

114TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. _____

To express the sense of Congress that the Government of the Maldives should immediately release former President Mohamed Nasheed from prison and release all other political prisoners in the country, as well as guarantee due process for and respect the human rights of all of the people of the Maldives.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. LEAHY (for himself, Mr. DURBIN, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. MCCAIN, Mr. REED, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. PETERS, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. COONS, Mr. MARKEY, and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To express the sense of Congress that the Government of the Maldives should immediately release former President Mohamed Nasheed from prison and release all other political prisoners in the country, as well as guarantee due process for and respect the human rights of all of the people of the Maldives.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

1 **SECTION 1. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON POLITICALLY MOTI-**
2 **VATED DETENTIONS AND HUMAN RIGHTS**
3 **ABUSES IN THE MALDIVES.**

4 (a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following find-
5 ings:

6 (1) The Maldives is strategically important due
7 to its location, which straddles major trade routes in
8 the Indian Ocean.

9 (2) Increasing human rights violations in the
10 Maldives fuel instability and pose a threat to re-
11 gional security.

12 (3) Since January 2015, President Abdulla
13 Yameen of the Maldives has increasingly cracked
14 down on dissent within his own party and the polit-
15 ical opposition, presided over the erosion of judicial
16 impartiality, and put increasing pressure on civil so-
17 ciety.

18 (4) The arrest of former President Mohamed
19 Nasheed in March 2015 was widely condemned as
20 politically motivated, and his conviction and sentence
21 of 13 years in prison has been condemned by Am-
22 nesty International as a “travesty of justice”.

23 (5) In his speech in Sri Lanka on May 2, 2015,
24 Secretary of State John Kerry stated, “[W]e’ve seen
25 even now how regrettably there are troubling signs
26 that democracy is under threat in the Maldives

1 where the former President Nasheed has been im-
2 prisoned without due process. And that is an injus-
3 tice that must be addressed soon.”

4 (6) On September 14, 2015, in his opening
5 statement at the 30th session of the United Nations
6 Human Rights Council, United Nations High Com-
7 missioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra’ad said, “In
8 the Maldives, the rule of law continues to be manip-
9 ulated for political ends.” He also stated, in ref-
10 erence to former President Mohamed Nasheed’s de-
11 tention, “Given the deeply tainted nature of this
12 case, I urge the Government to release him, and to
13 review several hundred pending criminal cases
14 against opposition supporters in relation to protests
15 in recent months.”

16 (b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Con-
17 gress that the Government of the Maldives should imme-
18 diately release former President Nasheed from prison and
19 release all other political prisoners in the country, as well
20 as guarantee due process for and respect the human rights
21 of all of the people of the Maldives.