

US Senate Sends Strong Message to Obama and Iran About Releasing Persecuted Pastor Saeed Abedini

The U.S. Senate sent a strong message to Iran and the Obama administration this afternoon by unanimously voting in favor of a resolution calling on the Obama administration to, in the words of Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell, “use the tools it has in pursuit of what should be a bipartisan goal: securing the release of American citizens being held as hostages by the regime in Iran.”

Majority Leader McConnell continued when speaking in favor of the resolution:

One of those Americans, Saeed Abedini, has reportedly been held prisoner for what would appear to be the supposed ‘crime’ of attempting to build and operate an orphanage. Beaten, denied access to medical care and locked away in solitary confinement—that’s apparently how the Iranian regime deals with those who dare to show love and compassion to others.

No American should find this acceptable. Just as no American should find it acceptable to unjustly imprison a reporter, or a grandson coming to see his grandmother. I think we can all agree that, at the very least, the American government should not be rewarding Iran for its disgraceful human-rights abuses—that we should not be granting Iran access to the funding it desires to further its nuclear weapons program and terrorist proxies while this exploitation continues.

So I call on every Senator to join us in standing up for human rights. Let’s pass Senator Risch’s legislation later

this afternoon.

The resolution, sponsored by Senator James Risch of Idaho—the home state of Pastor Saeed Abedini and where his wife, Naghmeh, and two young children still live—shows that Congress has not forgotten about Pastor Saeed and the other Americans wrongfully imprisoned in Iran.

In light of the upcoming Senate review of any nuclear deal with Iran, today was an important statement that Senators are prioritizing the freedom of Pastor Saeed and the other U.S. citizens imprisoned in Iran.

These are the same U.S. Senators who will review and vote on any finalized nuclear deal reached with Iran.

As the United States and Iran return to the negotiating table this week, it is vitally important that our leaders, regardless of party, do all they can to secure the release of Saeed and the other Americans before any deal is finalized and approved by Congress.

Join the ACLJ as we thank Senator Risch and the other members of the U.S. Senate taking the lead to stand up for Saeed. Sign our latest petition demanding no deal with Iran without Pastor Saeed.