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THE JUDICIARY

COMMITTEE ON
EDUCATION AND LABOR

COMMITTEE ON
OVERSIGHT AND GOVERNMENT REFORM
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Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State
United States Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton:

I am writing to share my serious concerns about the fate and well-being of some 3,400 Iranian dissidents who reside in Camp Ashraf, Iraq. They are considered "Protected Persons" under the Fourth Convention and must not be harmed, nor should they be expelled or relocated against their will. I have been closely following reports about Camp Ashraf for quite sometimes now and have personally been in touch with some of the relatives of the people in Camp Ashraf.

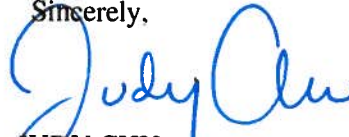
The United States has a legal and moral obligation to protect Ashraf residents against any attack by the Iranian regime or its proxies in Iraq. In January 2009, U.S. Military Forces were replaced with Iraqi Security Forces. Unfortunately, in July 2009, Iraq undermined its written assurances to the U.S. and attacked the unarmed residents of Camp Ashraf. As a result, 11 camp residents were killed and about 500 were injured. Some have suffered severe and debilitating injuries.

As a result of this attack and the continued threat to Camp Ashraf residents, I cosponsored House Resolution 704 which deplores the ongoing violence by Iraqi security forces against the residents of Camp Ashraf. This bi-partisan resolution also calls upon the President to take all necessary and appropriate steps to support the commitments of the United States under international law and treaty obligations to ensure the physical security and protection of Camp Ashraf residents against inhumane treatment and involuntary deportation by Iraqi Security Forces.

I have learned that in the coming weeks, the U.S. intends to leave the Forward Operation Base (FOB) Grizzly located in Camp Ashraf. Although I support the withdrawal of our forces from Iraq as scheduled, the premature removal of the U. S. forces from Ashraf worries me because such a move will leave its residents unprotected.

I believe the United States, with thousands of troops still in Iraq, has the responsibility to make sure that Camp Ashraf residents are safe and secure before leaving FOB Grizzly. We need to ensure that either the political situation in Iraq is stable with a new government that is not loyal to Tehran, or have a United Nations peacekeeping force stationed in Camp Ashraf before we leave these unarmed and defenseless Iranian dissidents at the mercy of the Iranian government or their allies. Unless those conditions are met in the next few weeks, let me respectfully suggest that we should continue with fulfilling our responsibility by providing security to the personnel of the United Nations Assistance Mission in Iraq (UNAMI) currently stationed in Ashraf, even if we intend to withdraw the remaining forces from FOB Grizzly. This will ensure there is at least an official international presence in Camp Ashraf ready and available to observe any further threats to residents' safety. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,


JUDY CHU
Member of Congress