November 19, 2013

Majority Leader Harry Reid

Senator Carl Levin
Chairman,
Senate Armed Services Committee

Senator Robert Menendez
Chairman,
Senate Foreign Relations Committee

Senator Tim Johnson
Chairman
Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee

Minority Leader Mitch McConnell

Senator James M. Inhofe
Ranking Member,
Senate Armed Services Committee

Senator Robert P. Corker
Ranking Member,
Senate Foreign Relations Committee

Senator Michael D. Crapo
Ranking Member,
Senate Banking, Housing and Urban Affairs Committee

Dear Majority Leader Reid, Minority Leader McConnell, SASC Chairman Levin, SASC Ranking Member Inhofe, SFRC Chairman Menendez, SFRC Ranking Member Corker, SBHUAC Chairman Johnson and SBHUAC Ranking Member Crapo,

With a deal to prevent war and prevent an Iranian nuclear weapon within reach, our organizations strongly urge you to support diplomacy and work with U.S. negotiators instead of working against them. We call on you to heed the request of President Obama, Secretary Kerry, and the U.S. negotiating team and refrain from passing new sanctions or restrictive policy language that would undercut U.S. diplomatic efforts.

President Obama has warned that sanctions would impede our diplomats' ability to secure a nuclear deal and, by derailing diplomacy, put the U.S. on a path to war. The American public will not side with those who support a war with Iran. Following a decade of wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the massive public outcry against proposed military action in Syria, it should be clear that Americans stand in firm opposition to further wars of choice. In fact, recent polls indicate that 76% of Americans - including majorities in both parties - support direct diplomacy with Iran to resolve the nuclear issue.

Finally, new sanctions or unrealistic demands imposed by Congress would divide the international community and risk convincing our partners that it is the U.S., not Iran, that is blocking a diplomatic resolution. In so doing, Congress would unravel international sanctions without Iran having to make a single concession.

The choice before you is now clear. A vote for sanctions at this critical moment is a vote for war. We strongly urge you to support negotiations and vote for diplomacy to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran and avoid a disastrous war. We look forward to your response.

Sincerely,

National Iranian American Council
Win Without War
Friends Committee on National Legislation
Americans for Peace Now
American Friends Service Committee
Berim
Center for Interfaith Engagement, Eastern Mennonite University
Center for International Policy
Church of the Brethren
Conference of Major Superiors of Men
Council for a Livable World
CREDO
DownsizeDC.org
Evangelicals for Middle East Understanding
Fellowship of Reconciliation
Global Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) and United Church of Christ
Institute for Policy Studies, New Internationalism Project
Jewish Voice for Peace
Just Foreign Policy
MoveOn.org
Peace Action
Peace Action West
Peace Catalyst International
Pax Christi International
Shomer Shalom Network for Jewish Nonviolence
Tikkun/Network of Spiritual Progressives
United Church of Christ, Justice and Witness Ministries
Women's Action for New Directions
Young Democrats of America