

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

July 12, 2016

The Honorable Kevin McCarthy  
Majority Leader  
H-107, The Capitol  
U.S. House of Representatives  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Mr. Leader:

We write to you regarding H.R. 5631. On the eve of the one-year anniversary of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), we must stand united in the common cause of enforcing Iran's compliance and stopping Iran's destabilizing, terrorist-supporting actions.

Over the past year, Iran has repeatedly shown that whatever forces of "moderation" were supposed to be empowered by the JCPOA remain sidelined amid a continued foreign policy of belligerence and hostility by the country's theocratic rulers. Iran's military tested ballistic missiles in defiance of U.N. Security Council Resolution 2231. Additionally, Iran continues to ship weapons and materiel to Hezbollah and to support the murderous Assad regime in Syria.

Meanwhile, Iran has continued to engage in other forms of provocative behavior. Iranian naval forces conducted live-fire exercises near U.S. warships on December 26 and unlawfully detained U.S. Navy sailors in January. Iran's leaders also continue to express vitriolic, anti-Semitic statements and threaten the existence of Israel, including the threat that Israel will not be around in twenty-five years when the JCPOA expires. Even after the JCPOA, it is clear that Iran remains a dangerous threat to our regional allies, particularly Israel, and to the United States directly.

In the past, Congress succeeded in pushing administrations of both parties to take a harder line against Iran by pursuing a bipartisan, unified approach on sanctions legislation. As noted in the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015, "the sanctions regime imposed on Iran by Congress is primarily responsible for bringing Iran to the table to negotiate on its nuclear program." Congress has a fundamental prerogative in addressing Iran's malfeasance.

Regrettably, the legislation you introduced late last week, H.R. 5631, undermines that approach. We, the signers of this letter, have always worked with you and your predecessors on bipartisan legislation to address the Iranian threat in a way that sends a strong signal of Congressional unity on this issue. Introducing a bill in the dead of night, without consultation with the

Minority, unfortunately turns what should be a bipartisan effort into an exercise in election-year politics that leaves Iran free to continue its malfeasance. Doing so prevents us from achieving what should be the real objective: halting Iran's dangerous actions.

We stand ready to work with you to impose significant costs on Iran for its continued belligerence, which undermines regional safety and security. Specifically, we urge the Majority to bring to the Floor immediately a clean bill to reauthorize the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996, which is set to expire this December. We believe such a reauthorization will garner strong bipartisan support.

We then look forward to working together with you on a bipartisan ballistic missile sanctions bill, one that does not include the unprecedented elimination of traditional prerogatives for the executive branch with respect to implementation. That bill should target entities involved in Iran's ballistic missile programs along with foreign entities that support or transact with those engaged in Iran's ballistic missile development efforts. It may take time to reach agreement, but we need a clear bipartisan statement to demonstrate to Iran that we in Congress stand together.

We look forward to discussing with you how best to achieve these objectives.

Sincerely,



STENY H. HOYER  
Democratic Whip



ELIOT ENGEL  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Foreign Affairs



NITA LOWEY  
Ranking Member  
Committee on Appropriations



THEODORE E. DEUTCH  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on the Middle East and  
North Africa  
Committee on Foreign Affairs