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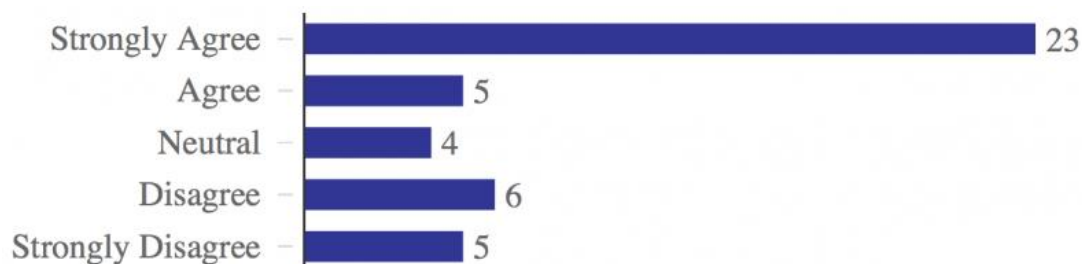
Should Congress Approve the Iran Deal?

Foreign Affairs' Brain Trust Weighs In

We at *Foreign Affairs* have recently published a [number of pieces on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action](#). Those articles sparked a heated debate, so we decided to ask a broad pool of experts to state whether they agree or disagree with the following statement and to rate their confidence level about that answer:

Congress should approve the JCPOA.

Results:



Full Responses:



[ELLIOTT ABRAMS](#) is Senior Fellow for Middle Eastern Studies at the Council on Foreign Relations.

Strongly Disagree, Confidence Level 10

Congressional disapproval serves several purposes. It reflects the views of the majority of Americans, who appear to think this is a bad deal. It would be a reminder that U.S. President Barack Obama has refused to submit this critical arms pact as a treaty, which he should have done. It paves the way for possible renegotiation under another president, because it helps delegitimize the deal Obama made. It is a reminder of the deal's many weaknesses—from the weak verification provisions to the cash bonanza provided to the world's leading state sponsor of terror—and therefore a

warning that the United States must act to address them. Disapproval is the first step toward remediation.



[GRAHAM ALLISON](#) is Professor of Government and Director of the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs at Harvard University's Kennedy School of Government.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 10

The overriding objective of the United States has been to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear bomb. This agreement achieves that objective by stopping Iran verifiably short of a bomb. In fact, by eliminating two-thirds of Iran's current centrifuges and 98 percent of its enriched-uranium stockpile, the agreement pushes Iran back at least a year from a bomb. If from that point, Iran should seek to develop a nuclear weapon, the United States and its international partners will have ample time to discover the violation, consider their options, and act to stop it.



[JOHAN BERGENAS](#) is Deputy Director of the Managing Across Boundaries Initiative at Stimson.

Agree, Confidence Level 7

We shouldn't let perfect be the enemy of good. Overall, the JCPOA moves the U.S.-Iranian relationship in the right direction and should be considered one part in a broader and longer-term conversation between the West and Iran on a wider range of security issues.



[RONEN BERGMAN](#) is a correspondent for the Israeli newspaper *Yedioth Ahronoth* and the author of *The Secret War With Iran*.

Neutral, Confidence Level 9

I have to say that I am still of two minds over the P5+1 deal with Iran. On the one hand, any agreement between two adversarial sides will entail difficult compromises. It was therefore unrealistic to expect that the West, headed by the United States, would achieve all of the terms that it demanded from Iran at the outset of the negotiations. On the other hand, the Western negotiators retreated beyond almost all of the red lines that they drew for themselves (and promised Israel) by agreeing to uranium enrichment on Iranian soil, the stockpiling of fissile material there, the continuation of R&D on advanced centrifuges, the continued operation of the Fordo plant, and more.

Previous deals with rogue states have yielded various results: total failure (in the case of North Korea) and a satisfactory degree of success (in the case of Libya). Which way will Iran go? This is a decision that the regime in Tehran will have to make. One thing is sure: Because of the dangerous terms of the deal, Western intelligence agencies will have to keep a close eye on what is happening there.



[AZRIEL BERMANT](#) is a Research Fellow at the Institute for National Security Studies at Tel Aviv University.

Agree, Confidence Level 7

The JCPOA is deeply flawed, but its opponents have yet to come up with a convincing alternative to stop Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon.



