

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 15, 2013

President Barack Obama
The White House
Washington, DC

Dear Mr. President:

Over the last few weeks, we were assured that the Administration was pursuing an interim step agreement with Iran that would 1) freeze and set back Iran's nuclear program, and 2) not provide any significant sanctions relief to Iran. Those assurances appear inconsistent with reports of what the Administration actually offered Iran in Geneva last week.

Under the proposal reportedly on the table in Geneva, the United States would provide Iran with significant sanctions relief – valued at up to \$20 billion – and, in exchange, Iran would not be required to dismantle a single centrifuge, close a single facility or ship outside its borders a single kilogram of enriched uranium. Furthermore, the accord would allow Iran to continue working on a plutonium reactor, enriching uranium, manufacturing centrifuges, testing ballistic missiles, sponsoring terrorism and abusing the rights of its people. In short, the American people will facilitate the payment of \$20 billion in hard currency to the world's leading sponsor of terrorism and in return accept a *more* advanced and dangerous Iranian nuclear infrastructure.

Specifically, our concerns include but are not limited to:

The Arak Heavy Water Reactor. How can an agreement allow Iran to continue any work on its Arak heavy water reactor – work that is strictly prohibited by multiple United Nations Security Council resolutions? Once operational, this reactor could produce enough plutonium for two nuclear weapons each year, giving Iran a second path to a nuclear weapon. Due to construction delays, the Arak reactor is currently not scheduled to come online until the middle of next year – meaning Iran is not making any concession whatsoever by agreeing not to activate the reactor in the next six months. In short, accepting work on the Arak heavy water reactor during the next six months will in no way slow Iran's path to plutonium production.

The Enrichment of Uranium. No agreement should cede to Iran the right to enrich uranium nor allow Iran to continue enrichment at any level – Iran must suspend enrichment as required by United Nations Security Council resolutions. Based on Iran's current rate of production, 9,000 IR-1 centrifuges would produce 1,380kg of 3.5% enriched uranium over a six-month period – roughly the amount needed to produce one nuclear weapon. Iran is also reportedly demanding that the United States and our partners acknowledge its right to enrich under the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, a "right" that Administration officials previously testified to Congress does not exist. In short, if allowed to continue enrichment at low levels during the next six months, Iran will have another bomb's worth of enriched uranium and will claim implicit recognition of a "right to enrich."

The Centrifuges. No agreement should allow Iran to maintain its current number of installed centrifuges, nor should any agreement allow Iran to continue the manufacturing of centrifuges. If Iran is allowed to keep all of its installed centrifuges and simply promise not to use them all – or not to install more – nothing will have been done to shrink Iran’s nuclear breakout capability. According to the Institute for Science and International Security, thousands of currently installed centrifuges must be disabled or removed to set back Iran’s breakout timeline. Furthermore, without requiring Iran to declare its manufacturing facilities and allow international inspections at those sites, Iran could manufacture 3,000 new centrifuges over a six-month period – and have them ready to install in a matter of weeks. In short, if Iran is permitted to keep its installed centrifuges and manufacture more for the next six months, Iran will improve its nuclear breakout capability.

The Money Transfer. Under the proposal reportedly discussed in Geneva, the United States would waive or suspend sanctions on precious metals (valued at \$9.6 billion over six months), petrochemicals (valued at \$5-6 billion over six months) and the automotive sector (valued at more than \$1 billion over six months) – and repatriate \$3 billion in overseas-held funds back to Iran. But without any third-party monitoring or financial controls, these funds may be used to finance terrorism, develop ballistic missiles or brutalize the Iranian people. In short, this proposal hands over \$20 billion in hard currency to the world’s leading sponsor of terrorism.

Cooperation with the IAEA. Despite Iran's supposed agreement on November 11, 2013 to provide greater transparency about its nuclear activities to the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), after years of engagement, Iran continues to refuse to provide key answers regarding its past work on the weaponization of a nuclear device as well as provide access to facilities and individuals involved in that work. This is not a side issue to be relegated purely to discussions between Iran and the IAEA. In short, this issue goes to the heart of Iran's history of deception and must be part of any serious negotiation.

Mr. President, the United States cannot allow Iran to advance its nuclear infrastructure while undermining the sanctions pressure we worked so hard to build. Once our sanctions pressure is forfeited, the chances for diplomacy to succeed will diminish. Rather than forfeiting our diplomatic leverage, we should increase it by intensifying sanctions until Iran suspends its nuclear and ballistic missile programs in accordance with multiple Security Council resolutions. We intend to work with our colleagues to continue to increase pressure on Iran until they comply with all of their international obligations and abandon any effort to retain enrichment and reprocessing capabilities.

Time and again, you promised the American people that you are committed to preventing Iran from developing nuclear weapons. To achieve that goal, we urge you to reject any proposal that: 1) allows Iran to continue enriching uranium at any level; 2) allows Iran to continue working on the Arak heavy water reactor; 3) allows Iran to maintain its current level of installed centrifuges or to continue centrifuge manufacturing; and 4) accepts Iran’s refusal to provide the IAEA with access to information, facilities and individuals related to its past work on the weaponization of a nuclear device.

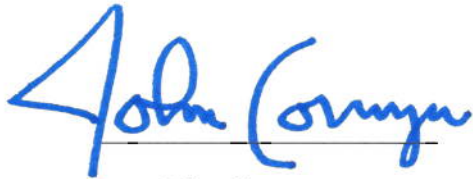
Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Mark Kirk". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left.

Mark Kirk

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Marco Rubio". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Marco Rubio

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "John Cornyn". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the left.

John Cornyn

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Kelly A. Ayotte". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline that extends to the right.

Kelly Ayotte