## Congress of the United States Washington, DC 20515

May 20, 2019

President Donald J. Trump The White House 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue N.W. Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

At a time of grave insecurity in the Middle East, we are deeply concerned about the role that terrorist and extremist groups and U.S. adversaries continue to play, particularly in Syria. As some of our closest allies in the region are being threatened, American leadership and support are as crucial as ever. To this end, we recommend several specific steps to advance our regional security priorities, including assisting our ally, Israel, in defending itself in the face of growing threats, including on its northern border.

Pockets of ungoverned space have allowed terrorist groups, such as ISIS, Al-Qaeda, and their affiliates, to keep parts of Syria in their stranglehold. These groups' ability to recruit, propagandize, and grow is alarming. Though their main purpose now may be to fight inside Syria, they retain the ability and will to plan and implement attacks against Western targets, our allies and partners, and the U.S. homeland. The United States has an interest in preventing these terrorist organizations from solidifying their foothold in the Middle East, which they would undoubtedly use to further destabilize the region, thereby undermining American interests.

The region has also been destabilized by the Iranian regime's threatening behavior. In Syria, Iran is working to establish a permanent military presence that can threaten our allies. In the past year alone, an Iranian-armed drone infiltrated Israeli airspace and the IRGC fired dozens of missiles toward Israel from Syria. Additionally, Iran continues its program to pursue a direct overland route from Iran to Lebanon. That connection would better facilitate Iran's supplying of Hezbollah terrorists and other Iranian-backed militias with deadly weapons. While our nation has encouraged more stable and inclusive political systems in the Middle East, the regime in Tehran has spread its influence and destabilized its neighbors for its own gain.

Like Iran, Russia is also working to secure a permanent presence in Syria, beyond its naval facility at Tartus. Russia has changed the arc of Syria's civil war at the expense of Syria's people by employing Russian troops, aircraft, and diplomatic protection to ensure the survival of the Assad regime. Furthermore, in providing Damascus with advanced weapons like the S-300 anti-aircraft system, Moscow is complicating Israel's ability to defend itself from hostile action

emanating from Syria. Russia's destabilizing role only complements that of Iran – since Russia shows no willingness to expel Iranian forces from Syria.

Hezbollah now poses a more potent threat to Israel as well. From Lebanon, Hezbollah has aimed more than 100,000 rockets and missiles at Israel that are increasingly more precise and of longer-range, giving the terrorist group the capability to strike anywhere in Israel. Just a few weeks ago, the Wall Street Journal reported that a Hezbollah operative who is accused of killing five American soldiers in Iraq may now be setting up a terror network on the border between Israel and Syria. Israel also recently discovered and destroyed six Hezbollah tunnels that made their way into Israel from Lebanon, all while Hezbollah has increased its rhetoric about its intentions of kidnapping Israeli soldiers and civilians.

In order to limit the presence of terrorists and extremists, counter the activities of our adversaries, and strengthen Israel's security we urge you to advance our regional interests by implementing a strategy including the following elements:

- Underscore Israel's right to self-defense. It is longstanding U.S. policy to support Israel's ability to defend itself by itself and support its qualitative military edge. With the region in flux, it remains critical that we reiterate to both friend and foe in the region that we continue to support Israel's right to defend itself. We must also look for ways to augment our support in the context of the current 10-year Memorandum of Understanding between the United States and Israel and to ensure that Israel has access to the resources and materiel it needs to defend itself against the threats it faces on its northern border. The U.S. should continue to oppose international efforts to isolate and weaken Israel.
- Increase pressure on Iran and Russia with respect to activities in Syria. Working with our allies and partners, we urge you to maintain and increase pressure on Iran and Russia to constrain their destabilizing activities. America must continue economic and diplomatic efforts to counter Iran's support for Hezbollah and other terrorist groups as well as Russia's support for the brutal Assad regime. We encourage full implementation of sanctions authorized in the Countering America's Adversaries Through Sanctions Act (CAATSA), a broadly supported bipartisan bill that you signed into law. Clear and sustained American action and close coordination with our allies and partners can send an important message of resolve to malign actors in the region.
- Increase pressure on Hezbollah. By forcefully and fully implementing the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Act of 2015, the Hizballah International Financing Prevention Amendments Act of 2018, and other sanctions aimed at Hezbollah and those who fund it, America can reduce their ability to threaten and challenge Israel. Additionally, we must continue to press UNIFIL to carry out its U.N. Security Council mandate, including investigating and reporting the presence of arms and tunnels on Israel's border.