[RICHARD K. BETTS](#) is Director of the Saltzman Institute of War and Peace Studies at Columbia University, an Adjunct Senior Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations, and the author of *American Force: Dangers, Delusions, and Dilemmas in National Security*.

Agree, Confidence Level 7



[DANIEL BYMAN](#) is a Professor in the Security Studies Program at the Edmund A. Walsh School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University and a Senior Fellow at the Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution.

Agree, Confidence Level 8



[ELIOT A. COHEN](#) is Robert E. Osgood Professor of Strategic Studies at the Johns Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies.

Strongly Disagree, Confidence Level 10

It is an agreement that virtually guarantees that Iran will get nuclear weapons in little more than a decade and which sets the Middle East on the path of even more violence than we have seen thus far.



[MICHAEL C. DESCH](#) is Professor and Chair of the Department of Political Science at the University of Notre Dame.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 8



[JOHN DEUTCH](#) is Institute Professor of Chemistry at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology and former U.S. Undersecretary of Energy, Deputy Secretary of Defense, and Director of Central Intelligence.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 10



[JAMES F. DOBBINS](#) is Senior Fellow and Distinguished Chair in Diplomacy and Security at the RAND Corporation. *Strongly Agree, Confidence level 10*

Seldom has the nation faced a starker choice between responsible international leadership and unilateralism.



[MICHAEL DORAN](#) is Senior Fellow at the Hudson Institute. In the George W. Bush administration, Doran served as a senior director in the National Security Council.

Strongly Disagree, Confidence Level 10

The agreement will not achieve its stated nonproliferation goals. It is, in addition, a key piece in an opening to Iran akin to Nixon's opening to China. That big strategic move is as poorly conceived as it has been cleverly executed. If Obama would devote as much effort to outfoxing foreign adversaries as he devotes to outfoxing domestic rivals and close allies, the United States would be sitting pretty.



[MARK DUBOWITZ](#) is the Executive Director of the Foundation for Defense of Democracies.

Strongly Disagree, Confidence Level 10

The agreement gives Iran a patient pathway to nuclear weapons and an economy immunized against snapback sanctions. It makes war more likely against a more dangerous regime. Congress has rejected or amended over 300 international treaties and agreements. It should do so again to keep European companies out of Iran and position the next president to more effectively address the fatal flaws of this agreement.



[ROBERT EINHORN](#) is Senior Fellow in the Arms Control and Non-Proliferation Initiative and the Center for 21st Century Security and Intelligence at Brookings.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 10

I am biased, having served on the U.S. Iran negotiating team for five years. But I genuinely believe the deal is worthy of support.



[LAWRENCE D. FREEDMAN](#) is Professor of War Studies at King's College London and the author of *Strategy: A History*.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 10

No deal of this sort is perfect, but now that this stage has been reached, I can see only downsides to failing to give the deal support. Much of the American debate ignores the fact that the closest allies of the United States (France, Germany, and the United Kingdom) were all closely involved in the negotiations and are already thinking about what comes next. Without this deal, there will be no better deal—just uncertainty, the erosion of sanctions, and no inhibitions on Iran.



[AKBAR GANJI](#) is an Iranian journalist and dissident.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 10

If Congress rejects the nuclear agreement and overrides the president's veto and the U.S. sanctions regime remains in place or even strengthened, Iran may accelerate its nuclear program. That, in turn, would invite military attacks on the country. Such a

war would kill and injure hundreds of thousands of people, create millions of new refugees, and set the entire region on fire. Meanwhile, the U.S. sanctions against Iran, the most crippling in history, already represent collective punishment of the Iranian people. Their continuation would lead to the death of tens of thousands, if not more.

The nuclear agreement with Iran, which has imposed severe limitations on Iran's nuclear program well beyond its international obligations, has ensured that even if Iran wanted the bomb it would not be able to produce it. Thus, it is an important first step toward a Middle East free of WMD. The agreement also opens the way to the United States and Iran working together on crises in the Middle East in which they share common interests, perhaps eventually leading to friendly relations between the two nations.



[F. GREGORY GAUSE III](#) is Professor of International Affairs at the Bush School of Government at Texas A&M University and non-resident Senior Fellow at the Brookings Doha Center.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 8

The alternatives are much worse. This will not have any immediate effect on Iranian regional behavior, but it was not meant to have that effect. It reduces the chances of Iranian nuclear breakout, and that is good enough.



