

# Iran Money Freeze: Blackburn Steps Up



by Roger L. Simon

Good on Tennessee GOP Sen. Marsha Blackburn for arranging a [press conference](#) of 11 Republican senators on Oct. 17 calling for a formal freeze on the \$6 billion in Iranian funds, actually a payment to the mullahs, lifted by the Biden administration in return for hostages.

As was noted during the conference, the \$6 billion is only a small part of the current administration's contribution to the Iranian mullahs. If you add the benefit to their oil revenues from Biden and Co. shutting down U.S. production, it amounts to more like \$60 billion: a lot of missiles for Hamas and Hezbollah.

"It is perplexing why the Biden administration refuses to crack down on Iran and issue a formal decision to freeze the \$6 billion ransom payment," Ms. Blackburn [said](#). "Instead, the

administration is selectively leaking parts of their backdoor deal with Qatar to the media. We need to ensure the Biden administration will not release another dollar to Iran—even when the media attention on Israel dissipates. We must send the message that America does not reward terrorism or the arbitrary detention of our citizens abroad.”

Perplexing indeed. But perhaps things are changing, as numerous senators have joined the original 11 from the presser and are now clamoring for us to reinstate sanctions on Iran at the least. It’s about time.

Ms. Blackburn had sent a [letter](#) to President Joe Biden on Oct. 9, two days after the Hamas terror invasion. It read in part: “Iran is the world’s largest state sponsor of terrorism, and the Wall Street Journal reported that the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps worked with Hamas to plan the ongoing attacks on Israel. ... To stand by and allow Iran access to these funds as Hamas infiltrates Israel and murders, rapes, and mutilates countless Israelis is unconscionable.”

She had the following co-signers: Thom Tillis (R-N.C.), Steve Daines (R-Mont.), Rick Scott (R-Fla.), Kevin Cramer (R-N.D.), John Thune (R-S.D.), James Lankford (R-Okla.), Mike Lee (R-Utah), John Cornyn (R-Texas), Bill Cassidy (R-La.), Lindsey Graham (R-S.C.), Katie Boyd Britt (R-Ala.), Tom Cotton (R-Ark.), Pete Ricketts (R-Neb.), Mike Braun (R-Ind.), Markwayne Mullin (R-Okla.), Eric Schmitt (R-Mo.), Ted Budd (R-N.C.), Marco Rubio (R-Fla.), and Roger Marshall (R-Kan.)

Other senators are apparently adding their voices. Tim Scott (R-S.C.) has joined Rick Scott (already a signer) in sponsoring the [Revoke Iranian Funding](#) bill for which many more Republican senators are signing up.

You would think it would be unanimous. What’s holding up the Democrat side of the Senate on this?

Is it a lingering effort to preserve the possibility of an Iran nuclear deal?

Or do they take their cues from The New York Times that made

the grievous [miscue](#) of immediately assuming Hamas was telling the truth about Israel being responsible for the explosion at the Gaza hospital?

Given the [evidence](#), at this point it's almost certain to have been caused by an errant Islamic Jihad missile.

And given that Hamas has made a habit for years of hiding their missiles in hospitals and schools, it's an odd error for The NY Times to have made in the first place.

Meanwhile, about the time President Biden was returning from his eight-hour sojourn in Israel, he announced the administration was sending \$100 million to aid those many Gazans, he claimed, who do not side with Hamas.

Color me skeptical. Where have they been since 2007, when Hamas used lethal force to take over the territory from the Palestinian Authority? Not doing much rebelling.

This sounds to me more like a new form of jizya we American taxpayers are paying to the Arab world, hoping they will settle down.

In case you don't know what that is, from Wikipedia: "Jizya is a per capita yearly taxation historically levied in the form of financial charge on dhimmis, that is, permanent non-Muslim subjects of a state governed by Islamic law."

On a personal note, I will be attending, for *The Epoch Times*, the annual Republican Jewish Coalition leadership forum on Oct. 28 and 29 at the Venetian Resort in Las Vegas.

I have been to several for the press, but, in present circumstances, this promises to be by far the most dramatic.

All GOP presidential candidates will be speaking, including, for the first time, one Donald J. Trump.

Unlike the debates, the others will be able to take potshots at 45 in person—or relatively, at least, he'll be backstage—also for the first time.

My prediction about that: It won't matter. Nothing else has.

Like many others I speak with, I'm becoming increasingly impatient with the tedious Republican primary process. And given the world's state, the candidates' arguments are sounding more trivial than ever.

Often, they seem like pathetic attempts to differentiate themselves when the differences barely exist.

If it weren't part of my job, I would be hard-pressed to watch the forthcoming debate or debates.

With the world what it is, I lie in bed at night wishing that Mr. Trump and Florida Gov. Ron DeSantis would come together and do what they should have done in the first place—run as a team with Mr. Trump as president and Mr. DeSantis as VP with real responsibilities and a brilliant future.

Besides putting a lot of us out of misery, the two of them working together instead of at odds would send a message of solidarity sorely needed in these increasingly parlous times.

Meanwhile, the discombobulated GOP House should learn from the solidarity of the GOP senators in their approach.

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