NUCLEAR AGREEMENT WITH IRAN

Mr. GRASSLEY. Mr. President, according to press reports, this administration may be just weeks away from lifting sanctions on Iran. This is despite Iran's recent actions that indicate they have little intention to comply with the terms of the agreement called the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, also known as the Iran nuclear deal. Most recently, the International Atomic Energy Agency released the final report on the possible military dimensions of the Iranian nuclear program. It is quite clear Iran was less than cooperative with the International Atomic Energy Agency. For some reason, despite Iran's stonewalling, the President seems intent and confident that they know the extent of Iran's past nuclear weaponization work.

It is important to remember the evolution of the importance of this information. In April 2015, Secretary Kerry stated in an interview that Iran must disclose its past military-related nuclear activities as part of any final deal. His words on this matter were unequivocal.

He stated:

> They have to do it. It will be done. If there's going to be a deal it will be done. It will be part of the final agreement. It has to be.

Just a few weeks later, when it was clear President Obama's administration was ready to surrender to Iran's demands on this issue, Secretary Kerry said that we didn't need a full accounting of Iran's past activities. He said the U.S. intelligence agencies already had ''perfect knowledge'' of Iran's activities.

Just a few days ago, the International Atomic Energy Agency released their report, which was supposed to be a comprehensive overview of Iran's nuclear program and their past military dimensions of that program. Because of Iran's obstruction, the report is far from comprehensive—as we were promised.

The International Atomic Energy Agency report essentially concludes what many of us have known for a very long time. Iran was working toward developing nuclear weapons capability and they have continually lied and continually misled the international community regarding that program. The International Atomic Energy Agency also concluded that Iran's nuclear weapons program was in operation until 2009, several years later than many believed.

President Obama repeatedly stated that the nuclear agreement was based on unprecedented verification. Yet it is very clear from the International Atomic Energy Agency report that Iran had no intention of cooperating with the requirement that they come clean on their nuclear program. In many areas, the International Atomic Energy Agency indicated that Iran provided little information, misleading responses, and even worked to conceal portions of that program.

Many of the questions around the Parchin military facility remain unanswered. This report from the International Atomic Energy Agency states:

> The information available to the Agency, including the results of the sampling analysis and the satellite imagery, does not support Iran's statement on the purpose of the building. The Agency assesses that the extensive activities undertaken by Iran since February 2012 at the particular location of interest to the Agency seriously undermined the Agency's ability to conduct effective verification.

An effective verification was what we were promised. The Iranians were actively working to cover up and destroy any evidence of their weaponization efforts at Parchin. On many occasions, Iran refused to provide any information or simply reiterated previous denials. Iran refused to cooperate and instead continues to deceive the international community on the military dimensions of its nuclear program. Some may wonder why we should even care about this. It matters because a complete and accurate declaration of all nuclear weapons activity is a critical first step in the verification regime and the safeguard process that the International Atomic Energy Agency will be asked to enforce and something we put our confidence in. I shouldn't say ''we'' because I didn't vote for it—but something this country puts its confidence in this Agency's ability to enforce. There must be a baseline declaration to ensure effective international monitoring going forward.

It also matters because President Obama entered into an agreement, along with our allies, to provide sanctions relief in exchange for Iran giving up its efforts to develop nuclear weapons. It matters because it is clear we do not have ''perfect knowledge''—which we were promised—of what Iran is up to, as Secretary Kerry has claimed. It also matters because since the agreement was finalized, Iranian leadership has not changed their behavior. If anything, they have increased their hostility. Here are some examples of hostility: On October 10, Iran launched a long-range ballistic missile. This is clearly in violation of Security Council Resolution 1929. Then, on November 21, Iran launched another ballistic missile.

It is clear that Iran has no intention to comply with the ballistic missile restrictions of this deal. These are blatant violations. How are we supposed to have any faith in this agreement or Iran's intent to comply? Iran did not comply with the International Atomic Energy Agency. They have continued to test ballistic missiles. They continue to hold Americans hostage. A Washington Post reporter has been imprisoned for more than 500 days and was recently convicted of unspecified charges in a sham trial. Iran has no intention to honor any of their obligations under this deal. It is naive to think otherwise. As a recent Wall Street Journal editorial put it, ''The larger point is that the nuclear deal has already become a case of Iran pretending not to cheat while the West pretends not to notice.''

I hope President Obama and his administration finally wake up and quickly recognize Iran's track record of noncompliance. Iran cannot and should not be rewarded with sanctions relief. The international community should not reward Iran with sanctions relief while Iran doubles down on its confrontational and uncooperative behavior. They should not be given hundreds of billions of dollars while continuing to defy and deceive the international community.

Mr. President, I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The bill clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

UNANIMOUS CONSENT REQUEST—S. 579

Mrs. MCCASKILL. Mr. President, I am on the floor this afternoon to talk about S. 579, which is called the Inspector General Empowerment Act, but it really ought to be called ''Let the inspectors general do their jobs.''

As I look back on my time as a State auditor and I think of all I learned about how government works well and how government behaves badly, I have a special point of respect for inspectors general because of the work I did as an auditor. I believe they are our first line of defense against waste, fraud, and abuse of taxpayer dollars. We should be helping them every way we can to do their jobs.

I want to thank Senator JOHNSON, the chairman of the committee I serve on that has primary jurisdiction on government oversight, and I want to thank Senator GRASSLEY for his long championing the cause of inspectors general and the GAO and all of the noble public servants who are out there every day trying to uncover government behaving badly.

This bill serves three main purposes. It provides additional authority to inspectors general to enhance their ability to conduct oversight investigations. It reforms the process by which the Council of the Inspectors General integrity committee investigates accusations against IGs, which is very important. IGs need to be above reproach. Any whiff of politics, any whiff of unethical conduct, any whiff of self-dealing—we have to empower the Council of the Inspectors General to deal with that in a way that is effective.

It restores the intent of the 1978 Inspectors General Act to ensure that IGs have timely access to documents they need to conduct good, comprehensive oversight audits and investigations.