[ELLIE GERANMAYEH](#) is Policy Fellow at the European Council on Foreign Relations.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 10

The deal is based on hard science and is the best means to verify that Iran's nuclear program remains peaceful. The alternatives to this deal are unpalatable to the P5+1 given that more sanctions or a military response are highly likely to speed up Iran's nuclear progress and increase the fragility of Middle East.



[REUEL MARC GERECHE](#) is a Senior Fellow with the Foundation for Defense of Democracies.

Neutral, Confidence Level 10

See my [Wall Street Journal op-ed](#) on the likely results of the JCPOA. It is a lame agreement with risible verification procedures. Assuming that the next president wants to be serious about verification, the deal will likely produce a confrontation between Iran and the United States. It will also whet clerical Iran's regional ambitions

and most likely lead to domestic disappointment and greater political agitation. In other words, the odds of internal turbulence and external collision go up with this agreement.

We will likely have a serious conversation about whether the Islamic Republic's nuclear weapons program is worth fighting over. That's the most you can expect now: greater clarity and less obfuscation and equivocation, which are hallmarks of Obama's Iran diplomacy.



[AVNER GOLOV](#) is Harry S. Truman Scholar at the Fletcher School of Law and Diplomacy at Tufts University and a Research Fellow at INSS.

Disagree, Confidence Level 9

The deal does not meet its goal as identified by Obama: to cut off every pathway Iran has to the bomb. If fully implemented, the deal may make pursuing nuclear weapons more risky in the next decade. In the second decade, though, the Iranian pathway to a bomb will be much shorter than it is today. The fact that there is no better alternative now, as the proponents of the deal claim, does not justify approval so much as it points out the diplomatic failure to create better alternatives to this dangerous one. Congressional opposition could push the administration to improve the deal, or at least strengthen it by addressing its holes and thus minimizing the risk that Iran could use the deal to advance its nuclear program. Additionally, congressional opposition could encourage the administration to pressure Iran on non-nuclear issues so that it doesn't take advantage of its new status as a threshold state to enhance its influence in the region.



[PHILIP GORDON](#) is Senior Fellow at the Council on Foreign Relations. He was Special Assistant to the President and White House Coordinator for the Middle East, North Africa, and the Gulf Region from 2013–15.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 10

No deal is perfect, including this one. But by rejecting it—especially now that it's been agreed to by other world powers and supported by just about every country in the world—Congress would isolate the United States and leave Iran free to resume all its nuclear activities tomorrow.



[YOEL GUZANSKY](#) is Research Fellow at the Institute for National Security Studies at Tel Aviv University.

Disagree, Confidence Level 7

Any limit on Iran's nuclear development will go away in 10–15 years, as Obama himself admits, shrinking Iran's breakout time to zero. The agreement with Iran might also set a new regional standard. Other countries there might want the same nuclear "rights" Iran received.



[JACQUES E. C. HYMANS](#) is Associate Professor of International Relations at the University of Southern California.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 8

Iran's capacity to quickly assemble a genuine nuclear weapon has been greatly exaggerated by both sides in the Washington policy debate. Iran's nuclear program has progressed very slowly over the past three decades, and foreign intelligence has been able to keep close track of its advances. The JCPOA is an appropriate response to this non-crisis situation. The most important achievement is the creation of a common front among the P5+1 and the explicit legal and diplomatic structures for identifying and dealing with any future Iranian noncompliance. The JCPOA also opens a door for the United States and Iran to try to build a more productive relationship at both the governmental and societal levels. Befriending Iran's scientific community would be particularly valuable. The more we get to know the Iranians, the less we will fear them.



[ROBERT JERVIS](#) is the Adlai E. Stevenson Professor of International Affairs at Columbia University.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 10



[JOSEF JOFFE](#) is Publisher-Editor of *Die Zeit*, a weekly German newspaper.

Disagree, Confidence Level 1

In the end, Congress will agree, as it does not have the numbers for overriding a veto, not even to prevent cloture on a filibuster.



[ANDREW F. KREPINEVICH, JR.](#), is President of the Center for Strategic and Budgetary Assessments.

Disagree, Confidence Level 8



[MATTHEW KROENIG](#) is an Associate Professor in the Department of Government and School of Foreign Service at Georgetown University and a Senior Fellow in the Brent Scowcroft Center on International Security at The Atlantic Council.

