

United States Senate

COMMITTEES:
COMMERCE, SCIENCE, AND TRANSPORTATION
FINANCE
JUDICIARY
VETERANS' AFFAIRS

October 13, 2023

VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

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

Dear Mr. President:

I write to you today to demand the immediate removal of Jake Sullivan as your National Security Advisor. Mr. Sullivan has routinely misled the entire government about the status of security threats around the world. Just eight days before Hamas launched their barbaric surprise attack against Israel, he stated, “the Middle East is quieter today than it has been in two decades.” Yet, to date, over 1,200 Israelis have been killed, over 150 hostages have been taken from the safety of their homes, and at least 27 Americans lives have been lost, with at least 14 Americans still missing. This is Jake Sullivan’s perception of a quiet Middle East. This is unacceptable.

Sullivan has been dead wrong on how to engage with Iran since his first day as National Security Advisor. His policies of appeasement toward Iran have only emboldened the world’s largest state sponsor of terrorism. Sullivan had direct influence in establishing the remarkably flawed 2015 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), commonly referred to as the Iran nuclear deal. Thankfully, this decision was later reversed, sparing the world from an expanded Iranian influence under this misguided policy that allowed Iran to continue to fund its terrorist proxies and build up its ballistic missile program. As your National Security Advisor, we have since seen Mr. Sullivan reinstitute many of the mistakes from the failed JCPOA. Easing sanctions against Iran and refusing to enforce others is not an effective solution, and this attack is clear evidence of that fact.

You simply cannot negotiate with the savages of the Iranian regime. The Iranian regime has no qualms with funding extremist terrorists, including Hamas, Islamic Jihad, and Hezbollah, all of which seek to destroy Israel. We have seen Iran-backed Hamas murder innocent civilians, we have evidence that Hamas has beheaded babies and burned Israelis alive, and we are all aware that they are taking hostages for rape, mutilation, and murder. Their actions directly mock every freedom-loving American. To stop their spread of influence throughout the region, we must immediately reverse course and reinforce our commitment on the sanctions levied against Iran. Anyone who thinks the appeasement of Tehran is an effective national security strategy must be removed for the sake of all Americans.

Sullivan’s deleterious mistakes with respect to Iran and Iran-backed Hamas only build on his earlier involvement in the administration’s disastrous withdrawal from Afghanistan. There, we stood by and watched the Taliban take over the country in less than two weeks. We cannot

have someone with his notable history of poor decision-making, and lack of critical insights, as the most senior advisor to the President on our nation's security matters. Continuing to do so is misguided. You said it yourself, Mr. President – the United States must stand with Israel. Leaving Jake Sullivan in his current position hinders both Israel's, as well as the United States', national security posture.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Marsha Blackburn". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent flourish at the end.

Marsha Blackburn
United States Senator