

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 19, 2006

The President  
The White House  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

An Iranian nuclear weapons program would be a significant threat to international peace and security. Iran's refusal to conclusively explain or halt its uranium enrichment and other nuclear activities and its acquisition of ballistic missiles, coupled with the troubling rhetoric of its President, presents serious challenges to security in the Middle East and requires the United States to energetically pursue a diplomatic solution. The international community must not allow Iran to acquire nuclear weapons, and Iran must know that it ultimately will not succeed in undermining international peace and stability.

There are many questions about the exact nature of Iran's activities and intentions, the objectives of US policy, and your Administration's strategy, including the role of diplomacy, sanctions and the potential role of military force. In order to avoid repeating mistakes made in the run-up to the conflict in Iraq, we must have objective intelligence untainted by political considerations or policy preferences and a comprehensive debate in the Congress about the best short and long-term approaches to resolving the international community's differences with Iran.

As a first step in these efforts, we therefore request that you direct the intelligence community to provide Congress with an updated National Intelligence Estimate on Iran. In order to facilitate the public debate we ask that you provide, consistent with protecting sources and methods, an unclassified summary of the key judgments. The process should be started now to enable the Intelligence Community to have sufficient time to produce a comprehensive, well-thought out product.

Among other potential issues, we believe this assessment should explore:

1. Iran's foreign policy and regime objectives.
2. The current status of Iran's nuclear programs, including any current and projected capabilities to design, build and deploy a nuclear weapon, and the intelligence community's assessment of Iran's intentions regarding possible development of nuclear weapons, what motivations underlie those intentions, and what might cause those intentions to change.
3. Iran's military and defense capabilities, including any other weapons of mass destruction programs and their delivery systems.
4. Iran's relationship with terrorist organizations, its use of terrorist organizations in furtherance of its foreign policy objectives, and what might cause Iran to reduce or end these relationships.

5. The prospects for support from the international community for various potential courses of action, including diplomacy, sanctions, and military action.
6. Iran's expected reaction to a range of diplomatic, economic, and military options available to the United States and the international community, including an assessment of what steps are most likely to successfully influence Iran's objectionable policies.
7. The level of popular and elite support within Iran for that country's nuclear ambitions and for the Iranian regime and its policies, and prospects for reform and political change within Iran.
8. Popular and elite Iranian views of the United States, including views of direct discussions with or normalization of relations with the United States, and views of other key states involved in nuclear diplomacy with Iran.
9. The likely consequences of military action against Iran's nuclear weapons program or other regime interests.
10. The confidence level of key judgments, the quality of the sources of intelligence on Iran, the nature and scope of any intelligence gaps, and any significant alternative views.

We hope that such an updated intelligence estimate can be provided at the earliest opportunity. We also hope that you and other Administration officials will take the opportunity in the coming weeks to provide members of Congress and the American people a full overview of your strategy on Iran.

Sincerely,



Harry Reid  
Democratic Leader



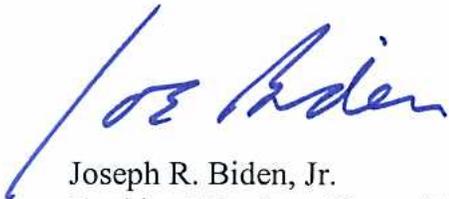
John D. Rockefeller IV  
Vice Chairman, Select Committee  
on Intelligence



Richard Durbin  
Assistant Democratic Leader



Carl Levin  
Ranking Member, Committee on  
Armed Services



Joseph R. Biden, Jr.  
Ranking Member, Committee  
on Foreign Relations