



FOREIGN AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

EST. 1812

HR 5931 - No More Cash Ransoms to Iran

That Iran received the initial payment – in cash – on the same day it released American hostages was a just coincidence, the White House would have us believe. I don't think so.

– Chairman Royce

Background: On the day his flawed nuclear deal with Iran was implemented, President Obama announced that the United States and Iran had agreed to a prisoner exchange that would see Iran release several innocent American hostages in exchange for the United States granting clemency to and releasing seven Iranians serving sentences or awaiting trial for serious crimes—such as aiding Iran's illegal weapons programs.

In that same speech, the President announced that [the United States would pay Iran \\$1.7 billion](#) to settle a dispute over an aborted arms sale that had dragged on since the radicals that rule Iran seized power in 1979. The White House rejected concerns that this settlement amounted to a ransom for the release of the American hostages and refused to answer questions from Congress.

When news broke that [the United States secretly paid Iran](#)—the world's leading state sponsor of terror—the first part of this settlement—*\$400 million in cash*—just as the hostages were released, it became clear that the President had rejected [the advice of his own Justice Department](#) and ignored a longstanding U.S. policy not to release prisoners or pay ransom in exchange for the return of Americans held hostage abroad. Even [the State Department now admits this payment was “leverage”](#) for the release of American hostages.

The goal of our longstanding “no concessions” policy is to remove a key incentive for hostage takers to target Americans and deny terrorists and their sponsors the resources they need to conduct attacks. Not surprisingly, Iran has since taken several more Americans hostage and continues to fund terrorist groups that threaten U.S. interests and destabilize the Middle East.

This Bill:

- *Makes clear that the Obama Administration violated longstanding U.S. policy by releasing prisoners and paying ransom for the return of Americans held hostage by Iran.*
- *Prohibits all cash payments to Iran—period.*
- *Demands transparency on any future settlements with Iran—to ensure they are not used to pay ransom.*