



Statement for the Record

HON. FRANK R. WOLF  
of Virginia  
In the House of Representatives  
Wednesday, July 30, 2008

H.Res. 1008

Mr. WOLF. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.Res. 1008, condemning the persecution of the Baha'is in Iran. The Baha'is are Iran's largest non-Muslim minority and have faced severe and often brutal persecution since the Iranian government banned all formal Baha'i activity in 1983. Incidents of violence and persecution targeting members of the Baha'i community have increased under the current regime of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad.

On July 18, the house of the Shaaker family in Kerman was torched only weeks after their car went up in flames. Officials investigating the scene attributed the incidents to electrical problems despite a series of threatening phone calls received by the family in the days leading up to the incident. This is one of over a dozen cases in a string of arson targeting Baha'is over the past 15 months.

These attacks follow the arrest and detention of the seven members of Iran's national Baha'i coordinating group in May. All of these individuals remain isolated in the notorious Evin Prison in Tehran without access to legal representation and are prohibited from contacting their families. At this time, no formal charges have been brought against these seven individuals.

I am pleased to join a bipartisan group of my colleagues as a cosponsor of this important resolution, and I hope its passage will send a strong message to the Iranian government that the United States Congress will always stand in solidarity with the persecuted people of the world.