

**Read Out from the House Foreign Affairs Committee Hearing**  
*“Iran Nuclear Agreement: The Administration’s Case”*

- As part of the process established in the *Iran Nuclear Review Act*, the Committee heard testimony from Secretary of State John Kerry, Secretary of the Treasury Jack Lew, and Secretary of Energy Ernest Moniz.
- Members expressed bipartisan concern over the Administration’s decision to go to the UN for approval of its agreement before the American people’s representatives in Congress.
- Chairman Royce [voiced](#) the skepticism of many in Congress, asking if *“temporary constraints on Iran’s nuclear program worth the price of permanent sanctions relief?”*
- As Royce explained, *“If this agreement goes through, Iran gets a cash bonanza, a boost to its international standing, and a lighted path toward nuclear weapons. With sweeping sanctions relief, we have lessened our ability to challenge Iran’s conduct across the board. As Iran grows stronger, we will be weaker to respond.”*
- In highlighting this high cost, Members on both sides of the aisle expressed concern with the large-scale sanctions relief that Iran receives under this agreement—particularly the 11<sup>th</sup> hour concession to remove the UN embargos on arms and ballistic missiles. Yet, Secretary Kerry claimed that by agreeing to sunset these key non-nuclear restrictions in 5 and 8 years respectively, *“we won a victory.”* There is nothing positive about allowing Iran and its terrorist proxies increased access to deadly weapons.
- Secretary Kerry admitted that no one in the U.S Government has read the “side letters” between Iran and international inspectors governing access to Parchin, a military base where Iran is suspected of conducting bomb work. Such access—which Iran has blocked for years—is essential to understanding how long it would take Iran to rush to a bomb.
- Kerry declined to address an [AP report](#) that Iran may be allowed to collect samples at the site itself as part of the verification process—instead of allowing international inspectors the access that they have demanded for years.
- While Secretary Moniz testified that international inspectors would have access to suspicious sites in 24 days, Members made clear that—in light of Iran’s long history of stonewalling inspectors—Iran should not have almost a month to cover its tracks. As one Member pointed out, this process *“depends on Iran acting in good faith”* and not blocking inspectors as it is still doing at Parchin.
- In troubling testimony, when asked if the Administration would implement the law—by keeping sanctions in place if Congress overrode a veto and rejected the agreement—Kerry indicated that he would have to *“consult with the President.”* The Secretary also testified that the agreement was not submitted as a treaty because it would be too difficult politically. Kerry said, *“it’s become physically impossible...You can’t pass a treaty anymore.”*

In anticipation of a vote on the agreement in early September, the Committee will continue to provide Members with background materials and analysis over the August recess.

Videos and transcripts are available [here](#).





**Read Out from the House Foreign Affairs Committee Hearing**  
*“Implications of a Nuclear Agreement with Iran—Part II”*

- Just hours after the Administration reached a nuclear agreement with Iran; the Committee held its second in a series of hearings to examine the implications of the agreement for the national security of the United States, our allies, and partners.
- Chairman Royce explained, *“The essence of this agreement is permanent concessions in exchange for temporary benefits, and that’s only if Iran doesn’t cheat, like it has in the past and as North Korea did.”*
- In urging Members to vote against the agreement, former Senator Joe Lieberman cited the central flaw in the agreement. Lieberman testified that: *“The agreement announced today, temporarily delays, but ultimately allows Iran to become a nuclear weapons state and indeed legitimizes Iran’s possession of the nuclear capabilities that it has built up, much of it covertly in violation of international law and in breach of its obligations under the Nonproliferation Treaty.”*
- Longtime Iran expert Ray Takeyh explained: *“...this deal may not rest on trust, but it does rest on hope, the hope that a decade from now, the Islamic Republic will be a different regime, a benign power, at ease with global norms, inclined to live at peace with its neighbors. A power that is no longer fueled, animated, by anti-Americanism and anti-Zionism...After watching the Islamic Republic for two decades...in its own language, it is a hope that I have difficulty sharing.”*
- On inspections, former CIA director Michael Hayden warned that the deal has, *“taken [inspections] from the technical level and put it at the political level. And I just think that’s a formula for chaos, obfuscation, ambiguity, doubt...”*
- Even the minority witness, Ambassador Nicholas Burns, who testified in support the agreement said, *“I would have preferred an entirely different set of parameters for this negotiation ...I would have rather seen 20 years, 30 years, rather than 10 if you ask me.”*
- Despite his support, Burns also testified, *“I wouldn’t say that if you are opposed to this deal that somehow leads to war. I think that’s false”* while admitting, *“I think it’s likely that Iran will try to cheat...I think that’s just an objective statement.”* Burns also urged the White House to end the “war of words” with Israel.
- Many members were dismayed over the decision to remove the UN embargo on conventional weapons and I.C.B.M.s. As Secretary of Defense Carter testified just last week: *“The reason that we want to stop Iran from having an I.C.B.M. program is that the ‘I’ in I.C.B.M. stands for ‘intercontinental,’ which means having the capability of flying from Iran to the United States.”* And as we know, countries build I.C.B.M.s for one reason—to deliver nuclear weapons.

As Congress reviews the agreement, the Committee will soon hear from Secretary Kerry. Throughout the review period the Committee will continue to provide Members with insights and other background materials, as they review the agreement in anticipation of a vote.

Videos and transcripts are available [here](#).

