

119<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# H. R. 7622

To support human rights and internet freedom in Iran and hold the Iranian regime accountable for the repression of the Iranian people.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 20, 2026

Mr. LAWLER (for himself and Mr. SHERMAN) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Committee on Financial Services, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

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## A BILL

To support human rights and internet freedom in Iran and hold the Iranian regime accountable for the repression of the Iranian people.

1       *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*  
2       *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3       **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4       This Act may be cited as the “Iran Human Rights,  
5       Internet Freedom, and Accountability Act of 2026”.

6       **SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND STATEMENT OF POLICY.**

7       (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

1           (1) For nearly 5 decades, the people of Iran  
2           have endured brutal repression under the Islamic  
3           Republic, a regime that denies basic human rights,  
4           silences dissidents, and responds to peaceful protest  
5           with violence.

6           (2) The people of Iran have courageously taking  
7           to the streets to demand economic opportunity,  
8           human rights, dignity, and freedom.

9           (3) The Islamic Republic has responded to the  
10          ongoing protests with brutality by reportedly killing  
11          over 30,000 people and wounding thousands more,  
12          arresting approximate 40,000, and restricting inter-  
13          net access and telephone lines.

14          (4) The people of Iran are in part protesting  
15          the Islamic regime's economic mismanagement, cor-  
16          ruption, internal suppression, and unjust executions.

17          (5) Access to free expression, open information,  
18          and uncensored communication are fundamental  
19          human rights.

20          (6) The inspiring 2022 Women, Life, Freedom  
21          protests demanded an end to the Islamic Republic  
22          and its violence, including against Iranian women  
23          and ethnic minorities.

24          (7) The barbaric so-called morality police and  
25          other arms of state suppression have a lengthy his-

1 tory of repressing the Iranian people’s fundamental  
2 freedoms, including the freedom to assemble, the  
3 freedom of religion, women’s rights, and LGBTQ  
4 rights.

5 (8) The Islamic regime has engaged in system-  
6 atic efforts to intimidate, harass, detain, and harm  
7 political dissidents, activists, and journalists both  
8 within Iran and beyond its borders.

9 (9) The people of Iran deserve the right to dig-  
10 nity, democracy, and self-determination and to be  
11 free from the brutality of the Islamic Republic.

12 (b) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—It shall be the policy  
13 of the United States to—

14 (1) recognize the right of the Iranian people to  
15 freely determine, through free and fair elections, the  
16 nature of their political regime;

17 (2) facilitate the immediate expansion of unre-  
18 stricted internet access and civilian lines of commu-  
19 nication across Iran;

20 (3) fully enforce sanctions against regime  
21 human rights violators and their family members,  
22 including any family members and associates in the  
23 United States that continue to directly or indirectly  
24 provide support to the regime; and

1           (4) work in coordination with its allies to con-  
2           sider and implement all necessary and appropriate  
3           measures to deter further lethal violence against pro-  
4           testers.

5 **SEC. 3. INTERNET FREEDOM AND CENSORSHIP CIR-**  
6 **CUMVENTION.**

7           (a) INTERNET FREEDOM REPORT.—

8           (1) IN GENERAL.—Section 5124 of the Na-  
9           tional Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year  
10          2025 (22 U.S.C. 8754a) is amended—

11                   (A) in subsection (a)(2), in the matter pre-  
12                   ceding subparagraph (A), by striking “subpara-  
13                   graph (A)” and inserting “paragraph (1)”; and

14                   (B) by adding at the end of subsection  
15                   (a)(2) the following new subparagraphs:

16                           “(H) An assessment of the feasibility of  
17                           using direct-to-cell wireless communications  
18                           technologies to expand internet access for the  
19                           people of Iran, including technical, regulatory,  
20                           and security considerations.

21                           “(I) An analysis of how drone-based plat-  
22                           forms, signal jamming technologies, and related  
23                           countermeasures could impact the feasibility,  
24                           security, economics, and resilience of such di-  
25                           rect-to-cell wireless communications.

