

Congress passes bipartisan religious freedom bill with support and praise from religious freedom advocates

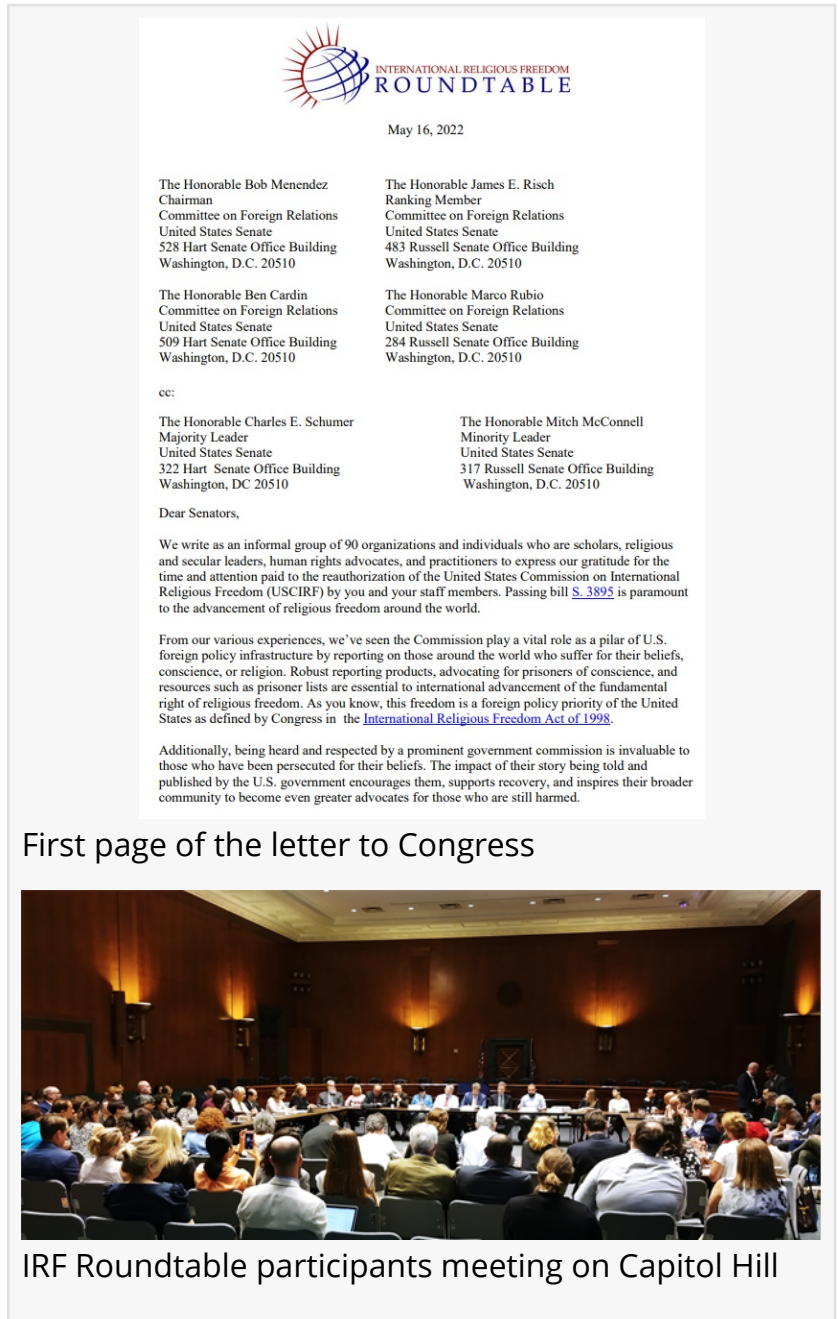
Church of Scientology joined 90 religious freedom advocates calling for reauthorization of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom

WASHINGTON, DC, USA, September 22, 2022 /EINPresswire.com/ -- The US House of Representatives voted overwhelmingly to reauthorize the US Commission on International Religious Freedom ([USCIRF](#)) through the year 2024. Passage of this bill will maintain the US' strong infrastructure to fight against religious persecution worldwide.

Praising the House's passage of the bill, S. 3895, this week, Senator James Lankford (R-OK) tweeted, "USCIRF does important work to help us protect and promote the human right of religious freedom for all people of every faith around the world. The House is finally passing my bill to reauthorize this commission."

