

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 154

Supporting political reform in Iran and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 23, 2013

Mr. HOEVEN (for himself and Mr. BLUMENTHAL) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Supporting political reform in Iran and for other purposes.

Whereas democracy, human rights, and civil liberties are universal values and fundamental principles of the foreign policy of the United States;

Whereas an essential element of democratic self-government is for leaders to be chosen and regularly held accountable through elections that are organized and conducted in a manner that is free, fair, inclusive, and consistent with international standards;

Whereas governments in which power does not derive from free and fair elections lack democratic legitimacy;

Whereas the Supreme Leader of Iran is unelected, has the power to veto any decision made by the president or parliament of Iran, and controls the foreign and defense policy of Iran;

Whereas the current Supreme Leader of Iran has been in power since 1989 and has never been subject to a popular referendum of any kind;

Whereas elections in Iran are marred by the disqualification of candidates based on their political views, the absence of credible international observers, widespread intimidation and repression of candidates, political parties, and citizens, and systemic electoral fraud and manipulation;

Whereas elections in Iran consistently involve severe restrictions on freedom of expression, assembly, and association, including censorship, surveillance, disruptions in telecommunications, and the absence of a free media;

Whereas the current president of Iran came to office through an election on June 12, 2009, that was widely condemned in Iran and throughout the world as neither free nor fair and provoked large-scale peaceful protests throughout Iran;

Whereas authorities in Iran continue to hold several candidates from the 2009 election in indefinite detention;

Whereas the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran banned more than 2,200 candidates from participating in the March 2, 2012, parliamentary elections and refused to allow domestic or international election observers to oversee those elections;

Whereas the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran seeks to prevent the people of Iran from accessing news and information by disrupting access to the Internet, including blocking e-mail and social networking sites, limiting access to foreign news and websites, and developing a national Internet that will facilitate government censorship of news and information, and by jamming inter-

national broadcasts such as the Voice of America Persian News Network and Radio Farda, a Persian language broadcast of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty;

Whereas authorities in Iran have announced that a presidential election will be held on June 14, 2013; and

Whereas the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran has banned numerous candidates from participating in the June 14, 2013, presidential election: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) recalls Senate Resolution 386, 112th Con-
3 gress, agreed to March 5, 2012, which called for free
4 and fair elections in Iran;

5 (2) reaffirms the commitment of the United
6 States to democracy, human rights, civil liberties,
7 and the rule of law, including the universal rights of
8 freedom of assembly, freedom of speech, freedom of
9 the press, and freedom of association;

10 (3) expresses support for freedom, human
11 rights, civil liberties, and rule of law in Iran, and for
12 elections that are free and fair;

13 (4) expresses strong support for the people of
14 Iran in their peaceful calls for a representative and
15 responsive democratic government that respects
16 human rights, civil liberties, and the rule of law;

1 (5) condemns the widespread human rights vio-
2 lations of the Government of the Islamic Republic of
3 Iran;

4 (6) calls on the Government of the Islamic Re-
5 public of Iran to respect freedom of expression and
6 association in Iran by—

7 (A) holding elections that are free, fair,
8 and responsive to the people of Iran, including
9 by refraining from disqualifying candidates for
10 political reasons;

11 (B) making the highest level of executive
12 power in the Government of the Islamic Repub-
13 lic of Iran accountable to the people of Iran
14 through free and fair elections;

15 (C) ending arbitrary detention, torture,
16 and other forms of harassment against media
17 professionals, human rights defenders and ac-
18 tivists, and opposition figures, and releasing all
19 individuals detained for exercising universally
20 recognized human rights;

21 (D) lifting legislative restrictions on free-
22 dom of assembly, association, and expression;
23 and

1 (E) allowing the Internet to remain free
2 and open and allowing domestic and inter-
3 national media to operate freely;

4 (7) calls on the Government of the Islamic Re-
5 public of Iran to allow international election mon-
6 itors to be present for the June 14, 2013, election;

7 (8) notes that the legitimacy of the June 14,
8 2013, election will be further called into question
9 if—

10 (A) candidates are disqualified for political
11 reasons;

12 (B) international election monitors are not
13 present; and

14 (C) following the election, the highest level
15 of executive power in Iran remains unaccount-
16 able to the people of Iran; and

17 (9) urges the President of the United States,
18 the Secretary of State, and other world leaders—

19 (A) to express support for the universal
20 rights and freedoms of the people of Iran, in-
21 cluding to democratic self-government and fully
22 accountable elected leaders;

23 (B) to engage with the people of Iran and
24 support their efforts to promote human rights
25 and democratic reform, including supporting

1 civil society organizations that promote democ-
2 racy and governance;

3 (C) to support policies and programs that
4 preserve free and open access to the Internet in
5 Iran; and

6 (D) to condemn elections that are not free
7 and fair and that do not meet international
8 standards.

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