

Senate policy briefing called for Iranian people's right to seek a free Iran

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, March 14, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Iranian American communities of [Maryland](#) and [Texas](#), members of the Organization of Iranian American Communities (OIAC), held a policy briefing in the U.S. Senate.

In a message to the conference, Mrs. Maryam Rajavi, the president-elect of the National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI) said, "Change in Iran is within reach for a number of reasons: The overwhelming majority of the Iranian people want fundamental change, and have demonstrated this desire repeatedly. The regime fears its downfall because it is engulfed in crises with no way out. The economic situation has worsened. Corruption is widespread. Popular discontent is on the rise. The regime cannot address the most basic needs of the people."



Sen. Kelly Ayotte (R-NH), Sen. Gary Peters (D-MI), Sen. Joe Lieberman (I-CT) and Amb. Mitchell Reiss

In his remarks, Ben Cardin (D-MD), senior member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, called human rights in Iran, a non-partisan issue on Capitol Hill. "We recognize that the Persian people are so committed to the right values universally. And that's why the current regime in Iran is so tragic. It does not represent the people of Iran...It is well past time for this regime to end." Senator Cardin added, "We saw an attempt at elections in February that were neither free nor fair. It was an attempt to try to give some legitimacy to this regime that doesn't deserve any legitimacy. We saw legitimate protests in November of last year ... And we saw the brutal repression by the government in

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preventing those individuals from exercising their God-given rights. It's been going on for over 40 years.”

In a statement, Senate Foreign Relations Committee member Ted Cruz (R-TX), addressed the briefing, “For decades, the men and women of Iran have suffered from brutal repression under the Ayatollah Khamenei and the Mullahs. But I believe one day Iran will be free, without the Ayatollah in power.” He added, “I have been a strong advocate for applying a maximum pressure campaign against the Iranian regime, to hold them accountable for their human rights abuses and once and for all end their reign of terror.”

Senator Cruz “called upon President Trump to invoke snapback sanctions under the Iran Deal and urged President Trump to order our diplomats to invoke the United Nations snapback to restore international sanctions and restrictions on Iran.”

Senior Senate Foreign Relations Committee member Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) called on the international community to hold the regime accountable for its rights violations. The Senator praised the Iranian people for their heroic protests, and said, “Now the people of Iran have taken to the streets to demonstrate in large numbers that they believe in freedom, in human rights for all, and in a government that answers to the people.... That’s why I’m joining my colleague, Senator Cardin, on his resolution ([S. Res. 539](#)) supporting the Iranian people as they take to the streets.”

Senate Homeland Security Committee Ranking Member Gary Peters (D-MI), , said the regime has been directly responsible for mass execution of political prisoners, “It's not just what this regime does around in the region, but for decades they have been directly responsible for mass executions of political prisoners, they violently suppressed peaceful protests, they have sham elections ... everybody should have the opportunity to stand up for liberty and to have those kinds of basic freedoms.

Former Senator Joe Lieberman (I-CT) said: “Mrs. Maryam Rajavi, who spoke very clearly to the people of Iran, incidentally, in the campaign leading up to the elections, and pleaded with people not to vote because a vote would be a vote in favor of the Supreme Leader and Rouhani and the clerical regime, and I think the people in Iran heard Mrs. Rajavi's voice, and that's one of the reasons they didn't come out to vote.”

Senator Lieberman added, “You can love President Trump for some things ... He pulled us out of



Sen. Ben Cardin at Iranian American communities of Maryland and Texas policy briefing in the U.S. Senate

the JCPOA, which was a bad deal for America and a great deal for Iran, and didn't really deprive them of their nuclear weapons program. He's enacted this campaign of maximum economic pressure. Since this regime in Tehran will not change, we have to support a change of the regime by the people of Iran to finally exercise their own self-government... and not to listen to people who say, regime change will lead to chaos as it did in Syria or Libya or Yemen. Part of why it won't lead to chaos is that Iran is the one who caused a lot of the chaos in those other countries. And part of the reason is that there is an alternative in Iran that's ready to govern. And that is the National Council of Resistance in Iran, and its President-Elect Mrs. Maryam Rajavi."

Former Senator Kelly Ayotte (R-NH) reiterated the need for the U.S. to push for reinstatement of U.N. snapback sanctions on the Iranian regime under U.N. Resolution 2231. She warned, "If the world does not push back...the arms embargo on Iran will be lifted and that means Iran can purchase tanks, missiles from China and Russia.

Senator Ayotte added, "In the last few months, we've seen the Iranian people stand up for their rights, and we stand with them. They've taken to the streets. We've heard their chants: Death to Khomeini. Death to the murderer and his rule. His rule is null and void...This is a time where we have an opportunity to come together, to continue the maximum pressure campaign, to make sure that people have the right to regime change in Iran, and that they can live in freedom and prosperity."

Former Policy Planning Director of the State Department, Ambassador Mitch Reiss highlighted three points. First, Iranian people have unequivocally rejected the clerical regime. Second, there is a credible and capable alternative led by the NCRI which best describes the hopes and aspirations of the Iranian people. Lastly, the U.S. should maintain comprehensive pressure on the regime.

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Sen. Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH) at Iranian Americans' policy briefing in the U.S. Senate.

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