

**AMENDMENT TO THE RULES COMMITTEE PRINT
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OFFERED BY MR. GRIMM OF NEW YORK**

At the end of subtitle D of title XII of division A,
add the following new section:

1 **SEC. 12_ . STATEMENT OF POLICY ON CONDEMNING THE**
2 **GOVERNMENT OF IRAN FOR ITS STATE-SPON-**
3 **SORED PERSECUTION OF ITS BAHA'I MINOR-**
4 **ITY.**

5 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

6 (1) In 1982, 1984, 1988, 1990, 1992, 1994,
7 1996, 2000, 2006, 2008, 2009, 2012, and 2013,
8 Congress declared that it deplored the religious per-
9 secution by the Government of Iran of the Baha'i
10 community and would hold the Government of Iran
11 responsible for upholding the rights of all Iranian
12 nationals, including members of the Baha'i faith.

13 (2) The United States Commission on Inter-
14 national Religious Freedom 2012 Report stated,
15 “The Baha'i community has long been subject to
16 particularly severe religious freedom violations in
17 Iran. Baha'is, who number at least 300,000, are

1 viewed as ‘heretics’ by Iranian authorities and may
2 face repression on the grounds of apostasy.”.

3 (3) The United States Commission on Inter-
4 national Religious Freedom 2012 Report stated,
5 “Since 1979, Iranian government authorities have
6 killed more than 200 Baha’i leaders in Iran and dis-
7 missed more than 10,000 from government and uni-
8 versity jobs.”.

9 (4) The United States Commission on Inter-
10 national Religious Freedom 2012 Report stated,
11 “Baha’is may not establish places of worship,
12 schools, or any independent religious associations in
13 Iran.”.

14 (5) The United States Commission on Inter-
15 national Religious Freedom 2012 Report stated,
16 “Baha’is are barred from the military and denied
17 government jobs and pensions as well as the right to
18 inherit property. Their marriages and divorces also
19 are not recognized, and they have difficulty obtain-
20 ing death certificates. Baha’i cemeteries, holy places,
21 and community properties are often seized or dese-
22 crated, and many important religious sites have been
23 destroyed.”.

24 (6) The United States Commission on Inter-
25 national Religious Freedom 2012 Report stated,

1 “The Baha’i community faces severe economic pres-
2 sure, including denials of jobs in both the public and
3 private sectors and of business licenses. Iranian au-
4 thorities often pressure employers of Baha’is to dis-
5 miss them from employment in the private sector.”.

6 (7) The Department of State 2011 Inter-
7 national Religious Freedom Report stated, “The
8 government prohibits Baha’is from teaching and
9 practicing their faith and subjects them to many
10 forms of discrimination that followers of other reli-
11 gions do not face.”.

12 (8) The Department of State 2011 Inter-
13 national Religious Freedom Report stated, “Accord-
14 ing to law, Baha’i blood is considered ‘mobah’,
15 meaning it can be spilled with impunity.”.

16 (9) The Department of State 2011 Inter-
17 national Religious Freedom Report stated that
18 “members of religious minorities, with the exception
19 of Baha’is, can serve in lower ranks of government
20 employment”, and “Baha’is are barred from all lead-
21 ership positions in the government and military”.

22 (10) The Department of State 2011 Inter-
23 national Religious Freedom Report stated, “Baha’is
24 suffered frequent government harassment and perse-
25 cution, and their property rights generally were dis-

1 regarded. The government raided Baha'i homes and
2 businesses and confiscated large amounts of private
3 and commercial property, as well as religious mate-
4 rials belonging to Baha'is.".

5 (11) The Department of State 2011 Inter-
6 national Religious Freedom Report stated, "Baha'is
7 also are required to register with the police".

8 (12) The Department of State 2011 Inter-
9 national Religious Freedom Report stated that
10 "[p]ublic and private universities continued to deny
11 admittance to and expelled Baha'i students" and
12 "[d]uring the year, at least 30 Baha'is were barred
13 or expelled from universities on political or religious
14 grounds".

15 (13) The Department of State 2011 Inter-
16 national Religious Freedom Report stated, "Baha'is
17 are regularly denied compensation for injury or
18 criminal victimization.".

