

As you may have read in the news, the United States recently charged two individuals connected to Iran with plotting to murder the Saudi Arabia Ambassador to the U.S. here on American soil. According to a Department of Justice [report](#) outlining the allegations, an Iranian-American named Manssor Arbabsiar sought to hire a member of a violent Mexican drug trafficking cartel to conduct the assassination using explosives and had \$100,000 wired into a U.S. bank account as a down payment for the act. Meanwhile, Gholam Shakuri, a member of Iran's special operations "Qods Force" which engages in terrorist activity, allegedly was aware of—and approved—the plot. Arbabsiar was arrested and reportedly confessed to his role in the plot, while Shakuri remains at large, presumably in Iran.

I believe these allegations are extremely alarming. As noted by the Justice Department, an assassination attempt on our nation's soil likely would have also resulted in the deaths of innocent Americans who were in the vicinity of the Saudi Ambassador. I applaud the exceptional detective work by U.S. law enforcement that exposed this deadly plot and prevented it from occurring. I hope that both men—and anyone else involved in the plot—are brought to justice.

The allegations further confirm the threat Iran poses to our national security interests. Iran continues to aggressively pursue [nuclear weapons](#), funds and [supports terrorist groups](#) in the region, has [provided arms](#) that have killed U.S. troops serving in Iraq, and has a dismal human rights record as evidenced by their pending threat to [execute a local pastor](#) who converted to Christianity. With these concerns in mind, I strongly supported passage of a [law](#) last year that strengthened U.S. sanctions against Iran. These sanctions have limited Iran's access to foreign banks and capital—making it more difficult to fund their energy sector and by extension their nuclear weapons program—but the high price of oil has kept Iran's economy growing at a fairly strong pace.

Most recently, I have agreed to cosponsor [legislation](#) to further discourage foreign companies from doing business with Iran and to insist that President Obama utilize the full weight of sanctions available to his Administration. This legislation has 342 bipartisan cosponsors and the House Committee on Foreign Affairs is scheduled to consider it later this week. Further, in light of the assassination plot, I call on Russia and China and other countries deeply invested in Iran to support additional international sanctions against the regime. There is simply no reason for any country interested in security and peace to continue to fund and support the hostile activities of this hostile regime. Because Iran's nuclear program severely threatens U.S. troops and our national security, I also continue to believe the United States should keep all options on the table to prevent Iran from producing a nuclear weapon.