The conflict in Syria is complicated, and the potential solutions are not perfect, but our only choice is to advance policies that can stop the growing threats to U.S. interests, Israel, and regional security and stability. This strategy requires American leadership. We thank you for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,

Elist L. Engel

Chairman

House Committee on Foreign Affairs

AMES RISCH

Chairman

Senate Committee on Foreign Relations

MICHAEL T. McCAUL

Ranking Member

House Committee on Foreign Affairs

ROBERT MENENDE

Ranking Member

Senate Committee on Foreign

Relations

TED DEUTCH

Chairman

Subcommittee on the Middle East, North Africa, and International

Terrorism

Ranking Member

Subcommittee on the Middle East,

North Africa, and International

Terrorism

CHARLES E. SCHUMER Member of Congress Member of Congress PATT MURRAY JOHN THUNE Member of Congress Member of Congress JOHN BARRASSO DEBBIE STABENOW Member of Congress Member of Congress JONI ERNST MARK R. WARNER Member of Congress Member of Congress **ROY BLUNT** AMY KLOBUCHAR Member of Congress Member of Congre TAMMY BALDWIN JOE MANCHIN, III Member of Congress Member of Congress CHRIS VAN HOLLEN Member of Congress

STENY A. HOYER
Member of Congress

JAMES E. CLYBURN Member of Congress

HAKEEM JEFFRIES Member of Congress

BEN RAY LUJAN
Member of Congress

MARCO RUBIO BENJAMIN L. CARDIN Member of Congress Member of Congress Member of Congress Member of Congress CORYGARDNER CHRISTOPHER A. COONS Member of Congress Member of Congress MITT ROMNEY Member of Congress Member of Congress JOHNNY ISAKSON TIM KAINE Member of Congress Member of Congress **ROB PORTMAN** EDWARD J. MARK Member of Congress Member of Congress

JEFF MERKLEY
Member of Congress

Member of Congress

CORY BOOKER
Member of Congress

**BRAD SHERMAN** Member of Congress GREGORY W. MEEKS Member of Congress BIO SIRES Member of Congress GERALD E. COMPOLLY Member of Congress

KAREN BASS Member of Congress

WILLIAM R. KEATING Member of Congress

DAVID N. CICILLINE Member of Congress

Member of Congress

eve Chalot STEVE CHABOT Member of Congress

ADAM KINZINGER Member of Congress

LEE ZELDIN Member of Congress

ANN WAGNER Member of Congress

**BRIAN MAST** Member of Congress



Member of Congress

**DINA TITUS** Member of Congress

ADRIANO ESPAILLAT Member of Congress

TED W. LIEU Member of Congress

SUSAN WILD Member of Congress

DEAN PHILLIPS Member of Congress

COLIN ALLRED Member of Congress JOHN R. CURTIS

Member of Congress

KEN BUCK Member of Congress

**RON WRIGHT** 

Member of Congress

**GUY RESCHENTHALER** Member of Congress

Member of Congress

MICHAEL GUEST

Member of Congress

ANDY LEVIN Member of Congress Member of Congress

TOM MALINOWSKI

Member of Congress

JIM COSTA Member of Congress

VICENTE GONZALEZ Member of Congress

CHRISSY HOULAHAN Member of Congress

DAVID TRONE Member of Congress

JAN VARGAS

Member of Congress

TIM BURCHETT Member of Congress

Member of Congress Member of Congress MARSHA BLACKBURN SUSAN M. COLLINS Member of Congress Member of Congress LAMAR ALEXANDER JERRY MORAN Member of Congress Member of Congress ROGER F. WICKER KAMALA D. HARRIS Member of Congress Member of Congress OHN BOOZMAN DAN SULLIVAN Member of Congress Member of Congress ON TESTER AMESO ANKFORD Member of Congress Member of Congress KYRSTEN SINEMA Member of Member of Congress MARGARET WOOD HASSAN DOUG JON Member of Congress Member of Congress

DIANNE FEINSTEIN Member of Congress SHERROD BROWN Member of Congress	M. MICHAEL ROUNDS  Member of Congress  MARIA CANTWELL  Member of Congress
THOMAS R. CARPER Member of Congress	CATHERINE CONTEZ  MASTO  Momber of Congress
JOHN CORNYN Member of Congress	Member of Congress  Bill Cassiely, M.D.  BILL CASSIDY  Member of Congress
TAMMY DUCKWORTH Member of Congress	SHELDON WHITEHOUSE Member of Congress
Conday Hyde-Smith CODY Hyde-SMITH Member of Congress	RICHARD BLUMENTHAL Member of Congress
MAZIE K. HIRONO Member of Congress	TINA SMITH Member of Congress
GARY C. PETERS Member of Congress	ACK REED  Member of Congress

