

January 2, 2018

The Honorable Jeff Sessions
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

Dear Attorney General Sessions,

We are deeply disturbed by recent reports that illustrate the Obama Administration's efforts to undermine Project Cassandra, a Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) campaign to target drug trafficking operations by the Iranian-backed terrorist group Hezbollah. We write to inquire about the steps your Justice Department will take to address the consequences of this misguided decision.

In 2008, the DEA found evidence that Hezbollah expanded its operations into drug trafficking and other criminal activities. Over the next eight years, DEA Agents used every tool in their disposal to track Hezbollah's illicit networks, culminating in the opportunity to file criminal charges against individuals and entities that profited from drug trafficking.

Unfortunately, the Obama Administration allegedly instituted several roadblocks to prevent holding Hezbollah accountable for fear of jeopardizing the prospects of securing the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action ("Iran Nuclear Deal") with the Iranian regime. According to testimony presented to the House Foreign Affairs Committee, by an Obama-era Treasury official, Katherine Bauer, "under the Obama administration ... these [Hezbollah-related] investigations were tamped down for fear of rocking the boat with Iran and jeopardizing the nuclear deal."

Contrary to the narrative of proponents of the Iran Nuclear Deal that the agreement would change Iran's behavior, Iran has responded by continuing its destabilizing foreign policy activities, while its proxy, Hezbollah, continues to provide weapons and training to anti-American militias. The result is the further undermining of America's national security interests, the safety of the American people, and the security of our allies – including Israel.

Given the Trump Administration's desire to hold the Iranian regime and its proxies accountable, we urge you to conduct a full investigation into the decision-making of the Obama Administration Justice Department as it relates to Project Cassandra. As you conduct this investigation, several questions remain:

1. Are you aware that the Obama Justice Department declined DEA requests to file criminal charges against Abdallah Safieddine, Hezbollah's Envoy to Iran?

2. Are you aware that the Obama Justice Department declined DEA requests to file criminal charges against the Lebanese Canadian Bank and its associates?
3. Which individual(s) within the Obama Justice Department were responsible for delaying prosecutions of key Hezbollah entities in the hope of securing Iran's approval of the Iran Nuclear Deal? If that guidance or directive came from outside the Justice Department, who and where did it come from?
4. What steps will your Justice Department take to ensure improved interagency cooperation to address the Hezbollah threat moving forward?

We respectfully request answers to these questions in writing as well as a briefing on this matter at your earliest convenience.

The security of the United States and the safety of the American people and our allies depend on a thorough investigation and corrective action to ensure that the Obama Administration's misguided policy is never implemented again. We appreciate your prompt consideration and look forward to your response on this matter. Our national security depends upon it.

Sincerely,

John Ratcliffe
Member of Congress

Lou Barletta
Member of Congress

Martha McSally
Member of Congress

Andy Biggs
Member of Congress

Robert Pittenger
Member of Congress

Ted Budd
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Steve Chabot
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