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December 10, 2011

The Honorable Barack Obama
President
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President,

It is my understanding that you will be receiving Iraqi Prime Minister Nouri al-Maliki at the White House on Monday, December 12. I am writing to express my concern for the residents of Camp Ashraf and ask that you insist that the Prime Minister lift his December 31 deadline to close Camp Ashraf and ensure the safety and security of those residents.

Located in Iraq, Camp Ashraf is the home to 3,400 members of the Mujahedin-e-Khalq (MEK), an entity that opposes the current regime in Iran and promotes its replacement with a democratic system of government. This opposition to the status quo in Iran places the residents of Camp Ashraf in constant danger. With growing Iranian influence in Iraq, Mr. Maliki has made it clear that he has no interest in protecting these residents.

The threat to those in Camp Ashraf is very real. In July 2009, it was reported that Iraqi military forces entered Camp Ashraf and killed 11 residents while wounding over 400. Most recently, in April of this year, the same Iraqi military forces killed 36 residents. Not surprising, this massacre was praised by the Iranian regime. The ominous declaration that Camp Ashraf will be closed on December 31 leaves no doubt that these residents could face torture or worse. It is my hope that Mr. Maliki will abandon the December 31 deadline and immediately allow the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) to begin the resettlement process so that Camp Ashraf residents can find safety in a new country without fear of physical violence.

Make no mistake, a stand against the residents of Camp Ashraf is a stand with the Iranian Regime. The United States must make it very clear that we will not abide by the atrocities that have occurred and most likely will occur if the December 31 deadline remains.

I appreciate your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,


MICHELE BACHMANN
Member of Congress