1           “(J) A survey of terrestrial and non-terres-  
2           trial telecommunications service providers cur-  
3           rently active in Iran, including—

4                   “(i) whether such providers are State-  
5                   owned or State-controlled;

6                   “(ii) the extent of foreign participa-  
7                   tion or investment in such providers;

8                   “(iii) the implications of such owner-  
9                   ship and control for communications free-  
10                  dom and censorship; and

11                  “(iv) any other relevant information  
12                  to assess the opportunities and risks asso-  
13                  ciated with terrestrial and non-terrestrial  
14                  communications technologies in Iran.”.

15           (2) FIRST UPDATE REQUIRED.—Not later than  
16           120 days after the date of the enactment of the Act,  
17           the Secretary of State, in consultation with the Fed-  
18           eral Communications Commission and the Depart-  
19           ment of the Treasury, shall prepare and submit to  
20           the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of  
21           Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Re-  
22           lations of the Senate a periodic update described in  
23           paragraph (4) of section 5124(a) of the National  
24           Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2025 (22  
25           U.S.C. 8754a) for the strategy required by that sec-

1 tion, that includes the new matter added by the  
2 amendments made by paragraph (1) of this Act.

3 (b) EXTENSION AND INCREASE OF AUTHORIZATION  
4 FOR IRAN INTERNET FREEDOM GRANT PROGRAM.—Sec-  
5 tion 5124 of the National Defense Authorization Act for  
6 Fiscal Year 2025 (Public Law 118–59), as amended by  
7 subsection (a), is further amended in subsection (b)(5)(A),  
8 by inserting “and \$30,000,000 for each of fiscal years  
9 2027 through 2030” after “2026”.

10 (c) DEVELOPMENT OF INTERNET ACCESS TECH-  
11 NOLOGIES BY THE DEFENSE INNOVATION UNIT.—

12 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Defense Innovation  
13 Unit (referred to in this section as the “Unit”) shall  
14 support the development of low-cost, easily scalable,  
15 and rapidly deployable technologies to counter inter-  
16 net shutdowns or limitations on network in Iran to  
17 enable the Iranian population to overcome such re-  
18 strictions.

19 (2) OBJECTIVES.—In carrying out paragraph  
20 (1), the Unit shall prioritize the following objectives:

21 (A) Identifying and supporting the devel-  
22 opment of technologies capable of overcoming  
23 internet blackouts and network disruptions im-  
24 posed by Iran and facilitating internet and net-  
25 work access, including—

1 (i) low-Earth orbit satellite internet  
2 infrastructure;

3 (ii) mesh networking solutions; and

4 (iii) portable and deployable commu-  
5 nication systems.

6 (B) Virtual private networks.

7 (C) Collaborating with industry, academia,  
8 and relevant stakeholders to accelerate the re-  
9 search, development, and deployment of such  
10 technologies.

11 (D) Conducting pilot programs and field  
12 experiments to test the effectiveness and  
13 scalability of technologies the development of  
14 which the Unit supported under this subsection  
15 in real-world settings.

16 (E) Providing technical assistance and re-  
17 sources to partner organizations, governments,  
18 and non-governmental entities engaged in ef-  
19 forts to expand internet access.

20 (F) Identifying and evaluating commer-  
21 cially available off-the-shelf items (as defined in  
22 section 104 of title 41, United States Code)  
23 that could be rapidly procured and deployed to  
24 address internet access challenges in targeted  
25 regions.

