

Cardin supports Iranian people in pursuit of rights

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Washington, DC – U.S. Senator Ben Cardin [D-MD], ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, released the following statement Tuesday, Jan. 2 amid ongoing protests in Iran:

"As protests in Iran continue, I support the legitimate desires of the Iranian people for dignity and fundamental freedoms, economic opportunity, and a government that is responsive to its citizens. The ability to peacefully protest is a universal right, and I applaud the courage and commitment of Iran's citizens across the country who have taken to the streets to call for reform despite the risks of violence and government-directed repression.

"I extend my condolences to the loved ones of those who have lost their lives in pursuit of change and freedom.

"I call on the Government of Iran to respect the right of its citizens to peacefully protest. The most effective government response is to acknowledge the economic grievances and concerns expressed by the protesters and to immediately take steps to respond, such as ending the entrenched system of corruption and halting programs of state-sponsored terrorism that deprive the vast majority of Iran's people of government resources and economic opportunities.

"The world is closely watching how Iranian officials respond to the legitimate calls of Iran's citizens for reform. If the response is violence, repression, and imprisonment, the United States has tools to target human rights abusers – these include sanctions authorized in the 2017 Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act and the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act.

"I also urge the Administration to explore options for sending signals of support to the Iranian people. A good start would be immediately removing Iran from the travel ban."

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