

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

February 24, 2019

The Honorable Donald J. Trump  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

As you prepare for your second meeting with North Korea's leader Kim Jong Un, we write to express our shared desire for a diplomatic solution which will ensure the dismantlement of North Korea's nuclear weapons and missile programs. A successful diplomatic agreement with North Korea that advances the goals described in the Singapore Statement of "a lasting and stable peace regime on the Korean peninsula" and "complete denuclearization of the peninsula" would represent an historic accomplishment.

While we acknowledge Kim Jong Un's change in behavior since your first meeting, we remain concerned owing to testimony on January 29, 2019 before the Senate Intelligence Committee, when our community intelligence leaders reported that the U.S. Intelligence Community is observing North Korean "activity that is inconsistent with full denuclearization," a statement that runs counter to the multiple assertions you have made about progress in the past year, including your claim after the Singapore meeting that North Korea no longer poses a nuclear threat. While you may disagree, we also note the assessment of ODNI Director Coats that "we currently assess that North Korea will seek to retain its WMD (weapons of mass destruction) capabilities and is unlikely to completely give up its nuclear weapons and production capability because its leaders ultimately view nuclear weapons as critical to regime survival."

The Singapore meeting gave Kim -- the leader of perhaps the world's most repressive regime -- legitimacy and acceptance on the global stage while effectively undermining our policy of maximum pressure and sanctions, which now appear to be in the process of showing strain, and putting at risk vital alliance relationships.

As strong advocates for a diplomatic pathway to resolve the North Korea threat, we still believe there is a path forward for tough and principled diplomacy to secure, monitor, and verify the denuclearization of North Korea.

We are pleased to see seasoned professionals like Special Representative Steve Biegun working to achieve this goal. We hope you will execute a serious diplomatic plan, which includes a sequenced process to verifiably freeze and roll back North Korea's nuclear weapons and missile programs in conjunction with continued appropriate sanctions and other pressure; a robust deterrence posture; strengthened alliances; intensified diplomatic and economic engagement; and a deepening of North-South dialogue that over time can provide the pathway to full denuclearization and a durable peace agreement. We believe your next meeting with Kim thus must demonstrate tangible, verifiable progress on denuclearization and reducing tensions with the North.


As the U.S. pursues this goal, it is crucial that we maintain our alliances in Asia, and in particular with the Republic of Korea and Japan, at the center of our policy towards North Korea. Resolving the North Korea nuclear threat is a national security imperative, and deepening our alliances, maintaining our military posture, and strengthening our partnerships are fundamental to building the architecture of a stable and prosperous Indo-Pacific region.

Meeting the challenge of North Korea's nuclear weapons and missile programs, as well as addressing other issues such as North Korea's systemic, gross violations of human rights, is of concern to all Americans and to our allies and partners. We believe that Congress therefore has an important role to play in working with the administration to shape U.S. policy toward North Korea. To that end, we would like to establish a process for regular and substantive briefings, including classified briefings, on U.S. policy and strategy and diplomatic engagements.

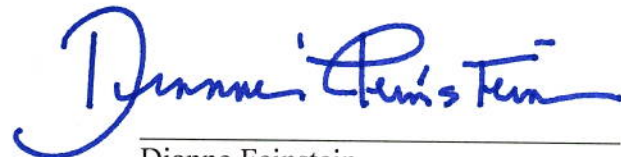
We look forward to working with your administration to secure a meaningful agreement to address the threat of a nuclear-armed North Korea in a manner that significantly enhances the security of the United States, our allies, and the world.


Sincerely,

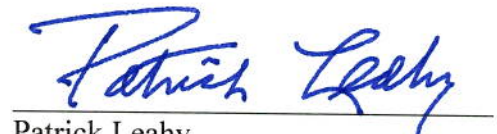
  
Robert Menendez  
United States Senator

  
Charles E. Schumer  
United States Senator

  
Richard J. Durbin  
United States Senator

  
Dianne Feinstein  
United States Senator

  
Mark R. Warner  
United States Senator

  
Patrick Leahy  
United States Senator

  
Sherrod Brown  
United States Senator

  
Jack Reed  
United States Senator