

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

October 1, 2019

The Honorable Mike Pompeo
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20520

The Honorable Steve Mnuchin
Secretary
U.S. Department of the Treasury
1500 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20220

Dear Secretary Pompeo and Secretary Mnuchin:

We write to request that you take action in response to the Russian government's ongoing targeting of dissidents and opposition leaders, including the politically motivated imprisonment of many Russian individuals. We urge you to use existing authorities under U.S. law, including the Sergei Magnitsky Rule of Law Accountability Act and the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act, to impose targeted sanctions on Russian Government officials responsible for these human rights abuses.

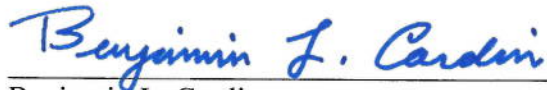
The Memorial Human Rights Center, a respected Russian human rights organization documenting political prisoner's cases, reports that there are currently over 200 vetted political prisoners in Russia. This estimate is likely conservative, as it is based on strict Council of Europe criteria. Since 2015, this number has increased significantly.

Russia's political prisoners include peaceful protesters, civil society activists, human rights advocates, journalists, Crimean Tatars, members of "undesirable" political organizations and adherents of prohibited religious groups. Some examples of particularly egregious cases are Alexei Pichugin who has been imprisoned for 16 years over the "Yukos Affair" and Konstantin Kotov who was sentenced earlier this month for participating in a peaceful demonstrations in Moscow. While these prisoners have different stories and different backgrounds, they are united by their unjust imprisonment under Vladimir Putin's authoritarian regime.

Earlier this year, an international coalition of NGOs published The Kremlin's Political Prisoners: Advancing a Political Agenda by Crushing Dissent, a comprehensive report that not only details the cases of individual prisoners but also identifies Russian Government officials who bear responsibility for arbitrary imprisonment. While some of the individuals have already been sanctioned by the U.S. Government, many others—including Prosecutor General Yuri Chaika, Justice Minister Alexander Kononov, and Federal Penitentiary Service Director Gennady Kornienko—have not.

We urge you to continue to impose targeted sanctions on Russian Government officials responsible for human rights abuses, specifically for the politically motivated imprisonment of dissidents, under relevant U.S. statutory authorities. This is an important step for accountability, and sends a message that the U.S. stands with those whose rights and basic freedoms are being unjustly repressed.

Sincerely,



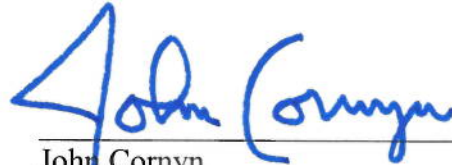
Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



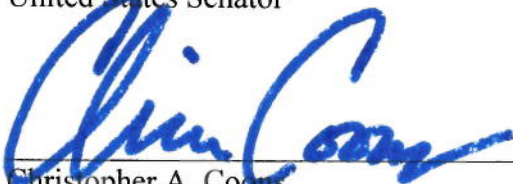
Marco Rubio
United States Senator



Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



John Cornyn
United States Senator



Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator



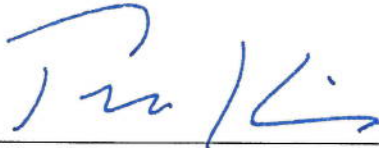
Cory Gardner
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



Todd Young
United States Senator



Tim Kaine
United States Senator



Roger F. Wicker
United States Senator



Susan M. Collins
United States Senator