1           (3) COLLABORATION WITH DEFENSE ACQUISITION UNIVERSITY.—The Unit shall collaborate with  
2           the Defense Acquisition University regarding the ac-  
3           quisition processes and practices related to carrying  
4           out the objectives under paragraph (2) for the pur-  
5           poses of—  
6

7                   (A) integrating best practices in defense  
8                   acquisition into the research, development, and  
9                   deployment processes of technologies the devel-  
10                  opment of which the Unit supports under this  
11                  subsection to facilitate internet access;

12                  (B) ensuring that technologies the develop-  
13                  ment of which the Unit supports under this  
14                  subsection align with the priorities and strate-  
15                  gies of the Department of Defense for acquisi-  
16                  tion;

17                  (C) providing training and educational op-  
18                  portunities for Unit personnel on acquisition  
19                  principles, regulations, and procedures, with a  
20                  focus on technology development for countering  
21                  censorship and related restrictions;

22                  (D) fostering dialogue and the exchange of  
23                  knowledge between acquisition professionals and  
24                  innovation specialists to enhance the effective-  
25                  ness and efficiency of the acquisition of defense

1 technology related to internet access tech-  
2 nologies; and

3 (E) the Unit and the Defense Acquisition  
4 University collaborating on the development of  
5 acquisition strategies that prioritize the rapid  
6 acquisition and deployment of technologies  
7 aimed at countering censorship and restrictions  
8 on accessing the internet.

9 (4) REPORTING.—Not later than 180 days after  
10 the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually  
11 thereafter, the Director of the Unit shall submit to  
12 the Secretary of Defense and the congressional de-  
13 fense committees (as defined in section 101(a) of  
14 title 10, United States Code) a report detailing the  
15 progress, challenges, and outcomes of the efforts un-  
16 dertaken pursuant to this subsection.

17 (5) FUNDING.—There is authorized to be ap-  
18 propriated \$2,000,000 for each of fiscal years 2027  
19 through 2030 to carry out the activities described in  
20 this subsection.

21 **SEC. 4. STOP CORRUPT IRANIAN OLIGARCHS AND ENTI-**  
22 **TIES.**

23 (a) REPORT.—

24 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days  
25 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-

1       retary of the Treasury, in consultation with the Di-  
2       rector of National Intelligence and the Secretary of  
3       State, shall submit to the appropriate congressional  
4       committees a detailed report on the following:

5               (A) Senior foreign political figures and  
6       oligarchs in Iran, including the following:

7                   (i) An identification of the most sig-  
8       nificant senior foreign political figures and  
9       oligarchs in Iran, as determined by the  
10      closeness to the Government of the Islamic  
11      Republic of Iran of each such figure and  
12      oligarch, and the estimated net worth of  
13      each such figure and oligarch.

14                  (ii) An assessment of the relationship  
15      between the individuals identified under  
16      clause (i) and President Masoud  
17      Pezeshkian or other members of the ruling  
18      elite of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

19                  (iii) An identification of any indices of  
20      corruption with respect to such individuals.

21                  (iv) Known sources of income of such  
22      individuals and their family members (in-  
23      cluding spouses, children, parents, and sib-  
24      lings), including relevant beneficial owner-  
25      ship information.

1 (v) An identification of the non-Ira-  
2 nian business affiliations of such individ-  
3 uals.

4 (B) Islamic Republic of Iran parastatal en-  
5 tities, including an assessment of the following:

6 (i) The emergence of Islamic Republic  
7 of Iran parastatal entities and their role in  
8 the economy of Iran.

9 (ii) The leadership structures and  
10 beneficial ownership of such entities.

11 (iii) An identification of the non-Ira-  
12 nian business affiliations of such entities.

13 (C) Information relating to the exposure of  
14 key economic sectors of the United States, in-  
15 cluding, at minimum, the banking, securities,  
16 insurance, and real estate sectors, to Islamic  
17 Republic of Iran politically affiliated persons,  
18 Islamic Republic of Iran parastatal entities, and  
19 other Islamic Republic of Iran state-owned en-  
20 terprises.

21 (D) Information relating to the likely ef-  
22 fects of imposing debt and equity restrictions  
23 on Islamic Republic of Iran parastatal entities,  
24 as well as the anticipated effects of adding Is-  
25 lamic Republic of Iran parastatal entities to the

1 list of Specially Designated Nationals main-  
2 tained by the Office of Foreign Assets Control  
3 of the Department of the Treasury.

