

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20510

July 31, 2024

Vice President Kamala D. Harris
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Vice President Harris,

We write to express concern about your national security advisor Mr. Philip Gordon's connections to Ms. Ariane Tabatabai, a senior Department of Defense official who was reportedly involved in an Iranian government operation to expand Tehran's soft power in the United States. During negotiations over the failed Iran nuclear deal, Ms. Tabatabai reportedly was a founding member of the Iran Experts Initiative (IEI), a group of policy analysts in America led by senior Iranian Foreign Ministry officials to propagate Iran's objectives during the nuclear deal negotiations and bolster Tehran's reputation.

Before joining your office, Mr. Gordon co-authored at least three opinion pieces with Ms. Tabatabai blatantly promoting the Iranian regime's perspective and interests. In a March 2020 piece, Mr. Gordon and Ms. Tabatabai claimed continued sanctions on Iran would create "catastrophe" in the Middle East. In another, they wrote sanctions could lead to new Iranian efforts to "lash out with attacks on its neighbors, and on Americans and American interests in the Middle East." Each prediction was as wrong, as it was biased in favor of Tehran.

Mr. Gordon was also closely associated with the National Iranian American Council (NIAC), another Iranian influence organization that allegedly collaborates with Tehran. He spoke at the NIAC's Leadership Conference in both 2014 and 2016.

The Biden-Harris Administration is no stranger to Iran accommodators, appeasers, and accomplices. Ms. Tabatabai remains gainfully employed in the Defense Department, helping oversee sensitive special operations. The FBI is investigating your former Special Envoy for Iran Robert Malley for passing classified intelligence to Tehran and your Special Envoy Amos Hochstein allegedly passed intelligence about Israeli airstrikes to Hezbollah potentially as recently as this weekend.

We request you provide answers to the following questions no later than August 9, 2024:

1. When you hired Mr. Gordon, were you aware of his connections with Ariane Tabatabai, the IEI, and the NIAC?
2. Did Mr. Gordon undergo security screening and receive a security clearance when you hired him? Does he have an active security clearance?
3. Did you request further investigation into Mr. Gordon when Ms. Tabatabai's connections to the Iranian Foreign Ministry were revealed in September 2023? Did Mr. Gordon admit and report his ties to this individual?
4. Have you or Mr. Gordon met with other members of the IEI, including Ali Vaez? Have you met with Ms. Tabatabai personally?
5. As the Vice President do you support Ms. Tabatabai's continued employment at the Department of Defense?
6. As the Vice President what specific actions will you take to address the issue of Iranian sympathizers, aside from yourself, within the Administration?

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Tom Cotton
United States Senator



Elise M. Stefanik
Member of Congress