

March 13, 2020

The Honorable Nita Lowey
Chairwoman
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on State and Foreign Operations
HT-2, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hal Rogers
Ranking Member
House Appropriations Subcommittee
on State and Foreign Operations
HT-2, The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairwoman Lowey and Ranking Member Rogers,

We, the undersigned democracy, human rights, and anti-corruption organizations and experts, write to thank you for including \$1 million for *Global Magnitsky* sanctions enforcement in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2020 State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs (SFOPS) appropriations bill and urge you to include a total of \$1.5 million in the Fiscal Year 2021 bill.

As you know, the *Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act* (22 U.S.C. 2656 note), which authorizes visa bans and asset freezes for human rights abusers and corrupt officials, is one of the most powerful foreign policy tools created in recent memory. It enjoys broad bipartisan support, and is widely viewed as one of the United States' most effective methods for addressing human rights abuses and corruption – two key drivers of instability globally.

We have collectively documented numerous firsthand accounts from human rights activists around the world about the law's powerful deterrent and accountability effects on corrupt activity and human rights abuses. Authoritarian leaders have taken notice. The law's novel provision requiring the consideration of information submitted by international human rights organizations has empowered civil society to play a key role in holding kleptocrats and abusive actors to account, helping to energize and organize collaborative efforts in even the most repressive of environments.

Since the *Global Magnitsky Act* was signed into law in 2016, targeted sanctions have been imposed on 199 human rights violators, corrupt actors, and associated entities in 25 countries. This remarkable success is a testament to unprecedented cooperation between Congress, the Executive Branch, and civil society, and a demonstration of a shared conviction about the law's utility.

The U.S. Department of State's Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor (DRL) and Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs (INL) are responsible, respectively, for working closely with regional bureaus and U.S. embassies around the world to gather and vet information about possible human rights violations and acts of corruption. Together with the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs (EB), the three bureaus work to identify perpetrators; and, led by EB, to share their recommendations and materials with the Department of the Treasury, which then assembles sanctions designations packages on each perpetrator. Unfortunately, as you know, demand for gathering and vetting information significantly exceeds current capacity. We are grateful that the FY20 SFOPS bill included \$500,000 each for DRL and EB to begin to address this backlog. An additional \$500,000 for INL will enable the hiring of 2-3 additional full time employees at INL focused specifically on *Global Magnitsky* enforcement, ensuring close attention to this issue at INL and more robust enforcement of a critical U.S. policy priority. We, therefore, propose the following bill and report language be included in Fiscal Year 2021:

Bill text: For necessary expenses for training, human resources management, and salaries...of which not less than \$1.5 million shall be available for addressing human rights violations and

corruption as authorized by the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act (22 U.S.C. 2656 note).

Report language:

The Committee directs the Department of State to spend no less than \$1.5 million to more effectively and aggressively implement the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act, with \$500,000 each for the Bureau of Economic and Business Affairs; Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs; and Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor.

Corruption and human rights abuses perpetuate and are born from violence and criminal activity, and exact an enormous toll socially, economically, and militarily. The United Nations estimates that the annual costs of corruption alone equal \$3.6 trillion – roughly four percent of total global gross domestic product. Addressing corruption and human rights abuses is of paramount importance for U.S. foreign policy, and *Global Magnitsky* sanctions are one of the most powerful tools for doing so.

We respectfully urge you to provide \$1.5 million for *Global Magnitsky* enforcement in the FY2021 SFOPS appropriations bill, including a clear “shall” set aside, and to include directive report language on implementation. We appreciate your consideration of this request and would be happy to meet with you in person to discuss this request in greater detail.

Sincerely,

Freedom House
Human Rights First
The Sentry
African Bar Association
American Jewish World Service
Americans for Democracy & Human Rights in Bahrain (ADHRB)
Asian Legal Resource Centre (ALRC)
Boat People SOS
China Aid Association
Church of Scientology National Affairs Office
Citizen Power Initiatives for China
Council for Global Equality
Falun Dafa (Falun Gong) Association of Washington DC
Free Russia Foundation
Global Diligence LLP
Human Right Campaign
Human Rights Foundation
International Christian Concern
International State Crime Initiative, Queen Mary University of London
NGO Truth Hounds
Reporters Without Borders
Robert F. Kennedy Human Rights
Safeguard Defenders
TAF - Tahrir Alnisa Foundation
The Church of Almighty God
The Jacob Blaustein Institute for the Advancement of Human Rights
Torture Abolition And Survivors Support Coalition International (TASSC)
Transparency International
Truth Hounds NGO

Uyghur Human Rights Project
WatchDog.MD Community (Republic of Moldova)

Puneet Ahluwalia, South Asia Minorities Alliance Foundation
Toufic Baaklini, President and Chairman of the Board of Directors, In Defense of Christians
Ariel Dulitzky, Human Rights Clinic, University of Texas at Austin, School of Law
David J. Kramer, Former Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor
Nadeem Nusrat, Voice Of Karachi

Cc: The Honorable Kay Granger, Ranking Member