4 (E) Information relating to the potential  
5 impacts of imposing sanctions or debt and eq-  
6 uity restrictions in addition to any such sanc-  
7 tions or restrictions in existence as of the date  
8 of the enactment of this Act on Islamic Repub-  
9 lic of Iran oligarchs, Islamic Republic of Iran  
10 parastatal entities, or Islamic Republic of Iran  
11 state-owned enterprises, including impacts on  
12 such oligarchs, entities, and enterprises and on  
13 the economy of Iran, as well as on the econo-  
14 mies of the United States and United States al-  
15 lies.

16 (2) FORM.—The report required under para-  
17 graph (1) shall be submitted in unclassified form  
18 and may contain a classified annex.

19 (3) DEFINITIONS.—In this subsection:

20 (A) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COM-  
21 MITTEES.—The term “appropriate congres-  
22 sional committees” means—

23 (i) the Committee on Financial Serv-  
24 ices, the Committee on Foreign Affairs,

1 and the Committee on Ways and Means of  
2 the House of Representatives; and

3 (ii) the Committee on Banking, Hous-  
4 ing, and Urban Affairs, the Committee on  
5 Foreign Relations, and the Committee on  
6 Finance of the Senate.

7 (B) ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN  
8 PARASTATAL ENTITIES.—The term “Islamic  
9 Republic of Iran parastatal entities” means en-  
10 tities—

11 (i) in which the ownership interest of  
12 the Government of the Islamic Republic of  
13 Iran is at least 25 percent; and

14 (ii) that had 2024 revenues of ap-  
15 proximately \$2,000,000,000 or more.

16 (C) SENIOR FOREIGN POLITICAL FIG-  
17 URE.—The term “senior foreign political fig-  
18 ure” has the meaning given such term in sec-  
19 tion 1010.605 of title 31, Code of Federal Reg-  
20 ulations (or any corresponding similar regula-  
21 tion or ruling).

22 (b) IRAN KLEPTOCRACY INITIATIVE.—Section 310 of  
23 title 31, United States Code, is amended by adding at the  
24 end the following:

25 “(m) IRAN KLEPTOCRACY INITIATIVE.—

1           “(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is established  
2 within FinCEN the Iran Kleptocracy Initiative  
3 (hereinafter in this subsection referred to as the ‘Ini-  
4 tiative’), to investigate, expose, disrupt, and pros-  
5 ecute corruption, money laundering, and racket-  
6 eering activities by Islamic Republic of Iran govern-  
7 ment officials, their family members, associates, and  
8 proxies.

9           “(2) DIRECTOR.—The Secretary of the Treas-  
10 ury shall appoint a Director to serve as the head of  
11 the Initiative.

12           “(3) RESPONSIBILITIES.—The Initiative shall—

13           “(A) identify, trace, and catalog assets (in-  
14 cluding real property, financial accounts, luxury  
15 goods, and investments) held by or attributable  
16 to Islamic Republic of Iran government officials  
17 and their proxies, including those concealed  
18 through nominees, shell companies, family  
19 members, or third-country intermediaries;

20           “(B) coordinate with the Department of  
21 State, and allied governments to freeze, forfeit,  
22 seize, and, where appropriate and legally per-  
23 missible, repurpose illicitly acquired assets for  
24 the benefit of the Iranian people or victims of  
25 corruption;

1           “(C) develop and publish unclassified find-  
2           ings, reports, and public designations regarding  
3           corrupt practices within the Islamic Republic of  
4           Iran regime, including case studies of asset con-  
5           cealment and sanctions evasion (consistent with  
6           national security and operational requirements);

7           “(D) coordinate with Federal, State, and  
8           international law enforcement agencies, includ-  
9           ing through joint task forces, to facilitate civil  
10          and criminal prosecutions, asset recoveries, and  
11          extraditions under applicable United States  
12          laws, including chapters 46, 95, and 96 of title  
13          18 and sanctions statutes; and

14          “(E) establish protocols for rewarding  
15          credible information leading to successful inves-  
16          tigations, asset forfeitures, or prosecutions, in  
17          coordination with existing rewards programs.

