



Congress of the United States  
House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

May 4, 2018

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

Dear Mr. President:

We write to you as bipartisan members of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and co-founders of the Friends of a Free, Democratic and Stable Syria Caucus with a shared concern about U.S. funding for the Syrian Civil Defence, also known as the White Helmets. We respectfully urge you to remove the freeze on their funding—funding that saves countless civilian lives in Syria.

The White Helmets serve as a volunteer organization with about 3,000 members. They serve communities across Syria, working tirelessly to rescue people caught in bombings, airstrikes and other attacks since the start of the Syrian War in 2011. To date, they claim to have saved more than 114,000 lives.

Mr. President, there is substantial support for the White Helmets in the United States. State Department spokesperson Heather Nauert called the White Helmets “selfless men” and less than two months ago, the State Department hosted them during their visit to Washington, DC and Capitol Hill.

The U.S. accounts for about a third of the group’s overall funding. Following news that the U.S. would freeze funding, the White Helmets are questioning what this means for their future and the future of the civilians they serve. Raed Saleh, the leader of the White Helmets, said, “If this is a long-term or permanent halt, it would have a serious impact on our ability to provide the same intensity and quality of services that we currently provide to civilians.”

Mr. President, this is of critical importance and we respectfully urge you to act swiftly to release U.S. funding to the White Helmets so they may continue their important humanitarian work.

Sincerely,

Brendan F. Boyle  
Member of Congress

Adam Kinzinger  
Member of Congress

CC: The Honorable Michael R. Pompeo, Secretary of State