Disagree, Confidence Level 8

The purpose of the Iran negotiations was to prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. By allowing Iran to keep a large enrichment program, this deal will likely delay, but not ultimately prevent, Iran from building the bomb. Moreover, and contrary to what some claim, there is a viable alternative: returning to the pressure track, boxing in Iran with a credible military threat, increasing pressure through sanctions, and holding out for a better deal. Of course, it would have been better had the administration not negotiated this weak deal in the first place than to have to rely on Congress to reject it, but this is the situation we find ourselves in.



[JAMES M. LINDSAY](#) is Senior Vice President, Director of Studies, and Maurice R. Greenberg Chair at the Council on Foreign Relations.

Agree, Confidence Level 10

The JCPOA is a modest deal—not a great one, let alone a perfect one. It doesn't end Iranian nuclear ambitions and it's unlikely to trigger a transformation in Iranian domestic politics. But the alternatives are worse. If the United States walks away from the JCPOA, the result won't be a better deal but a collapse of the sanctions effort and no deal at all. Meanwhile, military options will become no more appealing—or less risky.



[MARC LYNCH](#) is Professor of Political Science at George Washington University.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 10



[HOOMAN MAJD](#) is the author of *The Ayatollahs' Democracy*.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 10

A deal painstakingly concluded after almost two years of intensive negotiations is the very best deal that either side could make, or hope for.

Congress should trust the U.S. officials who were charged with making it that this deal is crucial to reducing tensions in the Middle East, and that there is no alternative short of a more advanced Iranian nuclear program, or military action to stop it.



[JESSICA MATHEWS](#) was President of the Carnegie Endowment for International Peace from 1997 to 2015.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 10



[JOHN J. MEARSHEIMER](#) is R. Wendell Harrison Distinguished Service Professor of Political Science at the University of Chicago.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 10

Given that diplomacy involves give and take on both sides, this is an excellent deal. That is especially true when one considers the consequences of rejecting it. This deal is an important step forward in improving U.S.-Iranian relations, which is in America's national interest.



[MOHSEN MILANI](#) is the Executive Director of the Center for Strategic & Diplomatic Studies and Professor of Politics at the University of South Florida.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 10

The JCPOA is a win-win deal for the United States and Iran, and a victory for diplomacy. It is not a perfect deal, but it is infinitely better than the alternatives. The historic deal significantly diminishes the chances of Iran building a nuclear bomb for years to come in exchange for the lifting of the nuclear-related sanctions. It seriously decreases the chances for another U.S. war in the Middle East. Potential fringe benefits include moderation in Tehran's regional policies, a much-needed detente between the United States and Iran, and the opening of Iran's large markets to foreign, particularly Western, investments. Those who oppose the deal have utterly failed to offer a realistic alternative to the JCPOA. The idea of scuttling it in order to get something better is just a clever strategy for keeping Iran and the United States in a perpetual state of animosity, which does not serve the national interests of either.



[STEVEN E. MILLER](#) is Director of the International Security Program at Harvard University's Belfer Center. He is also Editor-in-Chief of the quarterly journal, *International Security*, and Co-Editor of the International Security Program's book series.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 10

The most likely alternative to the JCPOA is not a better deal but no deal. If this agreement fails, concerns that would be pushed off 15 or more years could arise now or in the near future.

With the JCPOA, Iran's nuclear program will be much smaller, less capable, more constrained, more transparent and frozen in important respects during the life of the deal. With no deal, Iran's program will be much larger, more capable, less constrained, and less transparent, and it could grow and modernize substantially in the coming years. Arguments for a better deal depend on the assumption that greater leverage against Iran can be mobilized, leading to larger Iranian concessions. If Congress is responsible for derailing the deal, it will not be possible to gain the international support necessary to achieve this additional leverage.

The real choice is thus this deal or no deal. I prefer the limits and constraints contained in this deal to the more unconstrained environment allowed if there is no deal.



[SEYED HOSSEIN MOUSAVIAN](#) is a Research Scholar at Princeton University's Program on Science and Global Security. He served as Iran's Ambassador to Germany (1990-1997), head of the Foreign Relations Committee of Iran's National Security Council (1997-2005) and as spokesman for Iran in its nuclear negotiations with the European Union (2003-5).

