

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

September 8, 2022

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Biden,

We write to strongly urge you to deny entry visas to the United States for Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi and his delegation to attend the United Nations General Assembly's 77th session in New York this September.

The United States cannot overlook Ebrahim Raisi's direct involvement in gross violations of internationally recognized human rights, including the 1988 organized mass murder of thousands of political prisoners, among whom were women and children, by the Iranian regime.¹ A majority of those murdered were members or supporters of the People's Mojahedin of Iran (PMOI), also known as the Mujahedeen-e-Khalq (MEK). Members of other political dissident groups were murdered as well. Raisi was a documented member of the Tehran "death committee", the group responsible for overseeing the massacre. It is highly concerning that Raisi and other members of the so called "death committee" have not been investigated and charged with crimes against humanity. Furthermore, Raisi continues to publicly defend his role in the 1988 executions.²

It is unacceptable that the Iranian government continues to back state-sponsored terrorist activities around the globe, including campaigns to assassinate American officials. The Department of Justice recently announced charges against a member of the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps for planning to assassinate former National Security Advisor John Bolton.³ Additionally in 2019, the Department of the Treasury's Office of Foreign Assets

¹ Hanna, Andrew. "Raisi: Role in 1988 Massacre." *The Iran Primer*, United States Institute of Peace, 21 July 2021, iranprimer.usip.org/blog/2021/jul/21/raisi-role-1988-massacre.

² Nebehay, Stephanie. "EXCLUSIVE U.N. Expert Backs Probe into Iran's 1988 Killings, Raisi's Role." *Reuters*, 29 June 2021, www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/exclusive-un-expert-backs-probe-into-irans-1988-killings-raisis-role-2021-06-29/.

³ U.S. Department of Justice. "Member of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) Charged with Plot to Murder the Former National Security Advisor." *U.S. Department of Justice*, 10 Aug. 2022,

Control (OFAC) sanctioned Ebrahim Raisi for his role in oppressing Iranian civilians and promoting terrorism abroad, pursuant to Executive Order 13876.⁴

Section 212 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (INA) gives the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of State the legal authority to deny entry to any individual who “outside the United States, has committed, ordered, incited, assisted, or otherwise participated in the act of torture... or under color of law of any foreign nation, any extrajudicial killing, as defined in section 3(a) of the Torture Victim Protection Act of 1991.” Section 212 also provides the authority to deny “Any alien who... has been associated with a terrorist organization and intends while in the United States to engage solely, principally, or incidentally in activities that could endanger the welfare, safety, or security of the United States.” Furthermore, the President has the authority to deny entry of individuals whose entry into the United States is deemed “detrimental to the interests of the United States.”

There is also precedent to support a decision to deny an Iranian leader and his officials United States entry visas. In the last decade, two administrations have denied entry visas to Iranian regime officials, including Iran’s UN Ambassador Hamid Aboutalebi (2014) and its foreign minister Javad Zarif (2020).⁵

Given Ebrahim Raisi’s record of supporting terrorism and violating human rights, he should not be afforded the privilege to step onto American soil nor the privilege to address the United Nations General Assembly. We cannot turn a blind eye to perpetrators of gross violations of internationally recognized human rights and cruel regimes that endanger both their people and Americans. We urge you and your administration to carefully consider this matter of national security and to use your authorities under the INA to deny Ebrahim Raisi and his delegation entry into the United States.

Sincerely,

www.justice.gov/opa/pr/member-irans-islamic-revolutionary-guard-corps-irgc-charged-plot-murder-former-national.

⁴ U.S. Department of the Treasury. "Treasury Designates Supreme Leader of Iran’s Inner Circle Responsible for Advancing Regime’s Domestic and Foreign Oppression." *U.S. Department of the Treasury*, 4 Nov. 2019, home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sm824.