18          “(4) INTERAGENCY COORDINATION.—

19                 “(A) DIRECTOR.—The Director shall serve  
20                 as the primary point of contact for coordination  
21                 with relevant Federal agencies and the heads of  
22                 appropriate Federal law enforcement agencies  
23                 and international partners.

24                 “(B) INTERAGENCY MEETINGS.—The Di-  
25                 rector shall convene regular interagency meet-

1           ings and share non-classified threat intelligence  
2           on Islamic Republic of Iran kleptocracy net-  
3           works.

4           “(5) REPORT.—

5                   “(A) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 1 year  
6           after the date of the enactment of this sub-  
7           section, and annually thereafter, the Secretary  
8           of the Treasury shall submit to the appropriate  
9           congressional committees a report on the activi-  
10          ties of the Initiative.

11                   “(B) ELEMENTS.—Each report required  
12          by subparagraph (A) shall include—

13                           “(i) a summary of investigations initi-  
14                           ated, ongoing, and concluded, including the  
15                           number of indictments, convictions, and  
16                           asset forfeitures attributable to the Initia-  
17                           tive;

18                           “(ii) an accounting of assets identi-  
19                           fied, frozen, seized, or repatriated, includ-  
20                           ing estimated values;

21                           “(iii) challenges encountered and rec-  
22                           ommendations for legislative or administra-  
23                           tive improvements; and

24                           “(iv) metrics on international coopera-  
25                           tion and public impact.

1           “(C) FORM.—Each report shall be sub-  
2           mitted in unclassified form, but may include a  
3           classified annex.

4           “(6) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMIT-  
5           TEES DEFINED.—In this subsection, the term ‘ap-  
6           propriate congressional committees’ means—

7                   “(A) the Committee on Financial Services,  
8                   the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and the Per-  
9                   manent Select Committee on Intelligence of the  
10                  House of Representatives; and

11                  “(B) the Committee on Banking, Housing,  
12                  and Urban Affairs, the Committee on Foreign  
13                  Relations, and the Select Committee on Intel-  
14                  ligence of the Senate.

15           “(7) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in  
16           this subsection shall be construed to limit the au-  
17           thority of any Federal agency to investigate or pros-  
18           ecute corruption or racketeering activities under  
19           other provisions of law.”.

20 **SEC. 5. CONGRESSIONAL NOMINATION AUTHORITY.**

21           (a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 120 days after re-  
22           ceiving a written request from the chairman or ranking  
23           minority member of any of the appropriate congressional  
24           committees regarding whether a foreign person has en-

1 gaged in the conduct described in subsection (b), the  
2 President shall—

3           (1) determine whether the foreign person has  
4 engaged in such conduct; and

5           (2) submit to such chairman or ranking minor-  
6 ity member a written justification detailing whether  
7 the President has imposed, or intends to impose,  
8 sanctions pursuant to the regulations described in  
9 subsection (b)(2) with respect to such person.

10       (b) CONDUCT DESCRIBED.—The conduct described  
11 in this subsection is knowingly providing material support  
12 for the Islamic Republic of Iran regime’s human rights  
13 abuses, censorship, or repression of the Iranian people, in-  
14 cluding—

15           (1) selling, supplying, or transferring censorship  
16 technology, surveillance tools, or internet shutdown  
17 capabilities; or

18           (2) any conduct sanctionable under part 562 of  
19 title 31, Code of Federal Regulations (relating to  
20 Iranian Human Rights Abuses Sanctions Regula-  
21 tions).

22       (c) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DE-  
23 FINED.—In this section, the term “appropriate congres-  
24 sional committees” means—



- 1           (4) produce annual performance metrics and
- 2           benchmarks for audience reach, content impact, and
- 3           program outcomes.

○