

Exclusive: House Republicans Ask Biden Administration Why It's Not Sanctioning North Korea and China

[Kristina Wong](#) 31 Mar 2022



[Korean Central News Agency/Korea News Service via AP, File](#)

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House Republicans are pressing the Biden administration on why it is

not making full use of congressionally approved sanctions against China for providing support to North Korea in light of Pyongyang's recent illicit ballistic missile testing, Breitbart News has learned.

In a March 31, 2022, letter to Secretary of State Antony Blinken led by Rep. Kat Cammack (R-FL), members of the Republican Study Committee noted the uptick in North Korea's illicit missile testing and activities with Chinese support in recent weeks.

They wrote:

On March 4, North Korea launched a ballistic missile toward the sea off its east coast, its second missile test that week. On February 26, Japan and South Korea claimed that Pyongyang launched a ballistic missile which the Kim regime claimed was for a reconnaissance satellite system. Your administration has recently assessed that these latter two missiles are components of new intercontinental ballistic missile system under development. North Korea has launched at least 11 projectiles this year, including two modified long-range cruise missiles and its first intermediate-range ballistic missile since 2017, the Hwasong-12, which can reach the U.S. territory of Guam.

"In the face of these developments we find your administration's North Korea policy lacking and urge you to levy, tighten, and enforce sanctions based on congressional statutes as well as the broad executive authorities available to incumber North Korean military modernization and counter the Kim regime," they wrote to Blinken.



U.S. President Joe Biden and Secretary of State Antony Blinken participate in a meeting with President Moon Jae-in of the Republic of Korea in the State Dining Room of the White House on May 21, 2021. (Stefani Reynolds-Pool/Getty Images)

They noted that Congress passed mandatory sanctions on North Korea in 2016, 2017, and 2019 by “overwhelming bipartisan majorities,” adding, “Despite this bipartisan track record of calling for pressure on North Korea, your administration does not appear to have a serious sanctions strategy nor implementation plan for mandatory penalties on North Korea.”

They noted that the Biden administration has issued sanctions focused on North Korea’s weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programs twice — on January 12, 2022, targeting six North Korean individuals, including four based in China, a Russian individual, and a

Russian entity; and on March 11, 2022, against three Russian companies and two individuals for supporting North Korea's weapons of mass destruction and ballistic missile programs.

But they asked specifically why the administration did not designate additional entities in China and Russia as part of its North Korea sanctions designations and why the administration is not sanctioning entities in China associated with illicit coal shipments to North Korea [documented](#) by the United Nations Security Council.

"Does the Department assess that North Korea exported coal in 2021? If so, why has the administration not issued sanctions against entities, individuals, and financial institutions, including in China, associated with these activities?" the lawmakers asked Blinken.

Cammack said in a statement to Breitbart News:

Sanctions against North Korea will not work until we hold China accountable. Under President Trump, the U.S. imposed sanctions on Chinese banks and financial institutions that provided support to North Korea, but ever since Biden took office, we've seen zero sanctions out of this White House.

Despite several missile launches and provocations, this administration repeatedly fails to hold China accountable for its work with North Korea. I am pleased to lead my Republican Study Committee colleagues in calling out the Biden State Department for its gross failures on this front.



North Korean leader Kim Jong-un speaks at May Day Stadium on September 19, 2018, in Pyongyang, North Korea. (Pyeongyang Press Corps/Getty Images)

In addition to Cammack, the letter is signed by RSC Chairman Jim Banks, RSC National Security and Foreign Affairs Task Force Chairman Joe Wilson, and Reps. Ted Budd, Guy Reschenthaler, Dan Crenshaw, Neal Dunn, Buddy Carter, Byron Donalds, Jeff Duncan, Doug LaMalfa, Debbie Lesko, Doug Lamborn, Jake LaTurner, John Joyce, Tracey Mann, Blake Moore, Markwayne Mullin, August Pfluger, Bryan Steil, Greg Steube, Chris Stewart, Mike Waltz, Brad Wenstrup, Brian Babin, Ben Cline, Nicole Malliotakis, and Bob Good.

Banks said in a statement:

Sanctions on North Korea are worthless if you refuse to hold China

accountable. President Trump understood this, but more than a year into his presidency, Joe Biden has failed to impose the sanctions the Trump administration placed on Chinese banks and financial institutions that support North Korea. It's a puzzle and the only explanation I can find is that Biden wants to protect his family's multi-million-dollar business dealings.

I'm grateful to the more than 20 members of Republican Study Committee who joined Rep. Cammack's letter to the Biden State Department.

Wilson added:

The Biden administration is severely lacking in its policy on North Korea as Kim Jong Un continues testing ballistic missiles. We need answers as to why this administration refuses to designate individuals in China and Russia under sanctions against North Korea's ballistic missile program.

The lawmakers also said they are disturbed by the U.N. reporting that North Korea and Iran have "resumed cooperation on long-range missile development projects" and asked what the status of cooperation is between the two nations on ballistic missile cooperation and what the Biden administration is doing about it.

The Biden administration is seeking to reenter the Obama administration's nuclear deal with Iran and has been opaque on details of the negotiations.

"We seek your written answers to these questions no later than March 31st, 2022 at 11:59 PM," the House Republicans wrote.