⁵ Reuters staff. "U.S. Denies Iran's Zarif a Visa to Attend U.N.: U.S. Official." *Reuters*, 7 Jan. 2020, www.reuters.com/article/us-iraq-security-un-zarif/u-s-denies-irans-zarif-a-visa-to-attend-u-n-u-s-official-idUSKBN1Z605T; The White House. "Daily Press Briefing by Press Secretary Jay Carney, 4/11/2014." *Whitehouse.gov*, 22 July 2015, obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2014/04/11/daily-press-briefing-press-secretary-jay-carney-4112014;



Young Kim
Member of Congress



Maria Elvira Salazar
Member of Congress



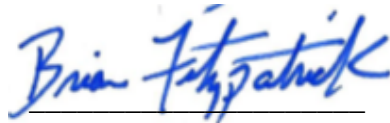
Byron Donalds
Member of Congress



Carlos A. Gimenez
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Claudia Tenney
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Brian Fitzpatrick
Member of Congress



Doug LaMalfa
Member of Congress



W. Gregory Steube
Member of Congress



Ted Budd
Member of Congress



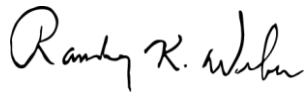
Nancy Mace
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Robert E. Latta
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Tim Ryan
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Randy Weber
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Ann Wagner
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Dan Crenshaw
Member of Congress



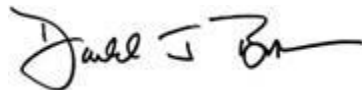
Stephanie Bice
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Tom McClintock
Member of Congress



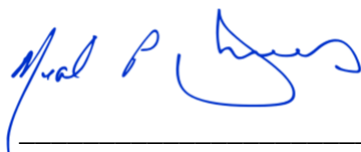
David G. Valadao
Member of Congress



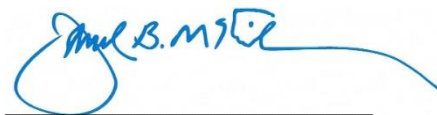
Donald J. Bacon
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Ralph Norman
Member of Congress



Neal P. Dunn, M.D.
Member of Congress



David B. McKinley, P.E.
Member of Congress



Debbie Lesko
Member of Congress



Tom Emmer
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Lisa McClain
Member of Congress



Kat Cammack
Member of Congress



Nicole Malliotakis
Member of Congress



Darrell Issa
Member of Congress



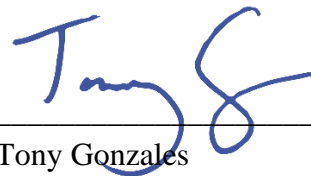
Andrew R. Garbarino
Member of Congress



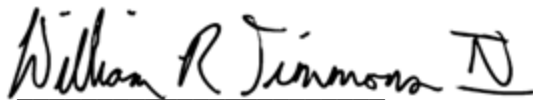
Brad R. Wenstrup, D.P.M
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Guy Reschenthaler
Member of Congress



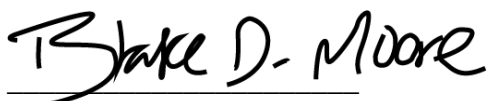
Tony Gonzales
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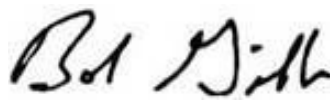
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Member of Congress



Bob Gibbs
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Michael R. Turner
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Louie Gohmert
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A. Drew Ferguson IV
Member of Congress



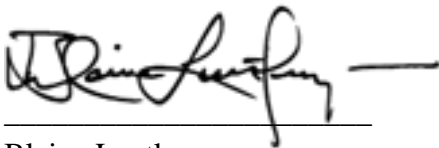
Chris Stewart
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Pete Sessions
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Sheila Jackson Lee
Member of Congress



Blaine Luetkemeyer
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Bob Good
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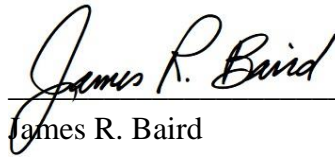
Troy Balderson
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Scott Perry
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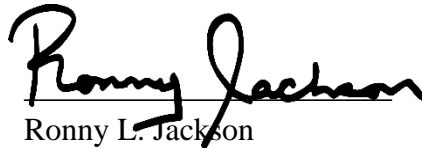
Joe Wilson
Member of Congress



James R. Baird
Member of Congress



Abigail Spanberger
Member of Congress



Ronny L. Jackson
Member of Congress



Pete Stauber
Member of Congress

CC: Secretary of State Anthony Blinken; Secretary of Homeland Security Alejandro Mayorkas;
Attorney General Merrick Garland