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Dozens of Dems, GOP lawmakers call for a democratic Iran on anniversary of 1979 revolution

Lawmakers accused the regime of having 'stole the leadership of the revolution'

By [Adam Shaw](#) | [Fox News](#)

Over 50 House lawmakers, both [Democrat](#) and [Republican](#), used the anniversary of the [1979 Iranian Revolution](#) to renew U.S. calls for a free and democratic Iran -- just as the regime in Tehran faced its own troubles at home.

At a virtual conference organized by the Organization of Iranian American Communities, dozens of lawmakers marked the anniversary of the 1979 revolution, when Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi's government fell after mass demonstrations. It would be followed by the establishment of an Islamic Republic with a supreme leader having final say on state matters.

The lawmakers called for a secular, democratic Iran, noting [past resolutions affirming that position](#).

"For too long, the Iranian people have been deprived of their fundamental freedoms, for which reason they rejected dictatorship in 1979 and oppose religious tyranny today," Rep. Brad Sherman, D-Calif., said. "And that's why I became the chief sponsor of House Resolution 118, expressing support for the Iranian people's desire for a democratic, secular, and non-nuclear republic of Iran and condemning violations of human rights and state-sponsored terrorism by the current Iranian regime."

Rep. Randy Weber, R-Texas, said that the clerics of Iran "stole the leadership of the revolution" and eliminated dissent in the days following the 1979 revolution, and said the Iranian people retain their desire for freedom and democracy.

He also called for an international tribunal into new hardline President Ebrahim Raisi, who is linked to mass executions in 1988. He also warned against giving concessions to Iran as part of talks to re-establish the Iran nuclear deal.

"Giving concession to the Iranian regime will embolden them to kill their own people, to wage terror in the region, and rapidly dash to a nuclear bomb," he said. "I urge the Biden administration to quickly change course with Iran and pay attention to what over 250 bipartisan House members said in H.Res.118, and that is 'we stand with the people of Iran who are continuing to hold legitimate and peaceful protests against an oppressive and corrupt regime.' Iran deserves that."

Rep. Russ Fulcher, R-Idaho, said that the people of Iran "must have the right to determine their own future and to ensure that their rights of expression, religious belief, political opinion, assembly, and a representative government are truly respected."

"The barbaric imprisonment and execution of the courageous pro-democracy activists must finally end," he said.

"Since 1979, the Iranian people have yearned for the opportunity to live in a democratic, secular, nonnuclear republic, free from oppression by kings, dictators, and religious extremists," Rep. Scott Peters, D-Calif., said. "Men, women, children, Kurds, Bahai, Christians, Jews, and Muslims have all suffered for decades at the hands of an oppressive regime solely focused on maintaining absolute power rather than helping the Iranian people."

National Council of Resistance of Iran (NCRI) President-elect Maryam Rajavi told lawmakers that lifting sanctions would "only lead to more conflict, carnage and insecurity in the region and warned against any U.S. policy that would "appease the mullahs."

"The right policy is within reach," she said. "This is a policy that recognizes the right of the Iranian people and the Iranian Resistance to overthrow the religious fascism ruling Iran."

Meanwhile, in Tehran, thousands of cars and motorbikes paraded in celebration, but there were fewer people out on the streets.

Crowds waved Iranian flags, chanting slogans and carrying placards that read "Death to America" and "Death to Israel" in celebration of the anniversary

However, there were also some anti-regime acts as part of the anniversary. The NCRI touted video of what appeared to be chants of "Death to [Supreme Leader Ali] Khamenei and Raisi," and other anti-regime slogans broadcast by what the organization said were resistance units in Tehran's main shopping center.

The NCRI said there were more than 40 resistance campaigns across the country to protest the regime in recent days, the latest instance of a continuing resistance movement within the country.

The anniversary comes as talks are again taking place in Vienna on re-establishing the Iran deal, from which the Trump administration withdrew in 2018 but the Biden administration has sought to re-enter.

The State Department last week waived sanctions related to [Iran's civilian nuclear activities](#) as part of its efforts to bring the regime back into compliance with the deal.

Secretary of State [Antony Blinken](#) signed a waiver that restored the ability of foreign companies and other countries to participate in civilian nuclear and safety projects in Iran without facing U.S. sanctions.