Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 5, 2011

The President
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We write to urge you immediately to implement additional sanctions on the Syrian regime of Bashar al-Assad. We appreciate the measures you have taken to date—including imposing sanctions on al-Assad, his family, and his associates—but we believe it is time to significantly increase pressure on the regime. No government should be allowed to inflict such suffering on its people without a stern response from the United States and from the broader international community.

Specifically, we request that you implement a number of key sanctions outlined in P.L. 108-175, the Syria Accountability & Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act of 2003. As required under this law, President George W. Bush implemented two of the available sanctions—a ban on exports to Syria other than food and medicine and a ban on Syrian aircraft landing in or overflying the United States.

We are pleased that you have maintained these sanctions, but we believe the time has come for implementation of further sanctions under the Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act, specifically:

- Section 5(a)(2)(B)—a prohibition on United States businesses from operating in Syria; and
- Section 5(a)(2)(F)—blocking transactions in any property in which the Government of Syria has any interest, by any person, or with respect to any property, subject to the jurisdiction of the United States.

Additionally, we urge the application of the full range of Iran, North Korea and Syria Nonproliferation Act sanctions on any foreign entity that knowingly transfers to Syria goods, services, or technology that materially contribute to Syria's efforts to develop nuclear, biological, or chemical weapons, or ballistic or cruise missile systems. Finally, we also request that you identify and implement additional sanctions to send a clear message to the Syrian government that it cannot murder civilians with impunity.

We share your concern for the Syrian government's unconscionable brutality and violence in response to calls for real political reform. According to available figures, almost 2000 Syrians have lost their lives and thousands more have been injured. In addition, thousands of refugees have fled to Turkey.

The Syrian people deserve a government that represents their aspirations and respects their basic human rights. It is clear that Bashar al-Assad is not willing to implement genuine reforms and that he lacks legitimacy to lead the Syrian people. As such, the United States and all responsible nations must hold the regime accountable, and pressure them to end the brutality. Implementing additional sanctions would show the Syrian people that we stand with them in their struggle for democratic freedoms, while also making it clear to the Syrian regime that it will pay an increasing cost for its gross violations of human rights and dignity.

Thank you for your continuing concern, and we look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN
Member of Congress

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Member of Congress

CONNIE MACK
Member of Congress

ELIOT L. ENGEL
Member of Congress

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Member of Congress

GARY L. ACKERMAN
Member of Congress

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Wally Herger

WALLY HERGER
Member of Congress