

JEFFERSON VAN DREW
SECOND DISTRICT, NEW JERSEY



WASHINGTON OFFICE
2447 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE
BUILDING
WASHINGTON, DC 20515
(202) 225-6572

MAYS LANDING OFFICE
5914 MAIN STREET SUITE 103
MAYS LANDING, NJ 08330
(609) 625-5008

Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

October 15, 2021

The Honorable Merrick Garland
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530-0001

Dear Attorney General Garland,

Three months ago, we sent you a letter regarding our concerns with the Department of Justice (DOJ) allowing Kaveh Afrasiabi, a defendant being tried for acting as an unregistered agent of Iran, to delay his court hearings on multiple occasions at his request. Since we sent that letter, and while we have patiently awaited a response, we have learned that Afrasiabi has again asked for and received another postponement of his hearing that was scheduled for December 1st, 2021. This is deeply troubling.

In his request, Afrasiabi stated that he needs more time to “review the tens of thousands of discovery material submitted to him on October 5th, 2021” and that he has “received the written consent of the opposing side to this request.” While Afrasiabi claims that he would need months to review all of the new information presented to him, we believe that he is abusing our judicial process because he has requested postponement of his hearing multiple times now. We are disappointed to see the DOJ again grant him this privilege and encourage the department to oppose any future requests of this nature.

As we stated in our July 14th, 2021 letter, Afrasiabi is not a friend of the United States. He was arrested for pretending to be an unbiased source of information on Iran, but was instead secretly being paid by the Iranian regime to lobby propaganda to journalists, Members of Congress, and other influential figures.¹ Given the increasing tension between the United States and Iran, we are concerned that Afrasiabi is being used by the Iranian regime as a political tool for backdoor negotiations.

¹ <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/political-scientist-author-charged-acting-unregistered-agent-iranian-government>

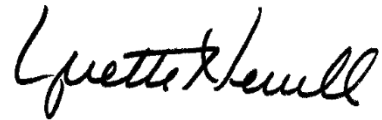
Just two weeks after we sent you our July 14th letter, the United States and Iran backed out of indirect nuclear discussions, which had already lasted six rounds. Even though this would be unconstitutional, Iran's latest demand is that the United States agree to require United Nations approval for the U.S. to withdraw from the deal in the future. Iran has no respect for our institutions or our constitution, and we cannot allow its oppressive government to exert any influence on our great nation. Like we stated in our previous letter, it is imperative that the DOJ send a stern message to Iran and other adversaries that the United States will not tolerate any efforts to undermine our democracy.

We look forward to the department's immediate action on Afrasiabi's case. To reiterate, we strongly encourage the DOJ to not allow him to postpone his hearing anymore, and believe he deserves to be punished to the fullest extent of the law. If any of our offices can be of assistance, please call us at (202) 225-6572.

Sincerely,



Jefferson Van Drew
Member of Congress



Yvette Herrell
Member of Congress



Eric A. "Rick" Crawford
Member of Congress