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October 14, 2013

The President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As the United States prepares to engage in renewed nuclear diplomacy with Iran, it is my hope that your Administration will regularly consult with Congress regarding critical aspects of Iran's nuclear program, which must be addressed to avoid an outcome in which a nuclear-armed Iran in fact becomes more likely. While our country faces few national security challenges as grave as Iran's march toward a nuclear weapon, negotiations with Iran must be entered into only with the highest degree of caution over that government's intentions.

As you are well aware, despite a decade of diplomacy with Iran, the United States, our allies and other parties have unfortunately failed to halt its nuclear program. Indeed, Iran's nuclear program has managed to make dramatic advances. If current negotiations are to have a chance of being successful, your Administration and Congress must work in unison. In that spirit, please allow me to offer a few observations.

No issue will be harder to negotiate with the Iranian regime than the status of its uranium enrichment program. Of course, this is the key technology needed on Iran's path to developing a nuclear bomb. Not long ago, we counted Iranian centrifuges in the hundreds. Today, that number is in the several *thousands*, with faster and more powerful centrifuges being installed.

Given the sensitivity surrounding this technology, ten years ago the world began to demand that Iran suspend all of its uranium enrichment activities. Multiple U.N. Security Council resolutions have reiterated the demand that all enrichment activities be suspended, regardless of their purpose. Similarly, the international demand that Iran verifiably halt its activities related to reprocessing is more than a decade old. Plutonium separated from a reactor's spent nuclear fuel is another path to a nuclear bomb.

Of course, Iran will continue to claim that the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) grants it the "right" to enrich uranium and reprocess plutonium. Yet, we must remember – and insist – that the Treaty was designed to *stop* the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Simply because a nuclear activity can be used for peaceful purposes does not mean that an NPT member has an unconditional right to pursue or acquire it, let alone a

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country that has actively deceived the international community and violated its NPT-required International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) nuclear safeguard agreements. As you have said, Mr. President, "We respect the right of the Iranian people to access peaceful nuclear energy." Clearly, this commitment can be upheld, without permitting Iran to retain and access technology that could be used to advance a weapons program.

Any negotiation should require Iran to fully comply with its international obligations to establish complete and total transparency in its nuclear program. As a first step, Iran should ratify and fully implement the IAEA's "Additional Protocol" agreement, thereby empowering international inspectors to gain a more complete picture of Iran's nuclear program. But given Iran's record of clandestine activity and intransigence, more should be asked, such as near-real time monitoring, zero-notice inspections and complete disclosure of past work on nuclear weaponization.

Even then, it is questionable that any level of inspection and verification measures could adequately assure the world that Iran is not pursuing a nuclear weapons program. As a respected former weapons inspector has written, "The blunt truth is that weapons inspections simply cannot prevent a government in charge of a large country from developing nuclear weapons, when that government has decided to breach its obligation not to." Indeed, a top State Department negotiator told Congress this month that, "deception is part of [Iran's] DNA." This challenge is all the more reason to obtain maximum commitments to transparency by Iran.

With these facts in mind, it is clear that U.S. negotiators face an uphill battle. As such, it is critical that we maximize our negotiating leverage through the immediate implementation of additional economic sanctions. Your assistance in securing Senate passage of H.R. 850, the bipartisan legislation I authored and that the House of Representatives adopted overwhelmingly, would dramatically increase the financial pressure on the Iranian regime, and thereby strengthen the hand of U.S. negotiators. International sanctions have forced Iran to the negotiating table; we should build upon this success with additional measures to compel Iran to make meaningful and lasting concessions. Additionally, you must continue to make clear that all options remain on the table to prevent Iran from achieving a nuclear weapons capability.

Finally, negotiations should not be allowed to become a delaying tactic used by the Iranian regime to facilitate its development of a nuclear weapons capability. Negotiations should also not lead to sanctions relief unless Iran has taken verifiable and irreversible action to stop its enrichment and plutonium-related activities. The current sanctions regime, as you know, has been painstakingly established and would be difficult to reconstitute once weakened or removed. We must guard against trading off the considerable economic pressure we have built for tactical and deceptive Iranian "concessions."

I look forward to working with you to see that Iran is prevented from acquiring a nuclear weapons capability.

Sincerely,



EDWARD R. ROYCE
Chairman