

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

February 3, 2021

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

Dear President Biden,

One of the many great legacies of former President Donald J. Trump is that no administration has had a more pro-Israel agenda. Not only did he successfully recognize Jerusalem as Israel's proper capital in December 2017, he also moved the United States Embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem the following year. Because of him, Israel is now safer and has a brighter future. The Trump Administration accomplished more for the special relationship between the U.S. and Israel than any other previous administration.

Most importantly, the Trump Administration made the Middle East substantially safer and more unified than four years ago by eliminating high-profile threats, including Islamic State Leader Abu Bakr al-Baghdadi and the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps General Qasem Soleimani. Additionally, by leading the Abraham Accords discussions, he was able to negotiate some of the strongest and unprecedented peace agreements known to the region.

The Obama Administration appeased Iran's demands and created instability in the region. The Administration's failed nuclear agreement with Iran gave the regime billions of dollars which it used to support terrorism throughout the region which increased the likelihood of conflict while providing Iran a legal pathway to a nuclear weapon within a decade. In contrast, President Trump's maximum pressure campaign has successfully deprived the Iranian regime of resources to support terrorism and carry out its destabilizing activities in the region without dragging us into a new conflict. Iran's economy is on the brink of collapse, its terrorist proxies such as Hezbollah have had to cut their salaries, and its defense budget has been reduced by 25%.¹ Iranian officials are committed to the gross violation of human rights, including the torture and mass killings of protesters, women, and ethnic and religious minorities. Under President Trump's maximum pressure campaign, Iran witnessed the largest demonstrations against the regime since it came to power in 1979.

It is thus of grave concern that you are considering a clean re-entry into the previous 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, otherwise known as the JCPOA or the Iran Nuclear Deal, without any sort of renegotiation to rectify that failed agreement's flaws. Lifting sanctions and re-entering into the Iran deal at this time would be even worse than the original agreement as parts of the 2015 agreement have already expired, such as prohibitions on Russia and China from selling arms to Iran, with others expiring in just a few years. It is also the position of the Iranian regime. In fact,

¹ <https://www.wsj.com/articles/pompeo-warns-easing-of-iran-sanctions-would-be-dangerous-choice-11605732951>

Iranian Foreign Minister Jawad Zarif wrote on January 22nd in *Foreign Affairs* "Iran wants the nuclear deal it made don't ask Tehran to meet new demands."²

In a September 13, 2020, essay, you stated that, "If Iran returns to strict compliance with the nuclear deal, the United States would rejoin the agreement as a starting point for follow-on negotiations."³ Furthermore, you have stated that you would lift the sanctions that the previous administration imposed on Iran. During a December 1, 2020 evening interview with *New York Times* columnist Thomas Friedman⁴, you committed to return the United States to the JCPOA, and scoffed at the idea of renegotiating the deal to include the Trump Administration's demands that Iran stop its support of terrorism, ballistic missile program, and regional destabilization.

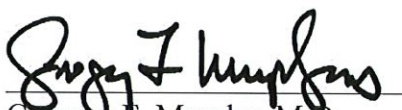
We are also concerned by reports that your administration is considering sanctions relief, specifically removing the Trump Administration's oil sanctions prior to even beginning negotiations with Iran. Replacing a maximum pressure campaign with a maximum concession campaign will only embolden Iran.

Appeasing the Iranian Government threatens Americans safety and the safety of our closest ally, Israel. The U.S. cannot give Iran billions to support terrorism destabilizing the region, develop its ballistic missile program, and commit gross human rights violations against its own people, while still having a path forward to developing a nuclear weapon within a few years.

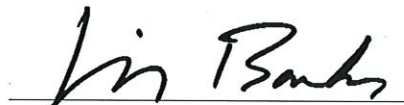
The Middle East has changed dramatically in the last decade, and we must confront this new dynamic with modern strategy, not previously flawed policy. We strongly urge against a clean re-entry into the Iran Nuclear Deal and urge you to continue President Trump's successful maximum pressure campaign.

Thank you for your service and your attention to this urgent matter.

Sincerely,



Gregory F. Murphy, M.D.
Member of Congress



Jim Banks
Member of Congress



Ted Budd
Member of Congress



Brian Babin, D.D.S.
Member of Congress

² <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/iran/2021-01-22/iran-wants-nuclear-deal-it-made>

³ <https://www.cnn.com/2020/09/13/opinions/smarter-way-to-be-tough-on-iran-joe-biden/index.html>

⁴ <https://www.nytimes.com/2020/12/02/opinion/biden-interview-mcconnell-china-iran.html>



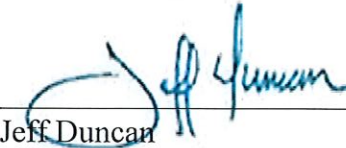
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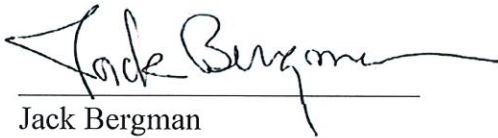
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Jody Hice
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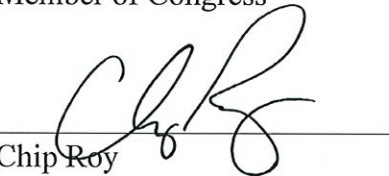
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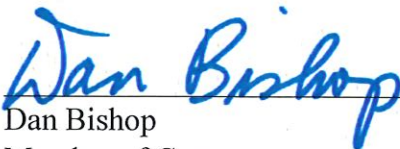
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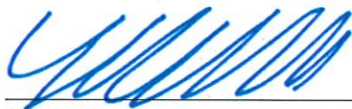
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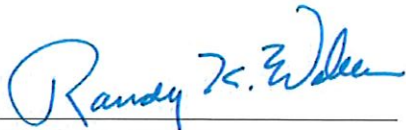
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Michael Waltz
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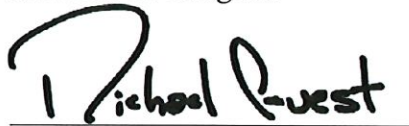
Dan Meuser
Member of Congress



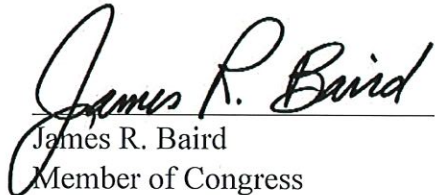
Randy K. Weber
Member of Congress



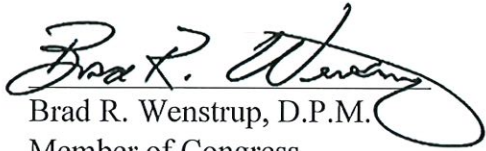
Kevin Hern
Member of Congress



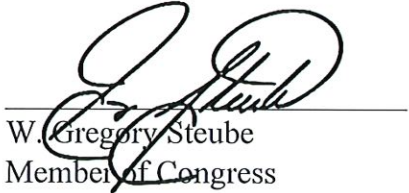
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