

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

August 1, 2013

The Honorable John Kerry
Secretary of State
U.S. Department of State
2201 C Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Mr. Secretary:

We write to formally express our deep concerns that the State Department failed to fully analyze and assess Iranian involvement in the Western Hemisphere and produce a strategy to address Iran's growing presence and activity, as required by Public Law No: 112-220.

While both the Department of Defense and intelligence community have sounded serious alarms about Iran's influence in the Western Hemisphere, the State Department's recent assessment in the required report to Congress significantly downplayed the threat, citing Iran's activity is "waning." It is stunning that although Iran has publicly declared its commitment and priority of "all-out cooperation with Latin America countries," the Administration refuses to take note.

This Administration produced a report that neglected the input of our foreign allies in the region, and it did not meet the intent of the legislation to address this threat from Iran in a comprehensive and coordinated way. Further, the report did not consider all the facts and ignored the recent findings from the General Prosecutor of the 1994 Argentine Israelite Mutual Association (AMIA) Case, Mr. Alberto Nisman's investigation.

In stark contrast to the State Department's assessment, Nisman's investigation revealed that Iran has infiltrated for decades large regions of Latin America through the establishment of clandestine intelligence stations and is ready to exploit its position to "execute terrorist attacks when the Iranian regime decides to do so." Mr. Nisman's investigation found that not only was Iran the mastermind behind the 1994 AMIA bombing, Iran was also the "main sponsor" of an attempted attack on American soil in 2007 to blow up the John F. Kennedy airport in Queens, NY.

As you know, Congress has focused extensively on activities of both Iran and Hezbollah in the Western Hemisphere. Several House and Senate hearings have been held, Members of Congress have traveled to the region to investigate for ourselves if reports of Iranian activity in Latin America were true, and Congressional reports outlining the threat have been issued. These actions culminated in the passage of the bipartisan, bicameral "Countering Iran in the Western Hemisphere Act," which became Public Law No: 112-220.

Based on sincere Congressional concern evidenced by hearings, reports, legislation, and today's activity in the House Foreign Affairs Committee, we write to gain responses from you to the below questions:

1. Recent Congressional hearings have highlighted Iran's steady patience in building networks within the Western Hemisphere, its ability to penetrate countries through mosques, embassies,

cultural centers, and student recruitment in Latin America to travel to Iran for training. How do you plan to interact with allies in the hemisphere to ascertain a full understanding of Iranian activity in the hemisphere?

2. Iran and its network of Hezbollah, Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC), Qods Force, and Ministry of Intelligence and Security (MOIS) operatives possess the ability to obtain fraudulent passport documentation, cooperate closely with drug cartels and criminal networks in the hemisphere, and exploit free trade zones and loose border security measures. How do you plan to address these security loopholes to ensure Iranian operatives are not crossing U.S. borders onto American soil?
3. What is the connection between Argentina's Fabricaciones Militares (FM) and recently sanctioned Compania Anonima Venezolana de Industrias Militares (CAVIM) in Venezuela? Is there a review in place to sanction Argentina's FM for colluding with CAVIM with the ultimate goal of providing weapons to sanction starved Iran?
4. How do you rationalize your report to Congress that Iranian activity in the Hemisphere is waning when Argentina has signed a new bilateral agreement with Iran after trade between the nations increased from \$319 million to \$1.08 billion during Ms. Cristina Fernández de Kirchner's presidency?
5. What additional steps are you taking to address Venezuela's flagrant response to continue trading with Iran despite U.S. sanctions? In addition to Argentina, what other nations are using Venezuela as a proxy to trade with Iran?
6. In light of the recent information from Alberto Nisman and from testimony in recent Congressional hearings, what is the final State Department strategy to address Iran's growing activities in the region evidenced by growing ties to Cuba, Venezuela, Argentina, Bolivia, Ecuador, and Nicaragua? What is the strategy to address threats to U.S. energy security and border security from Iranian efforts?

It is our belief that the impact of countries in the Western Hemisphere deepening their relations with the world's largest state sponsor of terrorism has direct economic as well as national security implications for American citizens. It is our request that each of the above questions is investigated and reported on to the fullest extent possible.

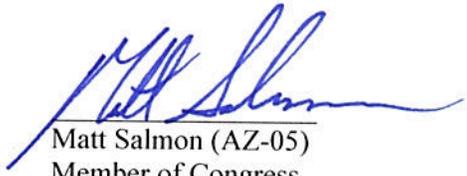
Due to the timely concerns addressed above, and the ongoing conversations through which we have engaged with you over the past six months, we believe that it is reasonable and necessary to ask that you respond to our concerns within a 30 day time period.

Thank you for your serious and timely response to our concerns.

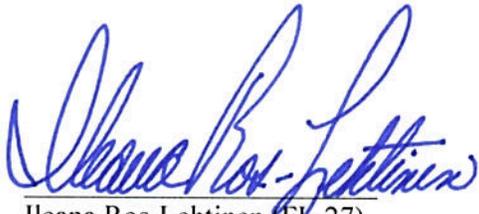
Sincerely,



Jeff Duncan (SC-03)
Member of Congress



Matt Salmon (AZ-05)
Member of Congress



Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (FL-27)
Member of Congress



Michael McCaul (TX-10)
Member of Congress



Doug Lamborn (CO-05)
Member of Congress



Mario Diaz-Balart (FL-25)
Member of Congress



Chris Smith (NJ-04)
Member of Congress



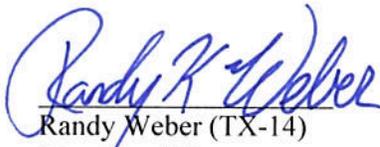
Lynn Westmoreland (GA-03)
Member of Congress



Trent Franks (AZ-08)
Member of Congress



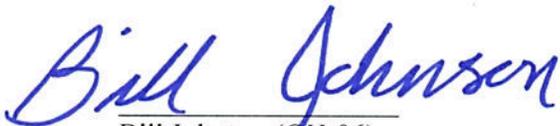
Mike Conaway (TX-11)
Member of Congress



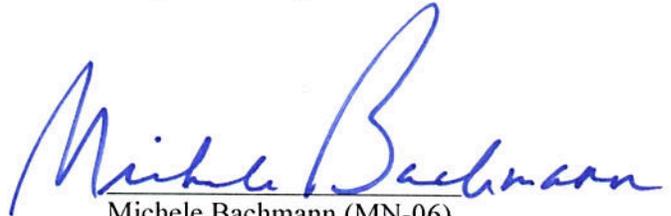
Randy Weber (TX-14)
Member of Congress



Mike Pompeo (KS-04)
Member of Congress



Bill Johnson (OH-06)
Member of Congress



Michele Bachmann (MN-06)
Member of Congress



Troy Radel (FL-19)
Member of Congress



Joe Wilson (SC-02)
Member of Congress



Steve Stockman (TX-36)
Member of Congress



Ted Poe (TX-02)
Member of Congress



Ed Royce (CA-39)
Member of Congress