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From: Eltrich, Kate (Appropriations) [Kate_Eltrich@appro.senate.gov]

Sent: Wednesday, August 06, 2008 3:43 PM

To: Emily L Blout

Subject: RE: Regarding Iran Democracy fund- wanted to verify with you before we publicize

Sorry for the delay, I was traveling. I think your interpretation of the prohibition on use of the funds for exchanges is accurate. We were concerned that the Iran office wants to run their own exchange programs with ESF funding, where we think it's more appropriate for the exchange professionals in ECE to administer. And on BBG, you're right we are trying to diffuse some of the criticism and link oversight to real standards. Hope this is helpful.

From: Emily L Blout [mailto:ebout@niacouncil.org]

Sent: Wednesday, July 23, 2008 2:21 PM

To: Eltrich, Kate (Appropriations)

Subject: Regarding Iran Democracy fund- wanted to verify with you before we publicize

Kate,

I hope you're doing well. I wanted to check in on the status of the Iran Democracy fund this appropriations cycle. I looked over the marked up bill and was pleased to see you included some important revisions to last year's language. We're preparing an analysis for our website and I wanted to make sure that we've interpreted your changes accurately.

I have two questions in particular: Regarding the \$20 million for Iran under the Democracy Fund: was the intention of the language prohibiting its use for "educational and cultural exchanges" to de-politicize such exchanges, effectively separating them out from the controversial "regime change" funding? Also, is it fair to say that the language instructing the BBG to enforce rigorous oversight and transparency is partly an attempt to address concerns about the declining quality of VOA Persian's programming?

Thanks so much for your help.

Emily Blout

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