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(Original Signature of Member)

119TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. R. _____

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

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. LAWLER introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

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

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 (1) the Committee on Foreign Affairs, the
2 Committee on Armed Services, and the Permanent
3 Select Committee on Intelligence of the House of
4 Representatives; and

5 (2) the Committee on Foreign Relations, the
6 Committee on Armed Services, and the Select Com-
7 mittee on Intelligence of the Senate.

8 **SEC. 6. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON IRAN BROADCASTING AND**
9 **HUMAN RIGHTS ASSISTANCE.**

10 It is the sense of Congress that United States policy
11 should—

12 (1) promote and provide United States Govern-
13 ment and international broadcasting efforts targeted
14 at providing the people of Iran with truthful report-
15 ing to counter Islamic Republic of Iran regime cen-
16 sorship;

17 (2) support independent Iranian journalists,
18 media outlets, and citizen journalists, including
19 grants for equipment, training, secure communica-
20 tion platforms, relocation assistance for those at
21 risk, and capacity-building for Persian-language
22 media;

23 (3) coordinate mechanisms with international
24 partners, the private sector, and diaspora commu-
25 nities to amplify credible independent media; and

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