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Mr. Steve Witkoff
U.S. Special Envoy to the Middle East
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

April 16, 2025

Dear Mr. Witkoff,

I write today to express concern with any attempt to broker a deal with Iran that fails to fully dismantle its nuclear program. As you rightly point out, “Iran must stop and eliminate its nuclear enrichment and weaponization program.” I urge you to steadfastly uphold this position as a redline for any future agreement with the Iranian regime on behalf of the United States.

During your Fox News appearance on Monday, April 14th, you seemed to express support for allowing Iran to enrich uranium up to 3.67%. You also stated that any agreement would have an accompanied verification regime. This idea is all too familiar and calls back to President Obama’s Iran Deal, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), which allowed for similar enrichment levels as well as monitoring and verification provisions.

Plain and simple, the JCPOA was a disaster. And any revert back to a similar deal will have the same detrimental effects. At best, JCPOA merely delayed — it did not stop — the Iranian regime’s nuclear advancements. In exchange for limited, time bound checks, JCPOA lifted sanctions on Iran that allowed the regime to raise money to fund their terrorist activities and weapons proliferation in the Middle East and beyond. This includes the missiles and drones that Iranian proxies have used to target U.S. service members. President Trump rightfully withdrew the United States from JCPOA during his first term and worked to undo the great harm it elicited.

Today, despite the 3.67% enrichment cap set by JCPOA, the regime continues to enrich uranium at near weapons grade — levels which simply have no justifiable civilian purpose. In recent years, Iran has also installed an increasing number of advanced centrifuges at its nuclear facilities, while simultaneously curtailing the International Atomic Energy Agency’s ability to effectively perform its verification and monitoring responsibilities inside Iran. This is not a regime that can be trusted to retain enrichment capabilities as these actions show.

“Peace through strength” and “maximum pressure” require the complete dismantling of Iran’s nuclear and missile programs, as well as the full implementation of sanctions on Iran and Iran’s

enablers. Anything less would be appeasement and a betrayal to U.S. national security interests and the security of our partners in the region, like Israel and Saudi Arabia.

As you continue to negotiate with the regime, I urge you to keep these points in mind. A return to the JCPOA or a similar arrangement will both hurt our long-term goals in the Middle East and enable the Iranian regime to further develop and fund its malign activities. The stakes could not be higher.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Michael Lawler", with a stylized flourish at the end.

Michael V. Lawler

Member of Congress

Chairman of the Middle East and North Africa Subcommittee