

November 16, 2023

VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

President Joseph R. Biden
The White House
Washington, DC 20500

Secretary Antony J. Blinken
U.S. Department of State
Washington, D.C. 20520

Dear President Biden and Secretary Blinken:

We write today regarding your administration's continued appeasement strategy toward Iran, which is placing the national security of both the U.S. and our ally, Israel, at risk. It is unconscionable that, just over two months after you sought to gift the Iranian regime a \$6 billion ransom payment, you are extending the electricity imports sanctions waiver, unlocking another \$10 billion in frozen assets for Iran to access.¹

We need not remind you that Iran is the world's largest state sponsor of terrorism, funneling an estimated \$700 million to Hezbollah and \$100 million to Hamas annually.² On October 7th, the world watched with horror as Hamas, with Iran's backing, brutally tortured and slaughtered innocent Israeli babies and children, and took Jewish families hostage in Gaza. That alone should be cause enough for you to forego giving Tehran another dollar. But if you need more convincing, look no further than last month, when the Iranian Foreign Minister visited the U.S. – with a visa provided by your State Department, no less – and threatened that the country would “not be spared from this fire” if Israel's war against Hamas continues.³ It's no coincidence that to date, U.S. forces have been attacked at least 56 times in less than a month by Iran-backed proxies.⁴

Once again, the State Department claims that these newly released funds can only be used for humanitarian purposes. As we unfortunately learned after the October 7th attacks on Israel, money is a fungible asset. Giving Iran access to another \$10 billion will only allow them to reallocate more funding from other sources to support terrorism. Additionally, you have placed

¹ Adam Kredo, *Biden Unlocks Fresh Funds to Iran Totaling Billions* (Nov. 14, 2023), <https://freebeacon.com/biden-administration/biden-unlocks-fresh-payments-to-iran-totaling-billions/>.

² *Under Secretary Sigal Mandelker Speech before the Foundation for the Defense of Democracies*, Press Release (June 5, 2018), <https://home.treasury.gov/news/press-releases/sm0406>; U.S. Department of State, Country Reports on Terrorism 2021, https://www.state.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/02/Country_Reports_2021_Complete_MASTER.no_maps-011323-Accessible.pdf.

³ *At UN, Iran Warns U.S. will not be spared if war in Gaza continues*, Reuters (Oct. 26, 2023), <https://www.reuters.com/world/middle-east/un-iran-warns-us-will-not-be-spared-if-war-gaza-continues-2023-10-26/>.

⁴ Natasha Bertrand and Haley Britzky, *US Forces have been attacked at least 4 times since Sunday strikes in Syria* (Nov. 13, 2023), <https://www.cnn.com/2023/11/13/politics/us-forces-attacked-4-times-syria/index.html>.

no conditions on where this money must be kept, giving Tehran a direct line of access to cash that will allow them to continue fueling their proxy war against our allies.

Your continued pursuit of desperate diplomacy with our adversaries is reckless, and it raises serious questions about this administration's blatant disregard for our national security. Do you believe it is in the United States' best interest to appease Iran while ignoring their calls for the destruction of the U.S. and Israel? If the answer is no, then you cannot simultaneously deal direct support to them in any form. You must immediately rescind this waiver and prevent Iran's unrestricted access to these funds.

Sincerely,



Marsha Blackburn
United States Senator



John Thune
United States Senator



Pete Ricketts
United States Senator



Roger Marshall
United States Senator



Thom Tillis
United States Senator



Kevin Cramer
United States Senator



Dan Sullivan
United States Senator