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House of Representatives

The House met at noon and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. BENTIVOLIO).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 25, 2013.

I hereby appoint the Honorable KERRY L. BENTIVOLIO to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 3, 2013, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes each, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 1:50 p.m.

FREE AMIR HEKMATI

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. KILDEE) for 5 minutes.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank other Members of this body. In less than a week, 72 Members, Members representing the House and the Senate, have joined me in the campaign to free Amir Hekmati from prison in Iran, joined the Free Amir Campaign.

This has been a strong bipartisan effort. We know there's not a lot that's happening in this House right now that happens on a bipartisan basis, but this is something that Members of the

House on both sides of the aisle, and all Americans, can join together to do, take a tangible step to help free my constituent who is being held in an Iranian prison on false charges.

Every day, Americans are speaking up because it's something that they can actually do to make a difference through the social media, through Twitter. Thousands of tweets calling on Iranian President Hassan Rouhani to release Amir Hekmati have gone out while President Rouhani is in New York at the U.N. General Assembly; and we know that the Iranian Government monitors social media, participates in social media, so we know that the message is getting through to them. It's a powerful tool, and one that all Americans can engage in to help with this important cause.

I was sent here to fight for my constituents, to work on their behalf, and that includes Amir Hekmati.

Amir is a former U.S. Marine who served his country well, and went to visit his family in Iran. He is of Iranian descent, born and raised here in the U.S., a constituent of mine in Flint, Michigan. He went to visit his family and was arrested, tried and convicted on false charges as a result.

So what we're now seeking to do is to encourage the Iranian Government, as it makes overtures to the global community, to take a tangible step in coming toward the international community by doing what's right and releasing Amir.

We've had tangible support here from Congress; 112 of my colleagues signed a letter to Secretary Kerry asking him to elevate this case, and he's responded and spoke out, calling upon the Iranian Government to release my constituent, Amir Hekmati.

Ambassador Samantha Power, our representative to the United Nations, tweeted shortly after I sent her a letter, sent out a tweet of her own calling on the Iranian Government to release

Amir and the other Americans being unjustly held.

It's time for Iran to do more than just talk. If Iran and President Rouhani is looking for a tangible demonstration that he is serious about re-engaging the global community, re-emerging as a nation among nations, then he can do what's right and release my constituent.

The other day he said he wanted to bring peace and friendship from the Iranian people to the Americans. The American people have responded by asking for that important critical concrete step in the name of friendship, in the name of peace, and that is to release Amir.

It would demonstrate to all Americans and to the global community that this is not just a matter of words, but it's a matter of action. And the only way, I think, that we, as a global society and, certainly, as the American Government, can accept Iran's request to rejoin the international community is if it does something more than just say they want to join, but actually takes an important step.

I will continue this fight. We will not stop. The family of Amir Hekmati will not stop. Democrats and Republicans in the House and in the Senate will not stop. The American Government will not stop until Amir is free.

I take this as my personal challenge, as a personal responsibility as the Member of Congress representing the family. But I think we all, as Americans, can join this fight to free Amir Hekmati and to bring him home to his family.

Ladies and gentlemen, that's all I ask is that Members of the House and the public join this cause and help free Amir.

HUNDREDS ATTEND JOB FAIR IN GROTON, CONNECTICUT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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