

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 17, 2010

The Honorable Hillary Clinton
U.S. Department of State
Washington, D.C.

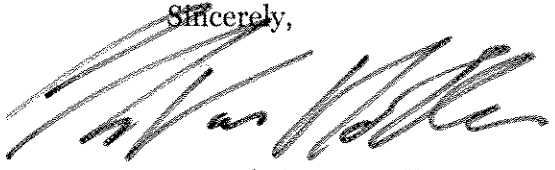
Dear Secretary Clinton:

As Members of the Maryland Congressional Delegation, we are writing to express our overwhelming concern regarding the continued incarceration of Alan P. Gross of Potomac, Maryland by the Government of Cuba. Mr. Gross has been held against his will and without any charges in a maximum security prison since December 3, 2009. He has been allowed to meet with representatives of the U.S. Interests Section just twice, on December 28 and February 2. Other than these two meetings and [three] brief telephone conversations with his wife, Mr. Gross has been unable to contact anyone. We firmly believe that the time has come for the Cuban government to release Alan Gross and reunite him with his family. The upcoming talks on February 19, 2010 between the United States and Cuba which will take place in Havana are an ideal forum for our government to forcefully raise the issue of the unacceptability of Mr. Gross' detention and demand his immediate release.

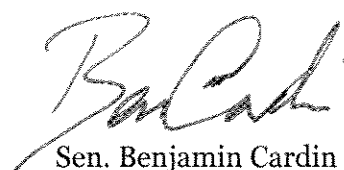
Trained as a social worker, Mr. Gross has worked in humanitarian development in more the 50 countries, representing the best of America's humanitarian values by improving the lives of thousands of people less fortunate than ourselves. As a subcontractor to Bethesda, MD-based DAI and in connection with its USAID contract, Mr. Gross was in Cuba carrying out U.S. government programming and it is therefore our duty to ensure his swift and safe return. This includes encouraging the Cuban government to abide by the rule of international law in dealing with detained civilians, particularly as we support further transparency, democracy and freedom of communication within Cuba.

In April 2009, the Obama administration lifted restrictions on Cuban Americans wishing to travel and send money to Cuba as a first important step in improving bilateral relations. However, the continued incarceration of Alan Gross serves as a significant barrier to any further progress between Cuba and the United States. We believe that the upcoming talks on February 19, 2010 between the United States and Cuba create an ideal opportunity to make clear that Mr. Gross' release is a most important priority in our nation's relationship with Cuba and that he be released immediately. We look forward to receiving a report from the State Department on the discussions regarding Mr. Gross' release in the upcoming talks with Cuba.


Sincerely,



Rep. Chris Van Hollen



Sen. Benjamin Cardin



Sen. Barbara Mikulski