

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 12, 2017

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

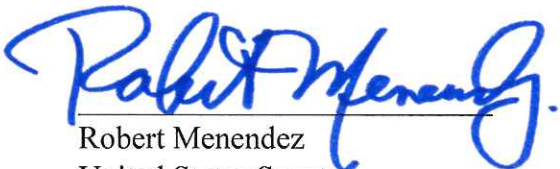
Dear Mr. President,

We write regarding the Iranian Government's continued detention of United States citizens. For 10 years, the regime has refused to acknowledge holding Robert "Bob" Levinson, a former FBI Agent who was working as a U.S. Government contractor when he was taken on Iran's Kish Island in March 2007. Baquer and Siamak Namazi were detained in October 2015, and February 2016, respectively, and each convicted and sentenced to 10 years in prison on sham espionage charges. Nizar Zakka, a legal resident of the United States and Lebanese national, was detained on September 18, 2015, after speaking at a conference in Iran to which the Iranian government had invited him, and was convicted and sentenced on the same false charges. Last month, Iranian authorities denied the appeal of Xiyue Wang, a doctoral student at Princeton University in New Jersey, who was also convicted of bogus espionage charges and sentenced to 10 years in prison.

It is critical that the United States increase pressure on the Iranian regime to release these Americans. Time after time, Iran has continued to take American hostages and hold them for political purposes. The international community must not tolerate the practice of hostage taking as a tool of state policy. We urge you to take all steps in the national interest to secure these Americans' release.

We were heartened that the White House released a July 2017 statement saying that there "will be serious consequences" if Iran does not return these individuals. We urge you to continue increasing pressure on the Iranian regime to release these Americans and to make clear to Iran that our nation will not stand idly by as Iran takes Americans hostage.

Sincerely,



Robert Menendez
United States Senator



Bill Nelson
United States Senator



Ted Cruz
United States Senator



Marco Rubio
United States Senator



Tom Cotton
United States Senator