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August 3, 2016

The Honorable John Kerry
Secretary
United States Department of State
Washington, D.C.

Dear Secretary Kerry:

As you understand, when two governments engage in high profile non-proliferation negotiations or discuss the release of detained prisoners, every action taken by both governments is strategically planned and scrutinized. With so much at stake, it is highly dubious that simple coincidences may occur.

With that in mind, I find it inconceivable that the United States reportedly sent an additional \$400 million to the Iran government during the same month of the release of four American prisoners, and concurrent with the implementation of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

The administration has claimed that the \$400 million was payment for a 1979 arms deal settlement, however the timing of the payment is undoubtedly suspect. Either the State Department is absolutely careless about the ramifications of sending \$400 million in cash to Iran during a prisoner release, or U.S. officials purposefully used this payment to entice the release of prisoners. Both scenarios are equally unacceptable.

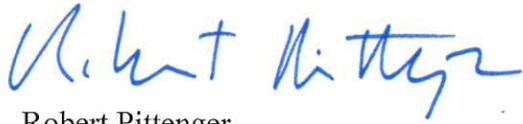
As you recall, in October and November 2015, it was reported that the Iranian government conducted illegal tests of its new medium range ballistic missile system – clearly in violation of U.N. Security Council Resolutions 1929 and 2231. Furthermore, nowhere in international law or custom is it permissible for Iranian military personnel to forcefully board an American military vessel at gunpoint and detain the uniformed sailors on board. These are recent examples of Iranian provocation, however, as you are fully aware, the list of bad actions by the Iran government, including the direct and purposeful funding of terror, has continued for decades.

Iran still remains a state-sponsor of terror designated by the State Department, which you manage, yet this administration is consistently able to find new ways to send billions of dollars to prop the Iran government, which included \$12 billion as a precondition to negotiate and over \$100 billion from the agreement.

United States foreign policy towards Iran appears to be a rudderless, feckless effort to justify the promoted outcome of the Iran deal. Members of Congress have every reason to question and doubt the integrity of the process and the agreement, as there is every appearance of deception and subterfuge in communicating to the American people.

Respectfully, I request that you provide a written explanation of why the \$400 million was sent in cash to the Iranians within days of a negotiated prisoner release.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Robert Pittenger". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Robert" and last name "Pittenger" clearly distinguishable.

Robert Pittenger
Member of Congress