

PAAIA Policy Recommendations for the 119th Congress (2025-2026)

Introduction

The Iranian American community, numbering over 1.5 million, is a vibrant and integral part of American society. Iranian Americans have made [significant contributions](#) to various industries and public life, holding leadership positions at companies such as Google, Intel, Tesla, YouTube, eBay, Uber, and JPMorgan Chase. Their work has been pivotal in maintaining America's global leadership in innovation and economic development. Additionally, Iranian Americans serve in public sectors, including two Members of Congress and the longest-serving Special Forces A-Team Soldier in U.S. history.

PAAIA (Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian Americans) is a nonprofit organization advocating for the community's interests, focusing on issues like immigration, civil liberties, security, and foreign policy. PAAIA also promotes civic engagement by empowering young Iranian Americans through our [Civic Leadership Program](#) and conducts [annual scientific surveys](#) to amplify the community's voice on critical issues.

PAAIA aims to raise awareness of the Iranian American community through education and policy, successfully advocating for bipartisan measures in the U.S. Congress. As the 119th Congress convenes, PAAIA wishes to share insight into the policy recommendations of the Iranian American community.

Family Ties & Importance of Travel and Communications

Despite being well integrated into American society, Iranian Americans maintain close familial ties with relatives in Iran.

- **94%** report having family members in Iran, and **47%** have immediate family connections, according to PAAIA surveys.
- Communication remains vital, with **73%** of Iranian Americans regularly connecting with family via internet or mobile technologies.

Facilitating family travel is also a priority. Notably, **83%** of Iranian Americans support the Temporary Family Visitation Act, which underscores the importance of policies that promote family reunification while respecting immigration safeguards.

Travel Ban Should Target Iranian Regime and Not People

Encourage the U.S. administration to implement a **travel ban** on Iranian regime officials and their immediate family members. It is essential for U.S. policy to [differentiate](#) between the Iranian government and the Iranian people. Measures should allow Iranian citizens to visit family and study in the U.S., as seen during the first Trump administration when Iranian students were granted carve-outs to pursue education in America. These students are recognized for their academic excellence and contribute to public diplomacy and national security efforts.

The younger generation of Iranians is largely pro-American, opposed to the regime's policies, and supportive of democratic governance. Recognizing these aspirations can strengthen U.S. efforts to counter authoritarianism in Tehran. Travel bans should, therefore, focus specifically on regime officials and their immediate families to hold them accountable for oppressing the Iranian people.

Enact the Temporary Family Visitation Act (TFVA)

The [Temporary Family Visitation Act \(TFVA\)](#) offers a balanced approach to family reunification while maintaining Homeland security safeguards. Key provisions of the TFVA include:

- A non-immigrant visa for relatives of U.S. citizens and permanent residents, restricted to **90 days**.
- Measures to prevent [visa overstays](#), such as penalties for perjury and disallowing adjustment of status or public benefits.

This bipartisan and bicameral legislation is designed to address flaws in the B2 visa process and facilitate short-term family visits. It also delivers economic benefits, with foreign travelers spending an average of **\$5,000** during a three-week stay, as reported by the U.S. Travel Association. The TFVA has been included in major legislative packages like the Bipartisan Dignity Act and Senate Supplemental Border Bill, reflecting broad congressional support.

Support Internet Freedom in Iran

Building on the 118th Congress's efforts, enhancing internet freedom in Iran is critical for supporting Iranian civil society as they use the internet to communicate, organize, and expose human rights abuses by the Iranian regime. The [Internet Reach and Access Now \(IRAN\) Act](#) and [Iran Internet Freedom Act](#), introduced during the 118th Congress, laid the groundwork for these initiatives, with elements included under Section 5124 of the [2025 NDAA](#).

- Congress should appropriate funds under Section 5124 to expand VPN access and other circumvention tools. Redirecting funds from USGMA to the State Department can bolster these efforts. Additionally, the administration should implement strategies to counter censorship, address internet blackouts, and improve information accessibility.
- Reintroducing the IRAN Act would strengthen these initiatives by focusing on sanctions exemptions for open internet technologies, deploying direct-to-cell satellite capabilities, and ensuring coordination through the State Department.

Conclusion

These recommendations aim to support the Iranian American community and promote democratic aspirations in Iran. By facilitating family connections, enhancing internet freedom, and distinguishing between the Iranian regime and its people, these measures align with U.S. values and represent practical, impactful steps to advance U.S. national security and foreign policy objectives.

For a more detailed breakdown of these priorities, please refer to the full document here: [PAAIA Policy Recommendations for the 119th Congress](#).