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**Opening Statement of the Honorable Ed Royce (R-CA), Chairman
House Foreign Affairs Committee Hearing: Implications of a Nuclear Agreement
with Iran
July 9, 2015
(As Prepared for Delivery)**

This hearing will come to order. This morning, the Committee continues to examine the Obama Administration's nuclear diplomacy with Iran as we get set for a congressional review of a possible, and hugely consequential, agreement.

As we speak, U.S. negotiators in Vienna face *another* deadline. But to be clear, there is no push from Congress to conclude these negotiations in the next few hours. If the Administration negotiates a sound agreement, it shouldn't matter if the congressional review period is 30 or 60 days.

While we don't have an agreement in front of us, we know the troubling outline taking shape. Just a few months ago, 367 Members of Congress signed a letter Ranking Member Engel and I led stating that any final agreement must last for multiple *decades* and include full disclosure of Iran's past efforts to build a nuclear weapon, a dramatic reduction in the number of centrifuges, as well as intrusive inspection and verification measures.

A few weeks ago, several of President Obama's former advisors signed an open letter echoing these concerns, and warned that these negotiations may fall short of meeting the Administration's own standard of a "*good*" agreement. Indeed, one witness with us today wrote back when these negotiations began (November 2013) that a "*good enough*" agreement would have Tehran giving up "all but a *minimal* enrichment capacity," agree to intrusive inspections and guarantee the re-imposition of sanctions.

But that's *not even close* to where negotiations are today. The "most robust and intrusive inspections and transparency regime *ever* negotiated for *any* nuclear program in history" –the President's promise – has turned into "*managed access*," with the Iranians having a big say in where international inspectors can and can't go. "*Managed access*" is a big back away from the "anywhere, anytime" terms the Administration once demanded.

But to be clear, under this agreement, Iran doesn't even have to cheat to be a step away from the bomb. Iran is *not* required to dismantle key bomb making technology; it *is* permitted a vast enrichment capacity, and is allowed to continue its research and development to gain an *industrialized* nuclear program once this agreement begins to *expire* in as little as ten years. That is hardly "decades." That is hardly "all but minimal" enrichment.

Meanwhile, Iran continues to develop its ballistic missile capabilities. After Iran's Supreme Leader called demands to restrict its missile program "a stupid, idiotic expectation," U.S. negotiators backed off this key demand. Instead, Iran is still able to "mass produce" its ballistic missiles, as the Supreme Leader has ordered. We ought to be concerned. Really concerned. One witness told the Committee last month that, "no country that has *not* aspired to possess nuclear weapons has *ever* opted to sustain" a costly, long-range missile program. Already, U.S. intelligence estimates Iran to have the

largest arsenal of ballistic missiles in the Middle East. Simply put, countries build ICBMs to deliver nukes.

Not to mention that the terrorist state of Iran will be flush with cash. Reportedly, Iran will receive as much as \$150 billion under this agreement – some 25 times the annual budget of Iran’s Revolutionary Guards Corps. Such a huge amount will breathe life into Iran’s economy and fund a new generation of terrorism in the region and beyond.

At every step in this process – whether it’s enrichment capacity, missile development or sanctions relief, the Obama Administration has discounted the fundamental nature of the regime in Tehran. “Death to America” isn’t domestic spin - it is the regime’s rallying cry.

As one witness concludes --“President Obama is agreeing to dismantle the sanctions regime – permanently. In return, Tehran is agreeing to slow the development of its nuclear program – temporarily.” That’s a bad deal for us: *permanent* concessions in exchange for *temporary* benefits, and that’s only if Iran doesn’t cheat, like North Korea did. So Iran is left a few steps away from the bomb and more able to dominate the region. How does that make us and our allies more secure? Or conflict less likely? That is the bottom line this Committee has and will continue to look at. Few issues are more important.

I know turn to the Ranking Member for any opening comments he may have.