

## Statement from PAAIA to Members of Congress on Israeli Strikes Against Iran and the Importance of Distinguishing the Iranian People from the Regime

*"The Iranian people are a peaceful people with an ancient civilization and culture that he greatly admires. The Iranian regime, specifically the clerical leaders, are not representative of the people or their history and contributions to humanity."* — Secretary Marco Rubio, [Senate Confirmation Hearing](#)

The Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian Americans (PAAIA) urges Members of Congress to distinguish the Iranian people from the ruling regime as tensions rise following Israeli strikes on Iran's nuclear facilities. Younger generations in Iran consistently express pro-American sentiments, oppose their government's policies, and support democratic governance.

[Polling](#) shows that Iranians, particularly the youth, reject their government's authoritarian rule and seek greater international engagement. U.S. policy should recognize their aspirations.

Congress has already demonstrated its commitment to supporting the Iranian people by advancing legislation to promote [internet freedom in Iran](#). Unfortunately, in response to the recent strikes, the Iranian government has imposed [internet restrictions](#), further cracking down on freedom of expression and limiting access to uncensored information. As this conflict unfolds, it is crucial for Congress to follow through on internet freedom programs and ensure that Iranians can communicate freely without government interference.

Additionally, PAAIA calls on Members of Congress to speak out in support of the civil liberties of Iranian Americans, ensuring that they are not subjected to discrimination because of this conflict. Iranian Americans are among the most educated and entrepreneurial immigrant groups in the United States, making [significant contributions](#) across a range of sectors, including information technology, biotechnology, real estate, medicine, law, and more. Iranian Americans also serve in the [military](#) and [law enforcement](#), helping safeguard national security and uphold constitutional values.

PAAIA calls on Members of Congress to:

- **Implement internet freedom initiatives** passed into law as part of the 2025 NDAA to counter the Iranian regime's censorship and suppression of dissent.
- **Speak out and recognize the distinction between the Iranian people and their government** in all discussions related to Iran, ensuring that policy decisions reflect the reality of Iranian society, and to help minimize civilian casualties as result of the conflict.
- **Defend the civil liberties of Iranian Americans**, ensuring they are not unfairly targeted or discriminated against due to geopolitical tensions.

As the situation in the region remains volatile, the United States must stand with the people of Iran by amplifying their voices and ensuring they are not collateral damage in geopolitical conflicts.

PAAIA remains committed to advocating for policies that support the Iranian American community and their fundamental rights. We urge Congress to uphold this commitment and take

decisive action to [protect internet freedom](#) and speak out in support of the Iranian people and the civil liberties of Iranian Americans.

Sincerely,

Morad Ghorban  
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***ABOUT PAAIA:*** *The Public Affairs Alliance of Iranian Americans, PAAIA, Inc., is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, nonsectarian organization that serves the interests of Iranian Americans and represents the community before U.S. policymakers and the American public at large. Learn more at [paaia.org](http://paaia.org)*