

House Dems revolt over Biden's Iran deal?

[Ed Morrissey](#) Mar 16, 2022 10:36 AM ET



AP Photo/Alex Brandon

To be fair, it looks pretty revolting to everyone outside of Congress as well. Surprisingly, it looks increasingly bad to House Democrats [according to Punchbowl](#), even though Joe Biden ran on the pledge to re-enter the Iran deal in his 2020 presidential campaign.

So what changed? Well, as it turns out, voters aren't terribly keen on outsourcing American national security to Vladimir Putin and Ali Khamenei. Now House Dems have yet another midterm issue on which they expect a beating:

The discord came to a head on Saturday during a two-hour call between roughly a dozen House Democrats and **Brett McGurk**, the National Security Council's coordinator for the Middle East and Africa, and other senior administration officials, according to a half-dozen sources familiar with the situation.

On that call, these Democrats laid into administration officials about being kept out of the loop about the status of the talks between the United States and Iran. Rep. **Elissa Slotkin** (D-Mich.) said on the call that the White House is bungling the public messaging surrounding the negotiations, and several other lawmakers raised concerns about being forced to answer for the deal once it's cut. ...

The rank-and-file Democrats expressed concerns about lifting sanctions on Iranian oil sales at this time. They worried that it would appear that the United States was easing up on the regime because of high oil prices due to the war between Ukraine and Russia. One House Democrat said it seemed as if the United States was "selling our soul" for oil.

That's certainly one concern. A bigger question to answer would be why Americans *need* to "sell our soul" for Iranian oil when we can extract our own right here, using American workers. It's one thing to go the full Greta on climate-change hysteria, but it's more than just *skosh* hypocritical to then start cutting deals with terror-supporting petro-states to get the price of gasoline down in time for an election. Try squaring that with voters in November, especially in states where either the price of gas is above \$5 a gallon or where oil exists that could boost the local economy, but where Biden's EO and new regs block access to it.

And of course the national-security issue will loom large, too. If Biden has an

argument for how American security gets enhanced by dropping sanctions on Iran based on Vladimir Putin's pledge to keep the mullahs honest, he'd better start making that case *toute suite*. Slotkin for one isn't impressed:

"If this Iran deal is happening, we need to explain both to members and to the public why it's important and why now. I don't think anyone, with Ukraine raging, is focusing on this. On issues of national security that are important, we need to educate the public. Think about the ramp up of [Vladimir] Putin's invasion of Ukraine."

Let's not forget the Iranian missile attack near our consulate in Irbil, too. That had House Democrat Elaine Luria signaling her opposition four days ago to Biden's bid to re-enter the JCPOA:

Rep. Elaine Luria  

@RepElaineLuria

I'm continuing to monitor reports of an attack on our consulate in Irbil.

If reports are accurate, the Biden Administration must withdraw its negotiations with Iran. We cannot re-enter a failed JCPOA to further empower Iran and threaten global security.

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That matters more than one might think. Thanks to a law passed in 2015 (the Iran Nuclear Review Act, Congress has to approve any executive deals with Iran, as Punchbowl reminds us this morning. That law remains in effect,

which means that Democrats will have to take a vote on whether to trust Iran and Russia that would be practically *designed* for all sorts of Republican seizing, pouncing, and shredding.

And finally, let's not miss the forest for the trees. The politics of a deal would be catastrophic for Democrats, but that's because this deal would be catastrophic for the United States. It's *insane* to pursue a deal that shifts US strategic positioning away from the Sunni states in favor of Iran in partnership with Putin, who clearly wants to use this as a way to reclaim superpower and imperial status. Why any American president would go out of his way to enable Putin and Khamenei is a question that this White House should be forced to answer — and so should the elected officials of Joe Biden's party. Repeatedly, constantly, and all the way to the midterms.