

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-0908

January 30, 2024

President Joe Biden  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

It is clear that Nicolás Maduro, and his regime, have broken their commitments under the Barbados agreement. Instead of complying, the regime has used your administration's recent sanctions relief to replenish its coffers, further empowering it to oppress the Venezuelan people. The reincorporation of transnational criminal Alex Saab into its ranks further exacerbates this situation. To maintain the United States' credibility, and hold the regime accountable for its decision to subvert democratic elections, we urge you to immediately reimpose sanctions in place before the declaration of the Barbados agreement on October 17, 2023. We further encourage you to completely reconsider your approach towards Venezuela policy.

The political and judicial persecution of opposition candidates associated with the Unitary Platform, continued attacks on independent civil society, and most recently the Venezuelan High Court's decision to uphold the electoral disqualification of Maria Corina Machado, the opposition's chosen presidential nominee elected through a free and fair primary process, clearly violate the electoral roadmap that the regime agreed to last year. Last November, Secretary of State Antony Blinken testified before the Senate Committee on Appropriations that the regime would "not [get] a free pass for actions they take that are in contradiction to the commitments that they've made to move toward free and fair elections" and that the sanctions relief provided can be "revoked very quickly if the regime has, in fact, violated the agreement that it reached."

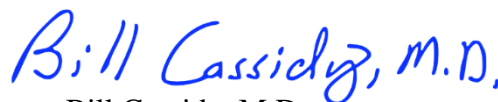
Continued authoritarian rule in Venezuela provides a dangerous foothold and an "open door" to other authoritarian actors operating in the region such as the People's Republic of China, the Russian Federation, Iran, and an assortment of transnational criminal groups. All of which collaborate to foster democratic instability in the region, like in Ecuador and Haiti, and help sustain other bankrupt and sanctioned authoritarians in places like Cuba and Nicaragua. This is much more than a foreign policy issue. It directly affects our own national security and domestic economic security because of how these groups directly contribute to the ongoing opioid and border crisis—overwhelming law enforcement and communities throughout the nation. It is a direct threat to our way of life. The time to act is now. Failure to do so will expose us all to grave consequences in the future. In light of the recent events, it is imperative for your administration to reevaluate our policy towards Venezuela to achieve free and fair elections before the end of the year.

We call on you now to uphold the commitment you and your administration have made to Congress and to the opposition parties of Venezuela. We stand ready to collaboratively address the challenges posed by the Venezuelan crisis.

Sincerely,



Marco Rubio  
U.S. Senator



Bill Cassidy, M.D.  
U.S. Senator



Rick Scott  
U.S. Senator