

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

May 10, 2021

Senator Bob Menendez
Chairman
U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations
423 Dirksen Senate Office Building
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chairman Menendez:

As you know, the New York Times recently reported – based on the contents of a leaked audiotape of Iranian Foreign Minister Javad Zarif – that according to Mr. Zarif, Special Presidential Envoy for Climate John Kerry had previously leaked to him details regarding Israeli attacks against Iranian interests in Syria.

The details of the tape have not been disputed by Iran’s Foreign Ministry, and were implicitly confirmed by Foreign Minister Zarif in a recent public apology.

Secretary of State Blinken and the State Department’s spokesperson have not denied the allegations. Instead they have said that whatever Kerry disclosed was already public knowledge. On April 26, State Department spokesperson Ned Price said “you go back and look at press reporting from the time, this certainly was not secret, and governments that were involved were speaking to this publicly on the record.” On April 27, Secretary of State Blinken said “these things [the airstrikes] were all reported in the press at the time.”

As you know, those defenses are not tenable.

Several Republican Senators have called for an investigation into the veracity and context of the allegations against Kerry, and for his resignation or firing if the allegations are confirmed. However, Congress has limited leverage to ensure that these legitimate requests are addressed by the Biden administration.

On April 26, the Department of State transmitted to Congress a notification, CN 21-111, “notifying its intent to establish the Office of the Special Presidential Envoy for Climate (S/SPEC) within the Office of the Secretary (S) and to reprogram \$2.5 million in FY 2021 Diplomatic Programs funds from the Bureau of Budget and Planning to S in connection with SPEC’s establishment.”

We respectfully ask that you hold CN 21-111 until the State Department provides to Congress –

1. A list of all meetings, phone calls, and all other communications, including digital communications and direct messages, between Mr. Kerry and Foreign Minister Zarif, from January 20, 2017 to January 20, 2021.

2. Copies of any digital communications and full details of any meetings between Mr. Kerry and Foreign Minister Zarif, from January 20, 2017 to January 20, 2021, if they involved Israeli actions against Iran.
3. A sworn statement from Mr. Kerry, made under penalty of perjury, that he did not divulge classified information to Foreign Minister Zarif.
4. A written commitment that no government official in the Office of the Special Presidential Envoy for Climate (S/SPEC), including Mr. Kerry, will engage, meet with, or otherwise communicate with Foreign Minister Zarif or other leaders in Iran nor will they participate in any process – including State Department decisions, engagements with foreign diplomats, or through the interagency process – involving negotiations with Iran.

Sincerely,



Ted Cruz
United States Senator



Todd Young
United States Senator



John Barrasso, M.D.
United States Senator



Marco Rubio
United States Senator