Dear Representative/Senator \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_,

I write to ask that you support human rights in Bahrain by speaking up on behalf of Abdulwahab Hussain and all prisoners of conscience currently suffering from torture and mistreatment in the country. Abdulwahab Hussain is a philosopher and social critic who worked as both a teacher and a social worker until he was dismissed from his posts on account of his political activities.

In February 2011, thousands of Bahrainis took the streets to peacefully call for democracy, freedom, and political reforms as part of a broader movement in the Middle East. The authorities in Bahrain responded with a violent and brutal crackdown that resulted in dozens of deaths, hundreds of injuries, and thousands of arbitrary arrests. Since then, the government has only continued to crack down on human rights by the recently criminalizing the rights to freedom of assembly, association, and speech, while fostering a culture of impunity for human rights abusers. Arbitrary detention and torture continue unabated, while the government reduces the sentences of convicted human rights offenders.

Among those arbitrarily arrested and tortured was Mr. Hussain, a 58-year-old social worker and professor of philosophy.  He was arrested on March 17, 2011 for his peaceful expression of free speech and his association with the non-violent protest movement, Al-Wafa’. During his arrest, both he and his daughter were beaten by police. During his time in prison, Mr. Hussain has been held in solitary confinement.

This is not the first time that Mr. Hussain has been targeted for exercising his fundamental human rights of free speech and association.  During the protests of the 1990s, he was arrested on multiple occasions and imprisoned for more than five years.  During his time in detention, he was held in solitary confinement. In early 2000, Mr. Hussain was pressured to sign a letter of apology to the Emir in exchange for a pardon. When he refused to sign it, he was held in prison for several more months. He was later released and continued to advocate for democratic and human rights reforms in Bahrain.

Since his arrest in March of 2011, Mr. Hussain has consistently been denied medical treatment while in detention. By November of 2013, his physical condition had deteriorated considerably. As a result, he suffers from complications relating to his chronic neurological disorder that will likely continue to worsen. In addition to his preexisting condition, Mr. Hussain is suffering from retinal laceration, deteriorating eyesight, and low blood hemoglobin.  The lack of treatment has resulted in numerous infections and yet medical care is still being denied.

As your constituent, I ask that you call for Mr. Hussain’s unconditional release and petition the Government of Bahrain to ensure that he is receiving adequate medical treatment on par with international standards. The United States Government has an obligation to ensure that its allies in the region uphold basic human rights such as the rights to peaceful association, assembly and speech.

For that reason, I ask that you, in your capacity as a public figure, bring attention to Abdulwahab Hussain’s situation, and send a strong signal that the United States does not condone the arbitrary detention and maltreatment of peaceful demonstrators and human rights activists.

Sincerely,

Name

Address