19 (14) On March 6, 2012, the United Nations
20 Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights
21 in the Islamic Republic of Iran issued a report (A/
22 HRC/19/66), which stated that "the Special
23 Rapporteur continues to be alarmed by communica-
24 tions that demonstrate the systemic and systematic
25 persecution of members of unrecognized religious

1 communities, particularly the Baha'i community, in
2 violation of international conventions” and expressed
3 concern regarding “an intensive defamation cam-
4 paign meant to incite discrimination and hate
5 against Baha'is”.

6 (15) On May 23, 2012, the United Nations
7 Secretary-General issued a report, which stated that
8 “the Special Rapporteur on freedom of religion or
9 belief . . . pointed out that the Islamic Republic of
10 Iran had a policy of systematic persecution of per-
11 sons belonging to the Baha'i faith, excluding them
12 from the application of freedom of religion or belief
13 by simply denying that their faith had the status of
14 a religion”.

15 (16) On August 22, 2012, the United Nations
16 Secretary-General issued a report, which stated,
17 “The international community continues to express
18 concerns about the very serious discrimination
19 against ethnic and religious minorities in law and in
20 practice, in particular the Baha'i community. The
21 Special Rapporteur on the situation of human rights
22 in the Islamic Republic of Iran expressed alarm
23 about the systemic and systematic persecution of
24 members of the Baha'i community, including severe
25 socioeconomic pressure and arrests and detention.

1 He also deplored the Government's tolerance of an
2 intensive defamation campaign aimed at inciting dis-
3 crimination and hate against Baha'is."

4 (17) On September 13, 2012, the United Na-
5 tions Special Rapporteur on the situation of human
6 rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran issued a re-
7 port (A/67/369), which stated, "Reports and inter-
8 views submitted to the Special Rapporteur also con-
9 tinue to portray a disturbing trend with regard to
10 religious freedom in the country. Members of both
11 recognized and unrecognized religions have reported
12 various levels of intimidation, arrest, detention and
13 interrogation that focus on their religious beliefs,"
14 and stated, "At the time of drafting the report, 105
15 members of the Baha'i community were reported to
16 be in detention."

17 (18) On November 27, 2012, the Third Com-
18 mittee of the United Nations General Assembly
19 adopted a draft resolution (A/C.3/67/L.51), which
20 noted, "[I]ncreased persecution and human rights
21 violations against persons belonging to unrecognized
22 religious minorities, particularly members of the
23 Baha'i faith and their defenders, including esca-
24 lating attacks, an increase in the number of arrests
25 and detentions, the restriction of access to higher

1 education on the basis of religion, the sentencing of
2 twelve Baha'is associated with Baha'i educational in-
3 stitutions to lengthy prison terms, the continued de-
4 nial of access to employment in the public sector, ad-
5 ditional restrictions on participation in the private
6 sector, and the de facto criminalization of member-
7 ship in the Baha'i faith.”.

8 (19) On December 20, 2012, the United Na-
9 tions General Assembly adopted a resolution (A/
10 RES/67/182), which called upon the government of
11 Iran “[t]o eliminate discrimination against, and ex-
12 clusion of . . . members of the Baha'i Faith, regard-
13 ing access to higher education, and to eliminate the
14 criminalization of efforts to provide higher education
15 to Baha'i youth denied access to Iranian univer-
16 sities,” and “to accord all Baha'is, including those
17 imprisoned because of their beliefs, the due process
18 of law and the rights that they are constitutionally
19 guaranteed”.

20 (20) On February 28, 2013, the United Na-
21 tions Special Rapporteur on the situation of human
22 rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran issued a re-
23 port (A/HRC/22/56), which stated, “110 Bahai's are
24 currently detained in Iran for exercising their faith,
25 including two women, Mrs. Zohreh Nikayin and Mrs.

