Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

July 20, 2015

The Honorable John F. Kerry
Secretary
U.S. Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear Secretary Kerry:

We write to express our concern over this year's Pride parade in Istanbul, Turkey. For years, members of the Turkish lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) community and their supporters have been able to partake in one of the few permitted pride parades in the Muslim world. It was a distinction for which Turkey could have been proud of, however this goodwill was ruined this year after the government banned the parade and then police proceeded to brutally disperse the parade with tear gas, rubber bullets and water cannons.

We need to help those around the world who are still denied basic human freedoms. With the Supreme Court's decision regarding the case of *Obergefell v. Hodges*, marriage equality finally became legal across our country. That same day, we were pleased when Turkey accepted Norway's proposal at the United Nations Universal Periodic Review just the previous Friday that "Turkey should carry out its human-rights obligations by ensuring that LGBTI individuals and non-governmental organizations are included in the process." Further, we believe Turkey should honor its commitments to the Organization for Security and Co-operation in Europe relating to freedom of assembly and freedom of speech. We have been following the situation of LGBT people in Turkey with great interest through the UN Review processes with the help of shadow reports issued by LGBT organizations in Turkey.

It is against this backdrop of hope that we witnessed, with extreme anguish and surprise, the oppressive treatment by Turkish authorities of the Istanbul Pride Parade.

It is in the United States' national interest to address civil injustice abroad. We implore that you further promote ending discrimination of LGBT individuals around the world. This is a moment where we can take steps to protect the rights of citizens abroad. We urge you to publicly address these concerns with the leaders of Turkey.

Thank you for your continued leadership on these issues and working to ensure that LGBT rights are respected.

Sincerely,

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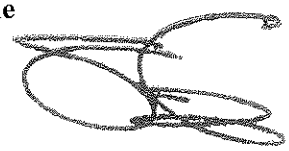
Name	District	Name	District
	NY-18	Sheila Jackson Lee	TX-18
Kyrsten Sinema	AZ-09	Barbara Lee	CA-13
Mark Takano	CA-41	Charles B. Rangel	NY-13
Raúl M. Grijalva	AZ-03	Brian Higgins	NY-26
Katherine M. Clark	MA-05	Jackie Speier	(CA-14)
Jim Van Hollen	MD-08	Steve Cohen	TN-09
Grace F. Napolitano	CA-32	Adam B. Schiff	CA-28
Linda Sánchez	CA52	Jim McGovern	MA-2
Earl Blumenauer	OR-03	Dina Titus	NV-01
Lois Frankel	FL-22		
Jim McDermott	WA-07	Patrick Murphy	FL 18
Eleanor H. Norton	DC-10	Frank Pallone	NJ-06
David Cicilline	RI-01	Jared Polis	CO-02
Eliot L. Engel	NY-16	Michael M. Honda	CA-17

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	NY-22
	MN-1
	NY-19
	MA-08
	CA-02
Ivan Vargas	
	WA-06
	NY-14
Beto O'Rourke	TX-16
	CA-31
	FL-23
	MN-01
	NY-17
	CA-03

Name	District
Rosa L. DeLauro	CT-03
Alan Lowenthal	CA-47
	CA-15
	KY-3
	CA-44
	TX-33
	NY-04
Tony Cárdenas	CA-29
	NY-06
	CA-34
Keith Ellison	MN-05
	IL-09
Denny Heck	WA-10
	MA-04

Name	District	Name	District
Tim Ryan	OH-13		
Paul D. Tonko	NY-20		
Daniel T. Kildee	MI-05		