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 10

The Iran nuclear deal represents the most comprehensive international agreement ever reached in the area of nuclear nonproliferation. The confidence-building measures it elicits from Iran in order to ensure that its nuclear program will remain peaceful—ranging from intrusive inspections to novel verification mechanisms—are the most powerful of their kind that a Nuclear Nonproliferation member-state has agreed to. If the objective was to certify Iran's compliance with NPT and block all possible paths toward a bomb, then this agreement represents the maximum that could have been achieved.

Iran's demonstration of such commitment to the NPT and the IAEA's rules and regulations is a clear sign of goodwill, which should not be overlooked. It is important to remember that the coercive policies implemented against Iran during the eight years of Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's presidency only resulted in Iran responding in kind by dramatically expanding its nuclear program, reducing its breakout period to just three months. This is a failed approach, which Congress should not repeat.

Additionally, the alternative, war with Iran, would be an unmitigated disaster for all the parties involved and would bring a region on the verge of total collapse to complete chaos. The reality is that the most severe global threats emanating from the Middle East come from terrorist groups such as ISIS and al Qaeda. Iran is a regional country that has aggressively taken the fight to these groups. Moreover, it is reasonable to say that none of the current crises in the Middle East can be resolved without Iran's participation and inclusion. That's why Congress should not kill the chance.



[ALIREZA NADER](#) is Senior International Policy Analyst at the RAND Corporation.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 10

The JCPOA is a solid nonproliferation agreement that will restrain Iran's nuclear program and ensure that it will not be used for military purposes. The agreement has broad international support; a rejection by Congress will be a diplomatic defeat for the United States, undermining the sanctions regime and providing greater diplomatic leverage for the Iranian government.



[JOSEPH S. NYE, JR.](#), is University Distinguished Service Professor at the Harvard Kennedy School of Government.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 10

It is easy to imagine a better agreement, but the passage of what we have is the best of the realistic alternatives.



[TRITA PARSI](#) is Founder and President of the National Iranian American Council.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 10

This is a no-brainer. In fact, the “debate” over this in the United States is a complete embarrassment. It has already hurt U.S. credibility internationally.



[DANIEL PIPES](#) is the President of the Middle East Forum and Publisher of its *Middle East Quarterly* journal.

Strongly Disagree, Confidence Level 10

It is the worst treaty (and I use that word advisedly) in American history, if not beyond.



[BARRY R. POSEN](#) is Ford International Professor of Political Science at MIT and Director of the MIT Security Studies Program.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 10

I see no better method for constraining Iran’s nuclear industry than this one. I see no sanctions regime that is plausibly strong enough to get more concessions. I see rejection as leading to a weaker sanctions regime and less influence over Iran’s program. This leaves war, which I see as a short-term expedient with a range of unpredictable long-term consequences, none of which are good. This agreement is so clearly in the U.S. national interest that I have found it very hard to think of the debate about the agreement as a debate about the agreement. Rather, it seems to be about something else.



[ROBERT POWELL](#) is Professor of Political Science at Berkeley.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 8

In my view, the chances that the United States could get a better deal if the JCPOA is not approved are very small. The United States is much more likely to find itself with no real limits on Iran and a very weak sanctions regime.



[ELIZABETH ROSENBERG](#) is a Senior Fellow and Director of the Energy, Economics and Security Program at the Center for a New American Security.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 10

Sabotaging the deal will hurt U.S. strategic objectives. Members of Congress may be frustrated that the JCPOA does not ban Iran from enrichment or demand a stop to Iran's support for terrorism. However, it offers meaningful transparency and restrictions regarding Iran's enrichment program, and it advances nuclear security. Furthermore, there is no alternative deal, and the United States will lose credibility and allies if it throws out the current agreement. Proceeding alone with a pressure strategy on Iran would be naïve and unrealistic. Congress should focus not on defeating the JCPOA but on strengthening the deal outside its framework.



[DENNIS ROSS](#) is Distinguished Professor in the Practice of Diplomacy at the Georgetown School of Foreign Service and counselor at The Washington Institute. He previously served as special assistant to U.S. President Barack Obama and senior director for the central region at the National Security Council.

Neutral, Confidence Level 6

If the administration would address the deal's issues through unilateral measures and understandings with the Europeans, I could move toward supporting the agreement. But it needs to create a firewall between threshold and weapons status, given the lack of limitations after year 15.



[MICHAEL RUBIN](#) is a resident scholar at the American Enterprise Institute. He previously worked as an official at the Pentagon, where he dealt with issues in the Middle East.

