

# Democrats join Republicans to attack Trump over Iran negotiations

Andre Damon  
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The announcement Saturday by the Trump administration that it had “largely” reached an agreement with Iran has drawn denunciations from broad factions of the US political establishment, with Democrats joining Republicans to attack the proposed agreement as insufficiently advantageous to US imperialism.

On Truth Social Saturday, Trump said “an agreement has largely been negotiated, subject to finalization between the United States of America and the Islamic Republic of Iran.” He said he had spoken with Arab leaders and the heads of Pakistan and Turkey but offered no details.

Senator Cory Booker, Democrat of New Jersey, told CNN Sunday that Trump was “being played as a fool.” “He’s got us in a situation that’s worse than it was before,” Booker said, “with a more extreme regime.”

The United States, Booker told CNN, had “let go of billions of dollars” in negotiations to dismantle Iran’s nuclear program. Giving Iran more money, he warned, would enable Tehran to “fuel their terrorist proxies.”

Senator Chris Van Hollen, Democrat of Maryland, told CBS “Face the Nation” Sunday that the agreement was a “blunder.” “It sounds like we will go back to opening the Strait of Hormuz, which, of course, was open before the war started,” Van Hollen said.

“It looks like Iran will retain more control over those straits. We also know Iran has an even more hard-line regime in place now, and we’re talking about releasing some of Iran’s frozen assets.”

Their attacks echoed talking points already laid down by Republicans and the far-right press. The *Wall Street Journal* published an editorial Sunday headlined, “Will Trump Bail Out Iran’s Regime?”, calling the emerging deal a “strategic setback” that ends US pressure “before dismantling the nuclear program.”

“If the blockade ends and Iran can sell its oil, all that’s left to coerce it into nuclear concessions is the threat of renewed war,” the *Journal* wrote. “Saving such a regime now with an economic bailout would be the real betrayal.”

Senator Roger Wicker of Mississippi, chair of the Senate Armed Services Committee, denounced a “rumored 60-day ceasefire” Saturday as a “disaster.” Senator Ted Cruz of Texas called the prospective deal “a disastrous mistake,” warning of a regime “still run by Islamists who chant ‘death to America’—now receiving billions of dollars, being able to enrich uranium and develop nuclear weapons, and having effective control over the Strait of Hormuz.”

Senator Lindsey Graham of South Carolina wrote on social media Saturday that any deal would amount to recognizing Iran as a dominant regional force, an outcome he called “a nightmare for Israel.”

The war Trump launched February 28 has killed thousands of Iranians, decimated Lebanon and pushed gasoline prices to a four-year high.

On Sunday Trump partly walked the announcement back, writing that he had told his representatives “not to rush into a deal” and that the US naval blockade of Iran would “remain in full force and effect until an agreement is reached, certified, and signed.”

The *New York Times* reported Sunday that the framework under discussion would extend the ceasefire that took effect April 8 by 60 days, gradually reopen the Strait of Hormuz and lift the US naval blockade. The *Times* wrote that Iran would pledge “in principle” to dispose of its highly enriched uranium, though the mechanism remained unsettled.

Iran holds roughly 970 pounds of near-bomb-grade material, enough by US estimates for a dozen bombs if further refined. The *Times* also reported Sunday that

three senior Iranian officials had disclosed that the deal would halt fighting on all fronts, including Lebanon, and release \$25 billion in frozen Iranian assets.

The Trump administration confronts a deepening crisis over its failure to achieve its aims in the Iran war. It had hoped that murdering Iran's leaders would trigger rapid regime change.

When that failed, it turned to massive bombardment of the country, followed by an economic blockade. None of these methods have broken Iran's resistance.

The United States and Israel began bombing Iran on February 28. Reuters reported Sunday that the campaign killed thousands of Iranians before the cease-fire took effect April 8. The *New York Times* put damage to Iran's critical infrastructure at more than \$300 billion, describing a wave of layoffs, soaring inflation and shortages of medicine and fuel inside Iran.

Meanwhile Israel's bombardment of Lebanon continues. On Sunday Israel ordered residents of at least 10 Lebanese villages to evacuate ahead of further air strikes.

In al-Duwayr, Israel bombed a building around 10:20 p.m. and struck the same location 30 minutes later, killing one person and wounding eight. At Arab Salim, two more were killed and 10 wounded, six of them paramedics, the Lebanese health ministry said Sunday.

Since Israel renewed its onslaught on Lebanon March 2, the ministry has counted 3,151 dead and 9,571 wounded from Israeli air strikes. Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has told Trump that his government will not compromise on its "freedom to act," including in Lebanon.

The economic toll of the war is mounting. Acting Pentagon Comptroller Jules Hurst told a House Appropriations panel last Tuesday that direct US costs had reached \$29 billion.

The administration is preparing a supplemental request of as much as \$100 billion to backfill expended munitions, including nearly the entire US stockpile of long-range stealth cruise missiles. The Congressional Research Service has tallied 42 US aircraft lost.

The national average for gasoline stood at \$4.51 a gallon Sunday—a four-year high for the Memorial Day weekend—with diesel at \$5.62, both up roughly by half since the war began.

After he failed to break Iran on the battlefield, the entire ruling establishment now reproaches Trump for

failing to break it at the negotiating table.



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