

July 9, 2026

The Honorable John Thune
Majority Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Roger Wicker
Chairman
Senate Armed Services Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Democratic Leader
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

The Honorable Jack Reed
Ranking Member
Senate Armed Services Committee
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510

Re: Support Amendments #5902 and #6327 to the FY2027 National Defense Authorization Act

Dear Leader Thune, Leader Schumer, Chairman Wicker, and Ranking Member Reed:

We, the undersigned organizations and individuals representing a broad range of missions and priorities, write to express our strong support for inclusion of two complementary bipartisan measures in the FY2027 National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA): **Amendment #5902**, the Iran Human Rights, Internet Freedom, and Accountability Act ([S.3900](#)), and **Amendment #6327**, the Feasibility Review of Emerging Equipment for Digital Open Media (FREEDOM) Act ([S.3360](#)).

In early January, the Iranian regime imposed a nationwide internet blackout that enabled an unprecedented and lethal crackdown on civilian protesters, shielding violent repression from international scrutiny. Internet shutdowns have become one of the regime's most powerful tools of repression - facilitating violence, mass arrests, and grave human rights abuses while preventing Iranians from communicating with one another and the outside world. In the months that followed, authorities again imposed sweeping internet restrictions that lasted 88 days, the longest nationwide internet blackout recorded in Iran to date, underscoring the regime's continued ability to isolate its citizens despite efforts to expand access to secure communications technologies.

Helping ordinary Iranians communicate with one another and with the outside world remains one of the most effective steps the United States can take to support the democratic aspirations of the Iranian people while advancing broader U.S. national security interests.

The bipartisan FREEDOM Act, introduced by Senators Jacky Rosen (D-NV) and Dave McCormick (R-PA), was approved by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee earlier this year and would strengthen the evidentiary foundation for U.S. policy by requiring updated assessments of emerging communications technologies capable of helping Iranians remain connected during internet shutdowns. The legislation examines the feasibility of direct-to-cell satellite connectivity, evaluates threats such as signal jamming and drone-based disruptions, and assesses the broader communications environment inside Iran.

On June 17, 2026, the Senate Foreign Relations Committee approved the bipartisan Iran Human

Rights, Internet Freedom, and Accountability Act (S.3900) with an [amendment](#) in the nature of a substitute, marking an important step forward in congressional efforts to support internet freedom and secure communications in Iran. The legislation builds upon prior efforts, including the FREEDOM Act, and incorporates many of the coordination and implementation concepts reflected in the bipartisan IRAN Act ([H.R.7380](#)).

S.3900 would:

- Reinforce U.S. policy in support of the Iranian people's rights and aspirations for self-determination.
- Designate the Secretary of State to lead and coordinate U.S. efforts to advance internet freedom in Iran.
- Evaluate and expand access to VPNs, direct-to-cell communications, peer-to-peer networks, and other technologies that help overcome internet shutdowns.
- Assess and counter the Iranian regime's ability to disconnect the country from the global internet and impose nationwide blackouts.
- Extend authorization of the Iran Internet Freedom Grant Program through 2031 and support development of technologies that circumvent censorship and communications disruptions.
- Expand cybersecurity training, digital safety tools, secure communications, and other support for journalists, human rights defenders, and civil society.
- Strengthen support for independent media, human rights documentation, and congressional oversight of U.S. internet freedom and human rights programs.

Both amendments build upon authorities established under [Section 5124](#) of the FY2025 NDAA, making the NDAA a natural and timely vehicle to further strengthen U.S. support for internet freedom, secure communications, and access to independent information in Iran.

Together, Amendments #5902 and #6327 represent the most comprehensive congressional response to date aimed at countering internet shutdowns, supporting secure communications, and ensuring that Iranians retain access to independent information in one of the world's most heavily censored environments.

We respectfully urge the inclusion of Amendments #5902 and #6327 in the final version of FY2027 National Defense Authorization Act. Advancing these measures would send a clear message of support to the Iranian people and reaffirm the United States' commitment to defending access to information, promoting transparency, and supporting those striving for freedom and democratic governance.

We appreciate your leadership on these issues and stand ready to support efforts to advance these important measures.

Sincerely,

Morad Ghorban

Director of Government Affairs & Policy
Public Affairs Alliance Iranian Americans

Alexandria Paolozzi Moore

Senior Director of Government Relations
FDD Action

Elliott Abrams

Senior Fellow for Middle Eastern Studies

Ahmad Ahmadian

Executive Director

Council on Foreign Relations

Goli Ameri

Former Assistant Secretary of State
U.S. Representative to the 60th Session
United Nations General Assembly

Kenzie Elsworthy

Vice President, Strategy & Finance
Psiphon

Carrie Fillipetti

Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State
Vandenberg Coalition

Adam Fisk

President
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Holistic Resilience

Nazanin Boniadi

Actress, Human Rights Activist

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Former Professional Staffer
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Joel Rubin

Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State

Behnam Ben Taleblu

Iran Program Senior Director and Senior
Fellow
Foundation for Defense of Democracies

CC: The Honorable Dave McCormick
United States Senate

The Honorable Jacky Rosen
United States Senate

The Honorable Susan Collins
Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
United States Senate

The Honorable Patty Murray
Vice Chair, Senate Appropriations Committee
United States Senate