1 Taraneh Torabi, who are reportedly nursing infants
2 in prison”.

3 (21) In March and May of 2008, intelligence of-
4 ficials of the Government of Iran in Mashhad and
5 Tehran arrested and imprisoned Mrs. Fariba
6 Kamalabadi, Mr. Jamaloddin Khanjani, Mr. Afif
7 Naeimi, Mr. Saeid Rezaie, Mr. Behrouz Tavakkoli,
8 Mrs. Mahvash Sabet, and Mr. Vahid Tizfahm, the
9 seven members of the ad hoc leadership group for
10 the Baha’i community in Iran.

11 (22) In August 2010, the Revolutionary Court
12 in Tehran sentenced the seven Baha’i leaders to 20-
13 year prison terms on charges of “spying for Israel,
14 insulting religious sanctities, propaganda against the
15 regime and spreading corruption on earth”.

16 (23) The lawyer for these seven leaders, Mrs.
17 Shirin Ebadi, the Nobel Laureate, was denied mean-
18 ingful or timely access to the prisoners and their
19 files, and her successors as defense counsel were
20 provided extremely limited access.

21 (24) These seven Baha’i leaders were targeted
22 solely on the basis of their religion.

23 (25) Beginning in May 2011, Government of
24 Iran officials in four cities conducted sweeping raids
25 on the homes of dozens of individuals associated

1 with the Baha'i Institute for Higher Education
2 (BIHE) and arrested and detained several educators
3 associated with BIHE.

4 (26) In October 2011, the Revolutionary Court
5 in Tehran sentenced seven of these BIHE instruc-
6 tors and administrators, Mr. Vahid Mahmoudi, Mr.
7 Kamran Mortezaie, Mr. Mahmoud Badavam, Ms.
8 Nooshin Khadem, Mr. Farhad Sedghi, Mr. Riaz
9 Sobhani, and Mr. Ramin Zibaie, to prison terms for
10 the crime of "membership of the deviant sect of Ba-
11 ha'ism, with the goal of taking action against the se-
12 curity of the country, in order to further the aims
13 of the deviant sect and those of organizations out-
14 side the country".

15 (27) Six of these educators remain imprisoned,
16 with Mr. Mortezaie serving a 5-year prison term and
17 Mr. Badavam, Ms. Khadem, Mr. Sedghi, Mr.
18 Sobhani, and Mr. Zibaie serving 4-year prison
19 terms.

20 (28) Since October 2011, four other BIHE edu-
21 cators, Ms. Faran Hessami, Mr. Kamran Rahimian,
22 Mr. Kayvan Rahimian, and Mr. Shahin Negari have
23 been sentenced to 4-year prison terms, which they
24 are now serving.

1 (29) The efforts of the Government of Iran to
2 collect information on individual Baha'is have re-
3 cently intensified as evidenced by a letter, dated No-
4 vember 5, 2011, from the Director of the Depart-
5 ment of Education in the county of Shahriar in the
6 province of Tehran, instructing the directors of
7 schools in his jurisdiction to “subtly and in a con-
8 fidential manner” collect information on Baha'i stu-
9 dents.

10 (30) The Baha'i community continues to under-
11 go intense economic and social pressure, including
12 an ongoing campaign in the town of Semnan, where
13 the Government of Iran has harassed and detained
14 Baha'is, closed 17 Baha'i owned businesses in the
15 last three years, and imprisoned several members of
16 the community, including three mothers along with
17 their infants.

18 (31) Ordinary Iranian citizens who belong to
19 the Baha'i faith are disproportionately targeted, in-
20 terrogated, and detained under the pretext of na-
21 tional security.

22 (32) The Government of Iran is party to the
23 International Covenants on Human Rights and is in
24 violation of its obligations under the Covenants.

25 (b) STATEMENT OF POLICY.—Congress—

1 (1) condemns the Government of Iran for its
2 state-sponsored persecution of its Baha'i minority
3 and its continued violation of the International Cov-
4 enants on Human Rights;

5 (2) calls on the Government of Iran to imme-
6 diately release the seven imprisoned leaders, the ten
7 imprisoned educators, and all other prisoners held
8 solely on account of their religion; and

9 (3) calls on the President and Secretary of
10 State, in cooperation with responsible nations, to im-
11 mediately condemn the Government of Iran's contin-
12 ued violation of human rights and demand the im-
13 mediate release of prisoners held solely on account
14 of their religion.

