



111th CONGRESS

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S. RES. 196

Expressing the sense of the Senate on freedom of the press, freedom of speech, and freedom of expression in Iran.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

**June 19, 2009**

Mr. KAUFMAN (for himself, Mr. KYL, and Mr. BUNNING) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to

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## RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate on freedom of the press, freedom of speech, and freedom of expression in Iran.

Whereas since the June 12 Iranian presidential elections, there have been increased restrictions on freedom of the press in Iran and limitations on the free flow of information among the Iranian people;

Whereas newspapers and news services have been restricted by the Government of Iran, preventing the publication of specific articles, blocking the transmission of some news broadcasts, and cancelling of foreign press credentials;

Whereas websites and blogs have been blocked in Iran, including social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter;

Whereas numerous Iranian journalists have been arrested, detained, imprisoned, or assaulted since June 12;

Whereas foreign journalists have been prevented from covering street demonstrations, confined to their hotels, and told their visas would not be renewed;

Whereas non-Iranian government news services, including the Associated Press, have been told they may not distribute Farsi-language reports;

Whereas Iranian journalists were instructed by the Government of Iran to report solely from their offices;

Whereas on June 13, the leading mobile phone operator in Iran, the government-owned Telecommunication Company of Iran, was suspended for over 24 hours;

Whereas short message service (SMS) in Iran has been blocked, preventing text message communications and blocking internet sites that utilize such services;

Whereas on June 14, an Al-Arabiya correspondent was instructed by the Iranian Ministry of Information to change a story and its Tehran bureau was subsequently closed;

Whereas shortwave and medium wave transmissions of the Farsi-language Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) Radio Farda have been partially jammed since June 12; and

Whereas satellite broadcasts, including those of the Voice of America's Persian News Network and the British Broadcasting Corporation (BBC), have been intermittently jammed since late May: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate--

- (1) respects the sovereignty, proud history, and rich culture of the Iranian people;
- (2) respects the universal values of freedom of speech and freedom of the press in Iran and throughout the world;
- (3) supports the Iranian people as they take steps to peacefully express their voices, opinions, and aspirations;
- (4) supports the Iranian people seeking access to news and other forms of information;
- (5) condemns the detainment, imprisonment, and intimidation of all journalists, in Iran and elsewhere throughout the world;
- (6) supports journalists who take great risk to report on political events in Iran, including those surrounding the presidential election;
- (7) supports the efforts of the Broadcasting Board of Governors (BBG) to provide credible news and information within Iran through the Voice of America's (VOA) 24-hour television station Persian News Network, and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty's (RFE/RL) Radio Farda 24-hour radio station; and
- (8) condemns acts of censorship, intimidation, and other restrictions on freedom of the press, freedom of speech, and freedom of expression in Iran and throughout the world.