**BEN SASSE** Member of Congress Member of Congress SHELLEY MOORE CAPITO Member of Congress Member of songress JAMES M. INHOFE JOSH HAWLEY Member of Congress Member of Congress PATRICK J. TOOMEY MICHAEL F. BENNET Member of Congress Member of Congress TOM COTTON JOHN HOEVEN Member of Congress Member of Congress ROBERT P. CASEY, JR. KEVIN CRAMER Member of Congress Member of Congress JOHN KENNEDY **DEB FISCHER** Member of Congress Member of Congress DAVID PERDUE KIRSTEN E. GILLIBRAND

Member of Congress

Michael B. Enzi

MICHAEL B. ENZI Member of Congress

. . . .

comment.

Member of Congress **CHRIS PAPPAS** Member of Congress ANTHOMY BRINDISI Member of Congress JOHN YARMUTH lember of Congress ERIC SWALWELL Member of Cong AMIE RASKIN Member of Congress RALPH ABRAHAM, M.D. Member of Congress YLOUDERMILK Member of Congress

ANN MCLANE KUSTER Member of Congress TOM O'HALLERAN Member of Congress JEFFE ON VAN DREW Member of Congress MARIO DIAZ-BALART Member of Congress JODY B. HICE Member of Congress DAN CRENSHAW Member of Congress JACKIE WALORSKI Member of Congress

LANCE GOODEN

Member of Congress **BRUCE WESTERMAN** Member of Congress WILL HURD Member of Congress Member of Congress YVETTE D. CLARKE Member of Congress COLLIN C. PETERSON Member of Congress STEVEN PALAZZO Member of Congress

Member of Congress

Madeleine Dean MADELEINE DEAN Member of Congress Member of Congress JOE CUNNINGHAM Member of Congress Member of Congress ELIJAH CUMMINGS Member of Congress KEN CALVERT Member of Congress RICK CRAWFORD Member of Congress KATHERINE CLARK Member of Congress

DAVID P. ROE, M.D. DONALD M. PAYNE, JR. Member of Congress Member of Congress MARK AMODEI Member of Congress Member of Congress PETE AGUILAR RAJA KRISHNAMOORTHI Member of Congress Member of Congress BRADLEY BYRNE TED BUDD Member of Congress Member of Congress GREG STANTON BEN McADAMS Member of Congress Member of Congress ANNA G. ESHOO JOSH HARDER Member of Congress Member of Congress DANIEL KILDEE GARY PALMER Men ber of Congress Member of Congress PAUL MITCHELL IMY PANETTA ember of Congress Member of Congress

My When

JOSH GOTTHEIMER Member of Congress

CHARLIE CRIST
Member of Congress

Dal B. Demings

VAL BUTLER DEMINGS Member of Congress

HALEY STEVENS

Member of Congress

PETER KING
Member of Congress

MICHAEL DOYLE Member of Congress

ROCER MARSHALL Member of Congress

A. Jonata Jul Can

A. DONALD MCEACHIN Member of Congress

THOMAS SUOZZI
Member of Congress

SCOTT R. TIPTON Member of Congress

DAVID SCOTT Member of Congress

JOAN LEWIS

Member of Congress

JOSEPH P. KENNEDY, III Member of Congress

ANN KIRKPATRICK Member of Congress

WILLIAM TIMMONS Member of Congress

TOM EMMER
Member of Congress

ally-fire

ABBY FINKENAUER Member of Congress

ROSS SPANO Member of Congress

OREG TEOBE Member of Congress

JOE CUNNINGHAM
Member of Congress

ADRIAN SMITH Member of Congress

SUSIE LEE
Member of Congress

ELAINE G. LURIA
Member of Congress

MICHAEL WALTZU
Member of Congress

MIKE JOHNSON Member of Congress

11/24/2

ELISE M. STEFANIK
Member of Congress

GILBERT RAY CISNEROS, JR.