There are men, women, children and faith institutions across the globe who are deprived of basic human rights to worship as they wish. Christians, Muslims, Buddhists, Hindus, Jehovah's

Witnesses, Ahmadis, Uyghurs, and others are being persecuted in many countries and not protected by their governments. According to a Pew Research Center Study, 80% of people live in



The image shows the first page of a letter to Congress. At the top right is the logo for the International Religious Freedom Roundtable, featuring a globe with sun rays and the text "INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM ROUNDTABLE". Below the logo is the date "May 16, 2022". The letter lists four recipients: The Honorable Bob Menendez (Chairman, Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, 528 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510); The Honorable James E. Risch (Ranking Member, Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, 483 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510); The Honorable Ben Cardin (Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, 509 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510); and The Honorable Marco Rubio (Committee on Foreign Relations, United States Senate, 284 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510). It also lists two recipients in the "cc:" field: The Honorable Charles E. Schumer (Majority Leader, United States Senate, 322 Hart Senate Office Building, Washington, DC 20510) and The Honorable Mitch McConnell (Minority Leader, United States Senate, 317 Russell Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510). The letter begins with "Dear Senators," followed by a paragraph of text expressing gratitude for the reauthorization of the US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) and stating that passing bill S. 3895 is paramount to the advancement of religious freedom around the world. A second paragraph explains that the Commission plays 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, and that robust reporting products, advocating for prisoners of conscience, and resources such as prisoner lists are essential to international advancement of the fundamental right of religious freedom. A third paragraph states that being heard and respected by a prominent government commission is invaluable to those who have been persecuted for their beliefs, and that the impact of their story being 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.

First page of the letter to Congress



IRF Roundtable participants meeting on Capitol Hill

countries with governmental restrictions on religious freedom.

The passage of the USCIRF bill in the House of Representatives with a vote of 402 to 4 stands as a bright light showing the world that the United States stands with those being persecuted and will continue to fight for the protection of minority faiths.



USCIRF, an independent, bipartisan US government federal commission, is one part of the US's vital infrastructure supporting religious freedom issues internationally.



Strong voices are needed to speak against religious persecution. With the reauthorization of USCIRF the work to fight for all faiths will continue in earnest. USCIRF is a vital force in this fight."

Rev. Susan Taylor, Church of Scientology National Affairs Office

USCIRF is joined by the US State Department's Office on International Religious Freedom and the US Ambassador for International Religious Freedom in working with civil society advocates to fight the persecution of minorities.

Earlier this year, 90 religious freedom advocates from the [International Religious Freedom \(IRF\) Roundtable](#), in a multifaith letter praised the Senate sponsors of the reauthorization bill - Marco Rubio (R-FL), James Lankford (R-OK), Chris Coons (D-DE), Jim Risch (R-ID), Dick Durbin (D-IL), Bob Menendez (D-NJ) and Ted Cruz (R-TX) - and urged the full Senate to pass it.

The letter in part said, "From our various experiences, we've seen the Commission play a vital role as a pillar of US 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 to international advancement of the fundamental right of religious freedom. Additionally, being heard and respected by a prominent government commission is invaluable to those who have been persecuted for their beliefs. The impact of their story being told and published by the US government encourages them, supports recovery, and inspires their broader community to become even greater advocates for those who are still harmed."

On July 20th, 2022, the Senate passed the USCIRF reauthorization bill by unanimous consent and sent the bill to the House.

With this week's passage of the USCIRF reauthorization bill in the House, Rev. Susan Taylor of the Church of Scientology National Affairs Office in Washington, DC, who had signed the group letter to the Senate on this issue said, "People of all faiths and none are continually under attack

around the world for their beliefs. Strong voices are needed to speak against religious persecution. With the reauthorization of USCIRF, the work to fight for all faiths will continue in earnest. USCIRF is a vital force in this fight.”

The US Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) is an independent, bipartisan, US federal government commission created by the 1998 International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA) that monitors the universal right to freedom of religion or belief abroad. USCIRF uses international standards to monitor religious freedom violations globally, and makes policy recommendations to the President, the Secretary of State, and Congress.

The IRF Roundtable, founded in 2010, is an informal group of faith leaders, human rights advocates and other civil society advocates who gather regularly to discuss IRF issues on an off-the-record basis. The IRF Roundtable meets weekly to advocate and advise on policies regarding international religious freedom around the world.

The Church of Scientology has supported the reauthorization of USCIRF since the commission was first enacted. Religious freedom and tolerance have always been an [important principle](#) at the heart of Scientology. The Scientology Creed of 18 February 1954, written by L. Ron Hubbard, the Founder of the Scientology religion, states:

"We of the Church believe: That all men have inalienable rights to their own religious practices and their performance."

The Church of Scientology has engaged, throughout its existence, in activities to promote and protect religious freedom around the world for everyone. Scientologists are dedicated to this principle as evidenced by their pledge to support freedom of religion for the good of all.

Religious advocacy supports the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), passed in 1948, which includes freedom of religion in Article 18: "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship and observance." Although the UDHR is one of the foundational documents of the United Nations, the concept of freedom of religion is still not broadly recognized around the world. Information on the UDHR is available from United for Human Rights at www.humanrights.com.

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

This press release can be viewed online at: <https://www.einpresswire.com/article/592138402>

EIN Presswire's priority is source transparency. We do not allow opaque clients, and our editors try to be careful about weeding out false and misleading content. As a user, if you see something

we have missed, please do bring it to our attention. Your help is welcome. EIN Presswire, Everyone's Internet News Presswire™, tries to define some of the boundaries that are reasonable in today's world. Please see our Editorial Guidelines for more information.

© 1995-2022 Newsmatics Inc. All Right Reserved.