

# Congress of the United States

## Washington, D.C. 20515

President Joseph R. Biden  
White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

September 27, 2023

Dear President Biden,

On September 17, 2023, the *Tehran Times*, a regime-affiliated newspaper in Iran, [published](#) an audiotape of the White House Coordinator for the Middle East and North Africa Brett McGurk in a private meeting discussing national security options towards Iran. A few weeks earlier, on August 27, the *Tehran Times* also [published](#) what it claimed were “sensitive but unclassified” U.S. government documents relating to the revocation of the security clearance of Special Envoy for Iran Rob Malley, who is currently on leave. This was not the first time that the *Tehran Times* had published information regarding the suspension of Special Envoy Malley’s security clearance.

If the published documents are authentic, this may indicate that Islamic Republic’s intelligence apparatus has been able somehow to obtain access to restricted U.S. State Department emails or government servers, which would constitute a significant security breach of U.S. government property by a foreign adversary. Alternatively, this could mean that U.S. government employees leaked restricted and sensitive government documents. According to the State Department’s Foreign Affairs Manual, such “sensitive but unclassified” documents “require administrative control and protection from public or other unauthorized disclosure for public reasons.”

Either possibility is gravely concerning.

We are also dismayed that, despite repeated Congressional inquiries into the circumstances that led to the suspension of Special Envoy for Iran Robert Malley’s security clearance, Members of Congress have obtained more information from the pages of the *Tehran Times* than from U.S. government briefings.

We therefore request your administration provide answers to the following questions, in either classified or unclassified form:

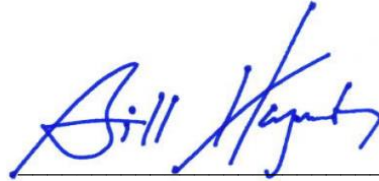
- 1) Can you please confirm whether the audiotape published on September 17<sup>th</sup> and the “sensitive but unclassified” documents published on August 27<sup>th</sup> by the *Tehran Times* are authentic?
- 2) If the audio and documents are authentic, please provide security assessment on how the *Tehran Times* obtained them.
- 3) Was Special Envoy for Iran Robert Malley involved in the chain of custody of the “sensitive but unclassified” U.S. government documents that were ultimately published by the *Tehran Times*?

- 4) Were any of the non-governmental persons referenced by the *Tehran Times*—including Trita Parsi, Ali Vaez, and Vali Nasr—involved in chain of custody of the U.S. documents that were ultimately published?
- 5) Please describe the steps your Administration is taking to prevent further leaks of information to the Iranian regime? Which elements of the U.S. government have you tasked with this responsibility?

Sincerely,



Kevin Hern (R-OK)  
Chairman, Republican Study Committee



Bill Hagerty (R-TN)  
United States Senator



Joe Wilson (R-SC)  
Chairman, RSC National Security Task Force