



Extension of Remarks
Hon. Henry A. Waxman
Condemning Religious Persecution in Iran

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.Con.Res. 128 and join my colleagues in condemning the Iranian government for its oppression of religious minorities. The persecution of Baha'is, Sunni Muslims, Christians and Jews is a gross violation of the human rights of communities that have existed in Iran for centuries.

Twenty years after the Islamic revolution, the Iranian government continues to disregard the most basic Islamic tenets of tolerance. Its suppression of student rallies in support of democratic reform, its censorship of the media, and its anti-Western rhetoric are emblematic of the government's insecurity and inability to govern justly.

I have closely followed the disturbing case of the arbitrary arrest of thirteen Jews from Shiraz on baseless accusations of spying. The group, arrested on the eve of the holiday of Passover, included the Chief Rabbi of the community, teachers, and students as young as 16 years old. Their sentencing for treasonous acts is a sham and I remain deeply concerned that a trial before a partial Iranian court would jeopardize their lives in a further miscarriage of justice. I enjoin the President and Secretary of State to continue working for the immediate release of these prisoners and hope that other governments will intensify pressure on the Iranian government to restore the basic human rights of the country's religious minorities.