Trump plans to resume bombing of Iran as early as the day after the midterm elections

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The Trump administration had told Gulf Arab governments to prepare for a new round of strikes on Iran as soon as November 4, the day after Tuesday's midterm elections, MS NOW, the cable network formerly known as MSNBC, reported Friday, citing three senior Gulf Arab officials. The network wrote that US President Donald Trump was planning to resume the bombing of Iran once the elections were over.

Tuesday's election is expected to reflect overwhelming popular opposition to the war in Iran and to its economic consequences, including the surge in prices. In a Pew Research Center poll released October 8, 65 percent of Americans said they disapproved of how Trump had handled the war.

The *Wall Street Journal* reported Tuesday that the United States had told several Gulf Arab governments to expect a military campaign against Iran after the election. The *Journal* wrote that Trump was leaning toward a large post-election attack whose targets could include Iran's nuclear sites and its infrastructure.

MS NOW reported that the aircraft carrier USS Theodore Roosevelt, with its escorts and about 9,000 Marines and sailors, would arrive in late November as the third carrier in the region, and that more Patriot antimissile batteries had gone to Qatar and Saudi Arabia.

Trump told KCMO, a Kansas City radio station, on Friday that the war "is going to be over very soon" and that "We're knocking the hell out of them," MS NOW reported. On Saturday night Trump told reporters at Mar-a-Lago, his Florida estate, where a Halloween party was under way: "We've knocked out their nuclear. We still have to take care of, I would say one or two sites, but we can do that in 10 minutes."

Secretary of State Marco Rubio, who was hosting the Group of 20 foreign ministers in Atlanta, said Saturday at a press conference there: "If we needed to do something militarily, we would have the ability to do it and we have everything we need to be successful." MS NOW quoted a former official of the administration who was familiar with its deliberations as saying of Trump: "He's been convinced that with this final attack we can get a deal with the Iranians, or we can finally destroy their nuclear program."

On Saturday, according to Iranian media as summarized by the Institute for the Study of War, Supreme Leader Mojtaba Khamenei ordered a response "without geographical limitations" and directed that the list of targets be extended to all US and Israeli assets. Iranian officials have named US bases, Gulf energy installations, pipelines and airports. In the spring fighting, Iran struck energy and industrial sites in the United Arab Emirates and airports in Qatar, Kuwait and Bahrain.

Senator Chris Murphy, a Connecticut Democrat on the Foreign Relations and Appropriations committees, has sat in a classified briefing on the plan. Speaking Wednesday at the Middle East Institute in Washington, he said the briefing included "a fairly detailed conversation about what the war plan would be if we restarted military operations," and that the plan "will lead, in my view, to a prolongment and an escalation of this war." He pointed to "open reporting as to what we may be planning and the civilian infrastructure that we may be targeting."

The next day Murphy wrote on X: "Some of us have been briefed on the war plan. And while I cannot disclose any details, I can say this: the plan is insane. It will not achieve objectives and will set off a new cycle of escalation." Murphy suffered a stroke Saturday and was hospitalized.

Murphy's statement is particularly significant

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because he has seen the plan. A member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee has said that the operation will produce the opposite of what is claimed for it: a longer and wider war, whatever the administration intends. His objections concern its effectiveness and its legality, not the aims of the war.

Yet no Democrat, Murphy included, demanded that the briefing be made public or that Congress reconvene before the attack.

Murphy remained the only lawmaker to have spoken publicly about the briefings. Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer wrote on X Wednesday that Trump "led us into this war with no plan, no authority, and no exit strategy" and that Democrats had "given Republicans 14 chances to hold Trump accountable and end this reckless war." Schumer's posts that week did not mention the plan to resume it.

On Friday night, as the MS NOW report circulated, Representative Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez, the New York Democrat, headlined a get-out-the-vote rally in Dumfries, Virginia, for Representative Eugene Vindman, a Virginia Democrat who served in the Army. While making cursory statements criticizing the war in Iran, neither speaker mentioned the strikes planned for after the election or warned about their implications, let alone called for opposition.

The Democrats on CNN, CBS and NBC on Sunday did not mention the plan either. Senator Raphael Warnock of Georgia, on CNN's *State of the Union*, did not mention the planned strikes, and Pennsylvania Governor Josh Shapiro, on CBS's *Face the Nation*, and Illinois Governor JB Pritzker and Representative Jamie Raskin of Maryland, on NBC's *Meet the Press*, did not mention the war at all.

On January 22, 2026, five weeks before the attack on Iran began, the Democratic Party supplied 149 House votes for the $839 billion military budget, which passed 341-88. Six weeks earlier, on December 10, 2025, the House had passed the National Defense Authorization Act 312-112, with 115 Democrats in favor, including House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, and on December 17 the Senate passed it 77-20, with Schumer, Senator Richard Durbin of Illinois and 25 other Senate Democrats in favor.

On March 4 the Senate voted 53-47 against taking up a War Powers resolution to stop the war, and on March 5 the House voted 219-212 against a similar measure.

Gasoline prices had risen by more than 40 percent since the war began, and the national average was above $4 a gallon, according to AAA figures on an NBC News price tracker updated Saturday. The Bureau of Labor Statistics reported October 16 that gasoline prices had risen 34.2 percent in the year to September, fuel oil 74.2 percent and airline fares 22.4 percent, and that consumer prices as a whole had risen 3.7 percent.

The Pentagon told Congress that the cost of the war had reached $47.1 billion by October 16, the *New York Times* reported Wednesday, and that more than 60 percent of it had gone to bombs, missiles and other ammunition. The Pentagon's casualty report published October 15 listed 21 US troops dead and 865 injured in the Iran war and related operations in the region.



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