

11/12/13

Dear Colleague:

We hope you will join us in sending the following bipartisan letter to Majority Leader Reid and Republican Leader McConnell to encourage the Senate to take up tough sanctions against Iran. As negotiations in Geneva are underway, we feel it is important to keep the pressure on Iran to maximize U.S. leverage. Indeed, it is because of tough U.S. sanctions against Iran that Tehran has come to the negotiating table.

Security in the Middle East and around the world depends on strong U.S. leadership against a nuclear Iran. We invite you to join us in sending this letter to the Senate leadership. To sign on, please contact Andy Taylor with Rep. McCaul at Andy.Taylor@mail.house.gov by C.O.B. Wednesday, November 13.

Sincerely,

Michael T. McCaul
Member of Congress

Brad Sherman
Member of Congress

Peter J. Roskam
Member of Congress

Grace Meng
Member of Congress

Dear Majority Leader Reid and Republican Leader McConnell:

We urge you and your colleagues in the Senate to act swiftly to continue consideration of rigorous Iran sanctions legislation.

We believe that as the United States negotiates with the P5+1 group and Tehran, it is critical to maximize U.S. leverage against the Iranian regime. The possibility of tighter sanctions will enhance our leverage in the nuclear standoff between the Iran's Supreme Leader and the international community. Despite Hassan Rouhani's attempt to portray Iran's government in a new light, the objective of the Iranian regime remains the same: the pursuit of a nuclear weapons capability.

The House has already passed legislation with the support of 400 bipartisan Representatives to increase economic pressure on the Iranian regime as it develops its nuclear weapons program. For more than three months this legislation, the *Nuclear Iran Prevention Act*, has been pending in the Senate. Meanwhile, the Iranian government presses forward and each day the world becomes less safe.

While recent assessments of the progress of Iran's nuclear program vary — with some estimating that Iran weeks away from producing weapons-grade uranium — what is clear is that time is running short. Protracted negotiations may give Iran more time to spin its centrifuges, while the threat of enhanced sanctions holds the promise of compelling Iran to give up its ambitions.

While we support diplomatic efforts toward an Iran free of nuclear weapons and free of nuclear weapons breakout capability, the sanctions pressure must be maintained. Every day, existing sanctions may be weakened as Iran finds loopholes and business partners willing to evade existing sanctions.

Even Hassan Rouhani, the country's new president, bragged in 2006 that Iran had deceived European negotiators into talks while it continued to develop its nuclear program. We should ensure that tougher penalties be available should Tehran be found to be using the negotiations for stalling tactics.

The deliberative process in Congress is lengthy, and many steps remain before legislation on Iran would be sent to the President. We believe, therefore, that the Senate can continue the work necessary to develop sanctions legislation without fear of short-circuiting diplomacy.

Sincerely,