

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

September 5, 2019

President Donald Trump
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear President Trump,

We write to express our grave concern regarding your policy and diplomacy with North Korea and to urge you to redouble efforts to forge a successful and durable path towards denuclearization of North Korea – by diplomatic means – while the opportunity still exists. Specifically, we urge you to recognize that North Korea’s series of ballistic missile tests clearly contravene United Nations Security Council resolutions and are being used to advance their operational capabilities to deliver nuclear weapons, and to press the United Nations to take enforcement action against North Korea for its violations of U.N. Security Council resolutions. While these tests did not directly threaten the United States, they are a clear threat to our treaty allies in the Republic of Korea and Japan, and they have allowed North Korea to continue to develop significant new ballistic missile technology alongside its still unconstrained nuclear weapons programs.

Despite these clear violations of United Nations Security Council resolutions – and direct threats to our allies – your administration has downplayed the significance of these tests and suggested that there is no rush to reach an agreement that verifiably freezes and reverses North Korea’s nuclear and missile development. Accepting North Korean ballistic missile tests represents, in our view, a significant step backwards in the negotiations, especially as you yourself have previously asserted that North Korea halting *all* ballistic missile tests and nuclear tests was a sign of your administration’s success.

Moreover, by repeatedly calling into question the importance of our alliances and combined military exercises, you threaten to undermine strategic stability on the Korean Peninsula. Our alliance architecture is critical to safeguard US national interests, and these exercises are a critical element of US strategic engagement on the Peninsula, a guarantee of the freedom and prosperity of the people of the Republic of Korea, and a vital element of any coherent strategy to assure that the United States maintains leverage for successful denuclearization diplomacy. Threatening to unravel the integrity of our alliance architecture in Asia makes us less capable of dealing with North Korea, not more.

Mr. President, we must find a path to engagement with North Korea that minimizes, and subsequently eliminates, its nuclear and ballistic missile threat while providing stability and preserving our strategic edge in the region. Your success in this endeavor is vital for our national

security interests, and we want to support your administration in the execution of a coherent, durable and sustainable strategy.

As a first step to rebalance our denuclearization diplomacy with North Korea we urge you to undertake a more pragmatic, verifiable approach to pursue denuclearization on the Korean peninsula. We also urge you to take advantage of the upcoming United Nations General Assembly session to simultaneously push for strong enforcement of existing sanctions and accountability for North Korea's on-going ballistic missile activities at the Security Council while also seeking to establish the sort of regular working-level negotiations necessary for diplomacy to succeed. A pathway for progress and successful diplomacy with North Korea that balances pressure and engagement in the right measure is still possible, and we urge you and your administration to take immediate and meaningful action.

Sincerely,



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



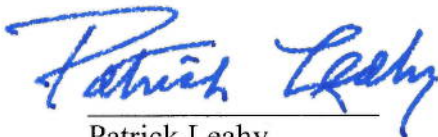
Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator



Robert Menendez
United States Senator



Jack Reed
United States Senator



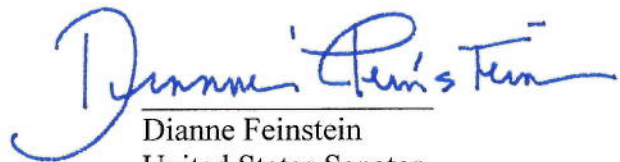
Patrick Leahy
United States Senator



Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



Mark R. Warner
United States Senator



Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator