

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 21, 2018

President Donald J. Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

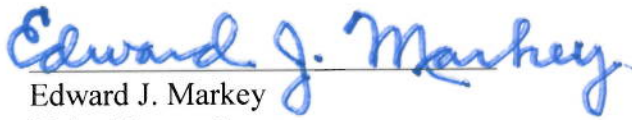
We write today to thank you and your Administration for your ongoing efforts to condemn the persecution of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) persons in the Chechen Republic of Russia and urge you to hold accountable the Russian and Chechen officials responsible for these flagrant human rights abuses.

It now has been a year since shocking reports first emerged indicating that Chechen officials had ordered the systematic arrest, detention, and torture of men suspected of being gay. Evidence gathered over the past year suggests that more than 100 men were detained and tortured. Some of the victims allegedly died in detention; others were handed over to relatives with the implicit understanding that the relatives should kill the men themselves. While most survivors have since fled and been resettled to safer countries for their own protection, we still have concerns that others are still hiding in Chechnya and remain vulnerable to abuses.

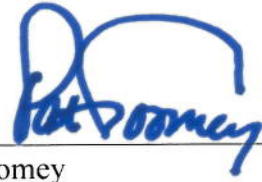
In December 2017, your Administration announced targeted sanctions under the Global Magnitsky Act against Ramzan Kadyrov, the brutal dictator of Chechnya, and Ayub Katayev, one of his henchmen who supervised the persecution of LGBT citizens. We greatly appreciate these sanctions and share your Administration's commitment to use existing law to aggressively target gross violators of human rights in Russia. On this one-year anniversary of when the world first began to hear reports about LGBT persecution in Chechnya, we write to offer our assistance and join together in letting the world know that the United States has not forgotten the abuses of these individuals in Russia. American values and national interests are closely linked, as stated in your recent Global Magnitsky Executive Order that: "serious human rights abuse and corruption around the world constitute an unusual and extraordinary threat to the national security, foreign policy, and economy of the United States."

Accordingly, we strongly encourage you and your Administration to continue to monitor the situation in Chechnya and hold Russian and Chechen officials accountable for the flagrant human rights abuses that have occurred.

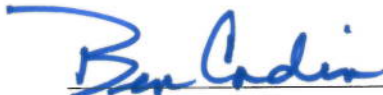
Sincerely,



Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



Pat Toomey
United States Senator



Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator



Todd Young
United States Senator



Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



Marco Rubio
United States Senator