Disagree, Confidence Level 8

The White House and State Department are correct that U.S. credibility will suffer if Congress disapproves the JCPOA (and overrides a presidential veto). How unfortunate it was, then, that the administration chose to figuratively play Russian roulette with Congress rather than consult it in a more bipartisan way as negotiations progressed.

Ultimately, the costs of tying the United States to a deal that does not adequately and permanently constrain the possible military dimensions of Iran's nuclear program are higher than the blow from rejecting it. Will U.S. partners complain? Yes. Will they open the floodgates of business to Iran? Likely not, as the Clinton administration learned in the mid-1990s. The Iranian nuclear program expanded rapidly during the first decade of the twenty first century not because of a lack of diplomacy but, rather, because the hard currency windfall provided Tehran by a rapid increase in European trade and the rise of gas and oil prices. Providing \$100 billion in sanctions relief and new investment simply repeats past mistakes—on steroids.



[SCOTT D. SAGAN](#) is the Caroline S.G. Munro Professor of Political Science at Stanford University and Senior Fellow at Stanford's Center for International Security and Cooperation.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 9



[BRENT E. SASLEY](#) is Associate Professor of Political Science at the University of Texas at Arlington.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 9



[MOHAMMAD ALI SHABANI](#) is a doctoral researcher at SOAS, University of London and a columnist for Al-Monitor.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 10

Vetoing the JCPOA will embolden Iran since it would severely undermine U.S. credibility and make renewed negotiations—at least for the foreseeable future—virtually impossible. The outcome may thus very well be war. Conversely, failing to veto the JCPOA would also embolden Iran, as it will show the limits of Gulf Arab,

Israeli, and Republican influence. In sum, the debacle over the Congressional approval of the JCPOA is directly playing into Iran's hands.



[GARY G. SICK](#) is a Senior Research scholar at Columbia University's Middle East Institute and an adjunct professor at the School of International and Public Affairs.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 10

Just for the record, the actual vote in Congress will be to remove the president's authority to lift sanctions related to Iran's nuclear program. It appears that 100 percent of Republicans will favor the bill, while Democrats will examine their consciences. If that sounds a bit reminiscent of the ultra-partisan divide on the Affordable Care Act, it should. There are legitimate concerns about the JCPOA, just as there were with the ACA, but they will not be resolved by rejecting U.S. responsibilities under an international agreement with no visible alternative.



[SHIBLEY TELHAMI](#) is the Anwar Sadat Professor for Peace and Development at the University of Maryland, College Park, and a nonresident senior fellow of the Saban Center for Middle East Policy at the Brookings Institution.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 10

Rejecting the deal puts us on a slippery slope toward a costly war that can only accelerate Iran's drive for a bomb instead of ending it. Sanctions have not compelled Iran to stop its program in the past, and they have a smaller chance now, given unlikely international support for a new regime. Failure of sanctions to get intended results only accelerates calls in the United States for further steps, including military action. Nothing in this deal precludes confronting Iran's policies outside of the nuclear realm. And the idea that we can, at this point, negotiate a "better deal" is a pie in the sky.



[STEPHEN VAN EVERA](#) is Ford International Professor in the MIT Political Science Department.

Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 10



[STEPHEN M. WALT](#) is the Robert and Renee Belfer Professor of International Affairs at Harvard's Kennedy School of Government.
Strongly Agree, Confidence Level 9



[AMOS YADLIN](#) is Director of Israel's Institute for National Security Studies (INSS). From 2006 to 2010, he was Chief of Israeli Military Intelligence.
Neutral, Confidence Level 10

The JCPOA is a very problematic agreement, as it raises severe long-term concerns on the nuclear level as well as significant immediate-term concerns among America's allies in the region.

However, it is not my place as an Israeli to opine on what Congress should do. Congressional debates are a matter of internal U.S. politics. Israel has enjoyed bipartisan support in the United States since the presidency of Harry S. Truman, and it must strive to maintain that support.

Instead, I call for Israel and America's leaders to focus on constructive collaboration that will mitigate the shortcomings of the JCPOA, for example, a combined effort to keep the military option both effective and credible in order to deter Iran's leadership from ever breaking toward the bomb.

This collaborative process should conclude with a binding, Israeli-American parallel agreement and the creation of an annual bilateral review forum that includes include high-level officials and reassess the status of the nuclear and conventional Iranian threat.

<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/iran/2015-09-07/should-congress-approve-iran-deal>