

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20500

June 15, 2022

Dear President Biden,

We write to you as concerned family members of innocent Americans held hostage and wrongfully detained abroad who are desperately in need of your courage and decisive leadership. We have joined together in solidarity to create the Bring Our Families Home Campaign to explicitly ask that you use all the tools on the table to secure the release of our loved ones. We know you are a man of faith and compassion who understands the importance of family. We thus formally request a meeting with you and our campaign leadership team, composed of five family members, to share our perspectives, ask that you meet with the families by country, and provide you information that we believe will move all of our cases forward.

We are grateful for the gestures of support that members of your Administration have made to show that resolving our cases is a priority. We have had calls with Secretary Blinken and National Security Advisor Sullivan, as well as exceptional support from Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs Roger Carstens and his team. We applaud your efforts in securing the recent releases of Gustavo Cardenas and Jorge Fernández from Venezuela in March and of Trevor Reed from Russia in April, after years of unjust detention. However, we are worried that many of our loved ones will continue to be left behind if we do not get your personal attention. It has become clear to us that without your direct involvement, other issues will continue to overshadow the release of our innocent family members. Nothing should be more critical to our nation than bringing home over 59 Americans from the grasps of foreign countries holding them just for being American.

The truth is that we have put our lives on pause for years to solely focus on saving our loved ones. We are exhausted, traumatized, and beleaguered. Life savings have been consumed; countless trips to Washington, DC have been made; and, we have each learned how to do live interviews in front of millions on television. Yet our loved ones still are not home. We wake up every day knowing that they are suffering far more than we could imagine, so much so that many of them dread waking up at all. And, for them and our families, we get out of bed and do it all again, day after day. We are doing everything we can as regular people, but we are certain that you are the one person that could make this trauma end.

Mr. President, we need you. We need your clear leadership to prioritize the expeditious resolution of these cases. We are not indifferent to the moral and ethical questions posed by using trades and other tools, but we know you will understand that the value of bringing home an innocent American unjustly held abroad far outweighs anything else. You are the only one who can ensure their freedom is restored by providing a direct mandate to your Administration to find solutions promptly. It has been heartbreaking to be separated from our loved ones,

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knowing that they are being held from the very things that make life meaningful - the births of grandchildren, anniversaries, graduations, and countless small moments of togetherness over the years. We pray that your willingness to meet with our campaign leadership team will be the key that helps bring this nightmare to an end for our families.

Grateful for your consideration of our request,

The families of the Bring Our Families Home Campaign

Campaign Leadership Team:

Alexandra Forseth
Neda Sharghi
Everett Rutherford
Mickenzie Hill
Harrison Li

Member families of the Bring Our Families Home Campaign:

Charlene Cakora, sister of Mark Frerichs held in Afghanistan since 2020
Harrison Li, son of Kai Li held in China since 2016
Katherine Swidan, mother of Mark Swidan held in China since 2012
Nahid Dalili, wife of Shahab Dalili held in Iran since 2016
Babak Namazi, son of Baquer & brother of Siamak Namazi, held in Iran since 2016 & 2015, respectively
Tara & Teymoor Tahbaz, children of Morad Tahbaz held in Iran since 2018
Bahareh Shargi, wife of Emad Shargi held in Iran since 2018
Maryam Kamalmaz, daughter of Majd Kamalmaz held in Syria since 2017
Cherelle Griner, wife of Brittney Griner held in Russia since 2022
Elizabeth Whelan, sister of Paul Whelan held in Russia since 2018
Amber Bobin, representative / family friend of Paul Rusesabagina held in Rwanda since 2020
Melanie Berry, wife of Airan Berry held in Venezuela since 2020
Mark Denman, brother of Luke Denman held in Venezuela since 2020
Everett Rutherford, uncle of Matthew Heath held in Venezuela since 2020
Mervis Ruiz, wife of José Ángel Pereira held in Venezuela since 2017
Carmen Molinos, wife of Jorge Toledo held in Venezuela since 2017
Gabriela Zambrano Hill, daughter of Alirio Zambrano held in Venezuela since 2017
Glayma Zambrano, wife of Jose Luis Zambrano held in Venezuela since 2017
Bob Klamser, representative for the family of Jeffery Woodke held by JNIM since 2016