



March 27, 2007

The Honorable Fabian Núñez
Speaker
California State Assembly
Sacramento, CA

Dear Mr. Speaker,

As an Iranian, it was with pride and admiration that I witnessed the courage my countrymen spontaneously demonstrated upon learning of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001 on America. On that day, thousands of Iranians took to the streets of Tehran, marching and holding candle light vigils through the night in sympathy and solidarity with the American people. While many around the world also showed their support on that terrible day, doing so in Iran was in direct defiance of the clerical oppressors of the Iranian people who continue to deny freedom, human rights and basic dignity in my homeland.

It is, of course, no secret that Iran's clerical regime has long been one of the major state sponsors of global terror. While its fanaticism and support for global militancy makes this regime a threat to all, it is my compatriots who are the first real victims of the regime's violence and terror as evident in the regime's consistent top ranking among the most flagrant violators of human rights.

Just a few weeks ago, the regime brutally crushed a peaceful demonstration by striking teachers seeking back pay and better wages. Their thugs used clubs to break up the protest and attack the demonstrators, most of whom were women. Earlier this month, the regime violently dispersed another peaceful demonstration in Tehran, slashing the bodies and breaking the skulls of Iranian woman, young and old, who were simply marking the international day for women's rights. Sadly, such ruthless brutality is not isolated in Iran today. Several months earlier, the world watched in horror as the regime used an iron fist to bust, arrest, torture and slash the tongue of union leaders as Tehran bus drivers went on strike for better wages.

These cycles of bloody repression are all too common in Iran, and indeed have been since the advent of the clerical regime in 1979. While the United Nations is now ready to stand together against the regime's pursuit of



nuclear weapons, I continue to call upon the good-hearted and freedom loving people of the world to pay a higher measure of attention to the viciousness of this regime against its own people. For if it were not for domestic oppression, Iranians would rise up against this theocracy and the world would no longer have to worry about terrorism or weapons of mass destructions from Iran.

Mr. Speaker, I am writing you in support of the Iran divestment legislation (AB 221) calling for the divesting of your state's public retirement funds from businesses benefiting the suppressive militant clerical regime of Iran. This act will hearten Iranians by demonstrating Californian's solidarity with their plight and national struggle against tyranny, injustice and suppression. Just as men and women of conscience around the world employed similar tactics and stood arm-in-arm against South Africa's evil apartheid in the 1980s, I am asking the good people of your great state to set a moral example and fuel the hopes of my compatriots about the good that can come from such acts of conscience.

As an advocate of a campaign of non-violent defiance against the clerical regime, I have repeatedly rejected the option of violence and war against my homeland. Instead, I have called on the international community to side with the Iranian people as they strive to bring about a democratic alternative to the current autocracy ruling them. The Iran Divestment Legislation will be a shining example and a great way to demonstrate solidarity with 70 million Iranians seeking freedom, democracy and a better life. Through the democratic institutions with which your great state is blessed, please send a powerful message to my compatriots about freedom and justice.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Ron Bell". The signature is written in a cursive style and is underlined with a single horizontal stroke.