

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 14, 2010

The Honorable Hillary Rodham Clinton
Secretary of State
United States Department of State
2201 C Street NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Clinton,

We are writing to express our deep concern about the ongoing Syrian support for terrorism. According to several reports, Syria has begun transferring Scud missiles to the terrorist group Hezbollah in Lebanon. On April 27th, the Israeli Minister of Defense, Ehud Barak, stated that “the Syrians keep backing the Hezbollah in a damaging way, that they convey to the Hezbollah weapons systems that can turn or disrupt the very delicate balance in Lebanon. And those balance-disrupting weapons systems, including the rockets or missiles, are considered to be a threat to the stability of the region.” We share his concern.

These missiles have a range of about 435 miles, making them able potentially to target any major city in Israel. By contrast, the rockets used by Hezbollah in its July 2006 war with Israel could only reach 20-60 miles. This limited the number of Israeli civilians exposed to danger, as well as the distance into Lebanon Israeli forces had to go to reach the launchers. Should another conflict break out and the Scud transfer reports be accurate, the great majority of Israelis will be at risk, and Israel will be forced into deep strikes or incursions into Lebanon to stop the launchings. This is a formula for an even worse conflict than in the 2006 war – all the result of Syria’s arms transfers to Hezbollah.

Your State Department’s March 22nd letter to us stated that “Greater engagement is not a concession, but a means to more effectively persuade the most senior levels of the Syrian regime.” However, if engagement precludes prompt punitive action in response to egregious behavior, such as the transfer of long-range missiles to a terrorist group, then it is not only a concession but also a reward for such behavior.

Therefore, should the Scud reports be accurate, will you impose prompt and meaningful sanctions in response, in addition to those currently levied? And if additional sanctions will not be applied in response to this or other negative Syrian behavior during the engagement process, how long will that process continue before meaningful additional sanctions are imposed? Lastly, we request an update at the earliest opportunity on when the Congress will receive the Iran, North Korea, and Syria Nonproliferation Act

reports; as you know, the State Department has not submitted one of these since October of 2008.

We would appreciate a response from you personally before the full Senate considers the nomination of a new U.S. Ambassador to Syria.

Sincerely,



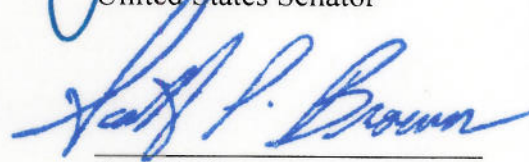
Mike Johanns
United States Senator



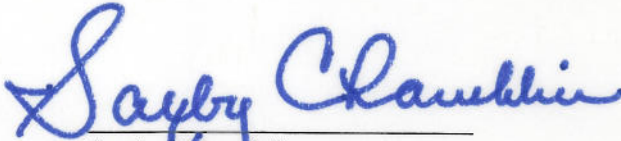
John Barrasso
United States Senator



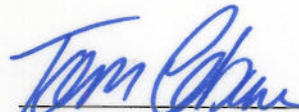
Kit Bond
United States Senator



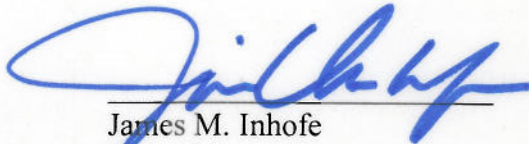
Scott P. Brown
United States Senator



Saxby Chambliss
United States Senator



Tom Coburn
United States Senator



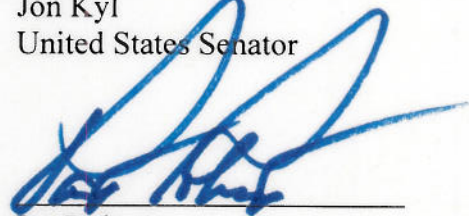
James M. Inhofe
United States Senator



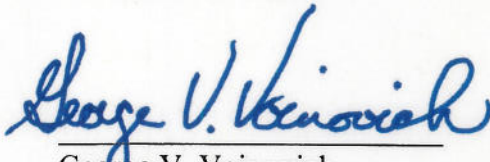
Jon Kyl
United States Senator



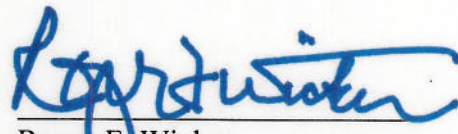
James E. Risch
United States Senator



Pat Roberts
United States Senator



George V. Voinovich
United States Senator



Roger F. Wicker
United States Senator