

Congress urged to reauthorize the US Commission on International Religious Freedom by 90 organizations and individuals

Turning the tide of global religious persecution depends on the full support of those entities fighting daily for the rights and lives of others.

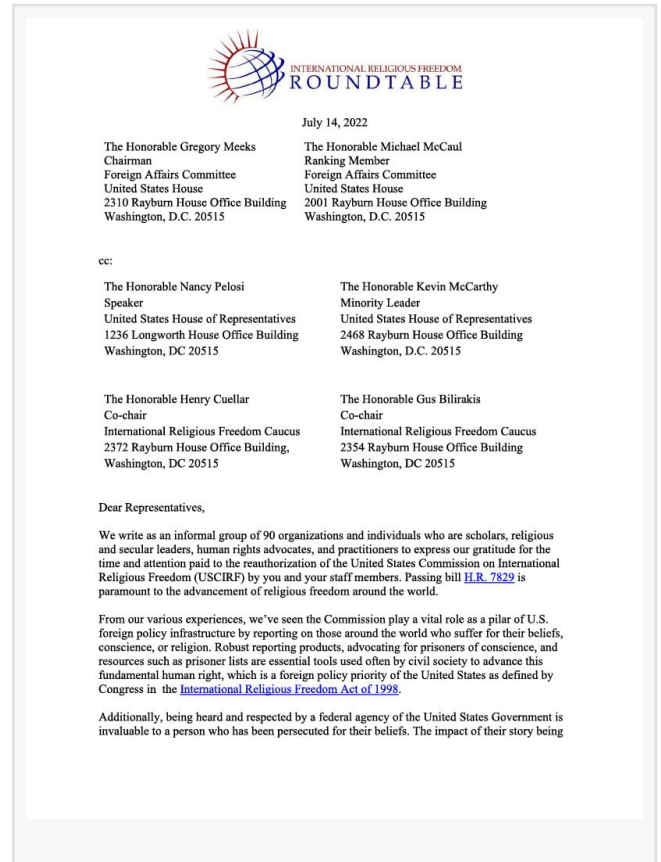
WASHINGTON, DC, USA, July 21, 2022

/EINPresswire.com/ -- In an effort to help those who are being persecuted for their faiths around the world, an informal group of 90 organizations and individuals in a joint letter this week urged Congress to swiftly pass the [US Commission on International Religious Freedom](#) Reauthorization (USCIRF) Act of 2022 (H.R. 7829).

The informal group of 90 is composed of scholars, religious and secular leaders, human rights advocates, and practitioners who come together weekly and also participate in smaller working groups on key issues to help bring about religious freedom for those suffering around the globe. The participants work hand in hand with government officials to expose violations and propose solutions as active participants of the [International Religious Freedom Roundtable](#) in Washington, DC.

House bill H.R. 7829 is paramount to advance religious freedom internationally as it reauthorizes a vital entity in the infrastructure of US foreign policy which is working to preserve religious liberty by investigating and reporting on religious persecution and atrocities.

According to the US Commission on International Religious Freedom's website, it is "an independent, bipartisan U.S. federal government commission, the first of its kind in the world, dedicated to defending the universal right to freedom of religion or belief abroad. USCIRF reviews the facts and circumstances of religious freedom violations and makes policy recommendations to the President, the Secretary of State, and Congress. USCIRF Commissioners are appointed by the President and the Congressional leadership of both political parties."



The commission has been particularly praised for its attention to prisoners of conscience who are imprisoned on charges related to their religious beliefs, or lack of beliefs, such as being charged with blasphemy for rejecting the teachings of leading religions, converting to another religion, or becoming atheists.

Christian pastors have been jailed in Pakistan, Nigeria, and Indonesia for preaching their beliefs or running “house churches,” while China and other countries have imprisoned Muslims for practicing their religion.

The multifaith letter to Congress, praising the US Commission said, “From our various experiences, we’ve seen the Commission play a vital role as a pillar of U.S. foreign policy infrastructure by reporting on those around the world who suffer for their beliefs, conscience, or religion. Robust reporting products, advocating for prisoners of conscience, and resources such as prisoner lists are essential tools used often by civil society to advance this fundamental human right, which is a foreign policy priority of the United States as defined by Congress in the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998.”

“

We believe not only that religious freedom is a God given right but that each individual must exercise their right to stand up for their fellow man to protect them from persecution by governments.”

Rev. Susan Taylor, National Affairs Office of the Church of Scientology

Those signing the letter and applauding Congress for moving on this legislation and urging the rapid reauthorization of the US Commission include a wide variety of organizations including the American Humanist Association, Baptist World Alliance, Church of Scientology National Affairs Office, Genocide Watch, International Christian Concern, and the Uyghur Human Rights Project.

The multifaith letter was sent to the Chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Congressman Gregory Meeks and the Ranking Member Congressman Michael McCaul

with copies sent to Congressional leadership to help ensure the work of the US Commission continues.

Rev. Susan Taylor, Public Affairs Director for the National Affairs Office of the Church of Scientology extolled, “We applaud Representative Chris Smith and his colleagues for supporting

told and published by the U.S. government encourages them, supports recovery, and inspires their broader community to become even greater advocates for those who are still harmed,

We, the undersigned, thank you for your dedication to upholding these fundamental freedoms and hope that Congress, working with your offices, will soon pass H.R. 7829 ensuring the continued mission of USCIRF.

Sincerely,

ORGANIZATIONS:

21 Wilberforce
Alevi Philosophy Center Association-ADO
Alliance of Religions
American Humanist Association
Assyrian Aid Society of America
Baha'is of the United States
Baptist World Alliance / Cooperative Baptist Fellowship
Boat People SOS (BPSOS)
Bruderhof
Buddhist Solidarity Association
Cao Dai Today
CCCU-Council for Christian Colleges & Universities
Co Lam Temple
China Aid Association
Christian Freedom International
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Churches for Middle East Peace
Coordination des Associations et des Particuliers pour la Liberte de Conscience
Coptic Solidarity
Federation of Indian American Christian Organizations of NA (FIACONA)
Genocide Watch
Global Peace Foundation International
Great Truth
Hindus for Human Rights
Indian American Muslim Council
International Christian Concern
International Human Rights Committee (IHRC)
International Organisation to Preserve Human Rights
International Society for Krishna Consciousness (ISKCON)
Islamic Society of North America (ISNA)
Jubilee Campaign USA
Justice For All
Lantos Foundation for Human Rights & Justice
Muslim Women Speakers
Muslims for Progressive Values

the ongoing campaign for religious liberty for not only those here in the United States but all around the world. Each effort of solidarity is an event in itself in this vital campaign seeking to turn the tide of religious persecution. We believe not only that religious freedom is a God-given right but that each individual must exercise their right to stand up for their fellow man to protect them from persecution by governments.

"In this vein, our National Affairs Office in DC works towards a world that is more secure and just, and one in which freedom of conscience and respect for the beliefs of others are worthwhile goals." Rev. Taylor said, "Working together we know that USCIRF will help ensure that those God-given rights remain protected."

Founded in 2010, the IRF Roundtable is an informal group of individuals from all faiths and none who gather regularly to discuss IRF issues on an off-the-record basis. The IRF Roundtable, which meets weekly, advocates and advises on policies regarding international religious freedom around the world and also in the United States.

Rev. Susan Taylor
National Affairs Office
+1 202-667-6404
[email us here](#)



Cover of a USCIRF report on religious freedom issues



Rev. Susan Taylor addressing attendees at the 2022 International Religious Freedom Summit in Washington, DC

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/582259690>

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