Member of Congress

MARTHA ROBY

Member of Congress

DAVID KUSTOFF
Member of Congress

PATRICK T. McHENRY Member of Congress LANGEVIN Member of Congress PRAVOS TOM GRAVES Member of Congress MICHAEL R. TURNER Member of Congress STEVE COHEN Member of Congress DAVID E. PRICE Member of Congress DIANA DEGETTE Member of Congress JERROLD L. NADLER Member of Congress

IJORDAN ember of Congress Member of Congres Member of Congress LUCILLE ROYBA ALLARD Member of Congress Member of Congress Member of Congress RICHARD HUDSON Member of Congress SEAN PATRICK MALONEY Member of Congress

PETE OLSON Member of Congress Member of Congress MARK MEADOWS Member of Gongress MICHAEL C. BURGESS, C. A. DUTCH RUPPERSBERGER Member of Congress Member of Congress H. MORGAN GATFITH TOM COLE Amber of Congress Member of Congress MAC THORNBERRY GRACE MENG Member of Congress Member of Congress STEVE KING GUS M. BILIRAKI Member of Congress Member of Congress No BILL FLORES JEFF DUNCAN Member of Congress Member of Congress BLAINE LUETKEMEYER Member of Congress Member of Congress

STEVE STIVERS
Member of Congress

VICKY HARTZLER
Member of Congress

CHRIS STEWART
Member of Congress

MO BROOKS
Member of Congress

TIM WALBERG
Member of Gongress

CHRIS COLLINS
Member of Congress

IULIA BROWNLEY
Member of Congress

ADAM B. SCHIFF
Member of Congress

SCOTT DESJARLAIS
Member of Congress

CAROLYN B. MALONEY
Member of Congress

Member of Congress

Member of Congress

SUZAN DELBENE Member of Congress

DAVID B. McKINLEY, P.E.

DORIS MATSUI
Member of Congress

HARLEY ROUDA

LOIS FRANKEL

Member of Congress

SANFORD D. BISHOP, JR. Member of Congress  STEVE WOMACK Member of Congress	BILL PASCRELL, JR. Member of Congress  ASON SMITH Member of Congress
BRAD WENSTRUP Member of Congress	VERN BUCHANAN Member of Congress
KURT SCHRADER Member of Congress	EARL L. "BUDDY" CARTER Member of Congress
BRETT GUTHRIE Member of Congress	KATHLEEN M. RICE Member of Congress
ALMA ADAMS Member of Congress	DONALD NORCROSS Member of Congress
Tony Cardenas TONY CARDENAS Member of Congress	DAVID ROUZER Member of Congress
ALEX X. MOONEY Member of Congress	Bonnie Watson COLEMAN Member of Congress



DANIEL W. LIPASKI Member of Congress

AIME HERRERA BEUTLER
Member of Congress

BILL FOSTER
Member of Congress

JOHN GARAMENDI Member of Congress

JOHN P. SARBANES Member of Congress Bill Johnson

BILL JOHNSON
Member of Congress

MARC VEASEY Member of Cons

ALCEE L. HASTINGS Member of Congress

JAN SCHAKOWSKA Maynber of Congress

PAUL D. TONKO Member of Congress

DOUGLAMBORN Member of Congress Ed Case

**ED CASE** 

Member of Congress

**BOB GIBBS** 

Member of Congress

Member of Congress

Member of Congress

VIRGINIA FOXX
Member of Congress

NORMA J. TORRES Member of Congress

Member of Congress

JOHN KATKO

Member of Congress

KENNY MARCHANT Member of Corg ess

MIKE ROGERS Member of Congress

RICHARD NEAL Member of Congress

**AUSTIN SCOTT** Member of Congress

FREDERICA S. WILSON Member of Congress

FRANK LUCAS Member of Congress

TOMREED

Member of Congress

EMANUEL CLEAVER, II Member of Congress

MARKWAYNE MULLIN

KELLY ARMSTRONG Member of Congress
SPARY SPARY
KEVIN BRADY Member of Congress
Delue
DENVER RIGGLEMAN Member of Congress
JODEY ARRINGPON Member of Congress
CATHY McMORRIS RODGERS Member of Congress
DEBBIE LESKO Member of Congress
KATIE PORTER Member of Congress
KIM SCHRIER, M.D. Member of Congress

