

Obama Administration Betrays Imprisoned Pastor With Iranian Deal

The Obama administration betrayed American pastor **Saeed Abedini** by reaching a deal with Iran that includes easing sanctions and providing humanitarian relief—a deal that leaves a U.S. citizen behind, imprisoned because of his faith, according to the American Center for Law and Justice (ACLJ), which is working to secure his release.

“President Obama and Secretary of State Kerry turned their backs on a U.S. citizen by refusing to secure his freedom before reaching an agreement with Iran,” says Jay Sekulow, chief counsel of the ACLJ. “It is outrageous and a betrayal of American pastor Saeed Abedini, who has spent more than a year in an Iranian prison simply because of his Christian faith. The Obama administration has left **Pastor Saeed** behind. And by failing to secure his release as a precondition to any negotiations, the Obama administration sends a troubling message to the Iranian government that Americans are expendable.”

The ACLJ sent a letter to Secretary Kerry, urging him to act and noting that “the failure to secure the release and return of Mr. Abedini and the other Americans would be reprehensible.”

Imprisoned for more than a year simply because of his **Christian faith**, Abedini faces life-threatening conditions in one of Iran’s most dangerous prisons.

Last week, the U.S. Senate unanimously passed a bipartisan resolution calling for the release of this U.S. citizen, and key members of the European parliament wrote a letter raising Pastor Saeed’s case.

And just days ago, the House Foreign Affairs Committee unanimously approved H. Res. 147, calling for the release of Abedini, allowing it to proceed on to a full vote of the U.S. House of Representatives.

The ACLJ has launched a significant online social media campaign on behalf of Pastor Saeed at .

Abedini is serving an eight-year prison sentence simply because of his Christian beliefs. He has been imprisoned now for more than one year. The ACLJ represents his wife, Naghmeh, and their two children, who live in Idaho.