

The Honorable Ben Cardin  
509 Hart Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510



Dear Chairman Ben Cardin,

On behalf of the Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian Americans (PAAIA), I encourage the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to **markup the Mahsa Amini Human rights and Security Accountability Act (MAHSA Act)**.

Senators Marco Rubio (R-FL) and Alex Padilla (D-CA) introduced the MAHSA Act (S.2626) in the Senate in July of 2023, and the House passed its companion bill (H.R.589) in September with near unanimous bipartisan support (410 yea votes). **This crucial legislation would require the Executive Branch to determine targeted sanctions under existing executive orders and laws on the Islamic Republic of Iran's Supreme Leader, President, their offices, and affiliated entities for their horrific track record of rampant human rights abuses and support for terrorism.**

Over a year after the **Woman, Life, Freedom movement** began in Iran, sparked by the death in state custody of Mahsa Amini, the Iranian authorities continue to suppress peaceful dissent, use forms of violence against critics and their families, and increase restrictive measures against women and businesses who defy compulsory hijab laws. The Islamic Republic's gross human rights violations are clear. The regime violently represses free speech, executes children, maims and imprisons thousands of peaceful protestors, and repeatedly blocks access to the internet and communications services to prevent the world from witnessing their offenses.

You have remained a staunch advocate for human rights throughout your time in Congress. Now, we ask that you continue that track record and markup the MAHSA Act. By supporting the legislation, **you are sending a message to the Iranian regime that the U.S. Congress will hold them accountable for their inhumane actions.**

Today, there are more than an estimated 1.5 million Iranian Americans living in the United States and the immigrant group is known for its extensive contributions to American society. Nevertheless, the community remains deeply connected to family back in Iran with nearly fifty percent (47%) of Iranian Americans reporting immediate family in Iran and only 6% with no family there. According to **PAAIA's 2023 National Public Opinion Survey** of Iranian Americans, nine in ten respondents believe that the protests in Iran will have a positive contribution to Iran's socio-political evolution and are **in favor of the U.S. government doing something to support the protestors**. The top issue for Iranian Americans with respect to U.S.-Iran relations, regardless of party affiliation, continues to be the promotion of human rights and democracy in Iran.

Given these facts, the MAHSA Act has wide support within the Iranian American community. Please stand with Iranian Americans and the Iranian people against the oppressive actions of this violent regime. **Hold regime officials accountable for their crimes against humanity and show your continued commitment to supporting human rights by scheduling a markup of the MAHSA Act.**

Thank you for your time and consideration of this matter.

Kind regards,

Neda Bolourchi  
Executive Director  
Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian Americans