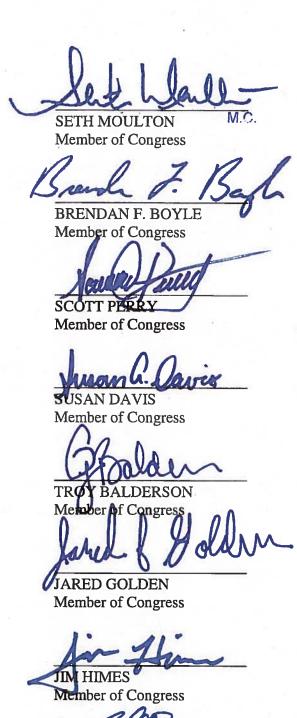
Ben Cline BEN CLINE Member of Congress
1. 41
Jan John
KEVIN HERN Member of Congress
Wellioer of Congress
KAY OKANOER TEATY
Member of Congress
11/1
M. when forguests
A. DREW FERGUSON, IV
Member of Congress
Delkie Wasserman Schultz Member of Congress
Janus Comer
JAMES COMER Member of Congress
Weinder of Congress
K Jel R
DONALD S. BEYER
Member of Corgress
V) ()
N PX
DAVID P. JOYCY
Member of Congress

TIM RYAN Member of Congres RUBEN GALLEGO Member of Congress BERT B. ADERHOLT Member of Congress MIKIE SHERRILL Member of Congress JENNIFER WEXTON Member of Congress GREG GIANFORTE Member of Congress **CONOR LAMB** Member of Congress

wite

JOHN ROSE

Member of Congress



ANTHONY G. BROWN Member of Congress

	1/-//
	Vanlayor
	VAN TAYLOR
	Member of Congress
_	$\rightarrow 0 V()$
Y	- Mark Caro
	John Street
	DEREK KILMER
	Member of Congress
	0. 1.
	WO 41 -00
	Alen Hotem
	GLENN GROTHMAN
	Member of Congress
	1 1010
_	AJULXA
	0
	SALUD CARBAJAL
	Member of Congress
	11.6
	Milia
ø	
	MIKE BOST
	Member of Congress
	Kon Kandl
	RON KIND
	Member of Congress
	Wichioci of Congress
	Van Dolo
	DARREN SOTO
	Member of Congress
	1
	11 , A
	many
	ANDY KIM

Member of Congress

AL LAWSON JR. Member of Congress DARIN LAHOOD Member of Congress LIZZIE FLETCHER Member of Congress BRADLEY S. SCHNEIDER Member of Congress OHN B. LARSON Member of Congress DOUG COLLINS Member of Congress DUSTY JOHNSON Member of Congress

RUSS FULCHER
Member of Congress

$\Omega$ $\Omega$ .
Moris Crows
ANOTE CRAIG
Member of Congress
5/ 12 VId.
Member of Congress
/ 1/
( //2
JIM COOPER
Member of Congress
January 1
frank / / /
JENNIFFER GONZÁLEZ- COLÓN
Member of Congress
Lidria M. Salia
SYLVIA GARCIA
Member of Congress
Jan Hollingworth
TREY HOLLINGSWORTH Member of Congress
- · · ·
Stephin
STEPHANIE MURPHY
Member of Congress
-10.
mf. CX
T.J. QÓX
Member of Congress



DAVE LOEBSACK

DAVE LOEBSACK
Member of Congress

JASON CROW Member of Congress

JOHN JOYCH Member of Congress

Ron Estes
RON ESTES

Member of Congress

LORI TRAHAN
Member of Congress

DANIEL WEBSTER
Member of Congress

ED PERLMUTTER Member of Congress

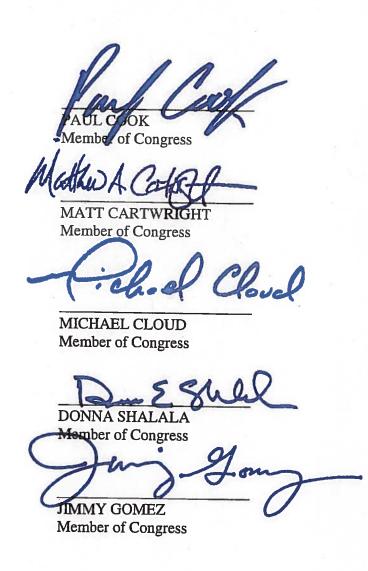
MKE GALLAGHER Member of Congress

BRYAN STEIL Member of Congress

DAVID SCHWEIKERT Member of Congress

JOHN RUTHERFORD Member of Congress

NANETTE DIAZ **BARRAGAN** Member of Congress J. LUIS CORREA Member of Congress CHIP ROY Member of Congress Member of Congress ROBIN L. KELLY Member of Congress



JOE MORELLE Member of Congress