

House Republicans demand DOJ probe of Mamdani administration over planned meeting with Iranian ambassador

By **Tim Harrison** on
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Fourteen House Republicans sent a letter to Acting Attorney General Todd Blanche on Thursday morning asking the Department of Justice to investigate New York City Mayor Zohran Mamdani's administration for potential violations of the Logan Act, the federal statute that bars American citizens from conducting unauthorized negotiations with foreign governments in disputes involving the United States.

The request, **first reported by Breitbart News**, follows revelations that Commissioner Ana María Archila, the head of the NYC Mayor's Office for International Affairs, had scheduled a July 7 meeting at 11:00 a.m. with Amir-Saeid Iravani, the Islamic Republic of Iran's ambassador to the United Nations. Two other senior officials from Mamdani's international affairs office were also set to attend.

The meeting never took place. The State Department learned of it, confronted the Mamdani administration, and the sit-down was called off. But for the House Republicans who signed the letter, led by Rep. Addison McDowell of North Carolina, the fact that it was scheduled at all, during active U.S. negotiations with Iran, raises questions that only a formal DOJ investigation can answer.

What the letter says

The **letter to Acting AG Blanche** lays out the lawmakers' concerns in plain terms. It opens by flagging the timing of the proposed meeting against the backdrop of sensitive diplomatic negotiations.

"As you know, negotiations with Iran are in a critical stage. Given its timing, we believe this proposed meeting may have presented significant national security risks."

The letter goes further, arguing that the actions of both Mamdani and Archila "create a clear conflict of interest with the United States' strategic military actions in Iran and across the Middle East, warranting further examination by the Department."

The lawmakers explicitly invoke the Logan Act, codified at 18 U.S.C. § 953, which prohibits American citizens from holding unauthorized negotiations with foreign governments in disputes involving the United States. They call for a formal investigation to determine whether Archila, acting on behalf of Mayor Mamdani, "engaged in any unlawful activity or communication with the Islamic Republic of Iran."

The letter also expresses the signatories' support for President Donald Trump's efforts to advance American economic and national security interests in the Middle East, a framing that underscores the Republican view that freelance diplomacy by a city official could undercut the administration's negotiating position.

McDowell's warning

In an exclusive statement to Breitbart News, Rep. McDowell sharpened his criticism of the mayor's office. He did not mince words about what he sees as the stakes.

"Undermining national security has serious risks, and the Mayor of New York should know better than to meddle in our foreign affairs during the height of negotiations between the White House and Iran."

McDowell added that "the Department of Justice needs to look into Mamdani's office and ensure they are not acting as rogue agents to the detriment of America's national security." He concluded: "Mamdani does not speak for America. President Trump earned the public's trust to ensure the safety and security of the United States."

Thirteen other House Republicans co-signed the letter, including Reps. Lauren Boebert (R-CO), Claudia Tenney (R-NY), Pete Sessions (R-TX), Wesley Hunt (R-TX), Pat Fallon (R-TX), Anna Paulina Luna (R-FL), Randy Fine (R-FL), Earl Carter (R-GA), Clay Fuller (R-GA), Richard McCormick (R-GA), Pat Harrigan (R-NC), Max Miller (R-OH), and Riley Moore (R-WV).

How the meeting came to light

City Journal first obtained screenshots of the calendar invitation for the July 7 meeting and confirmed its existence with sources connected to the international affairs community and Archila's office. The reporting revealed that the **State Department stepped in and blocked the sit-down** after discovering it had been arranged.

A spokesperson for the NYC Mayor's Office for International Affairs told City Journal flatly: "This meeting did not and will not take place."

The State Department issued its own statement on a Friday, calling it "unconscionable" that a New York City official would meet with an Iranian ambassador at this time. The department said it was appreciative that the meeting had been called off. Officials also said they had "clarified acceptable conduct" with Mamdani's team, diplomatic language for a dressing-down.

Archila was allegedly reprimanded by the mayor's office after the episode. The New York Times reported that Mamdani, speaking at an unrelated press conference, characterized the proposed meeting as the result of "a request that came in" to the Mayor's Office for International Affairs, "not one that originated from the office." His administration said it was developing updated protocols for managing meeting requests going forward.

That explanation raises more questions than it answers. Who made the request? What was the proposed agenda? The subject of the meeting, as the congressional letter itself notes, remains unclear.

Who is Ana María Archila?

The commissioner at the center of this controversy is no stranger to political confrontation. Archila is the progressive activist who famously accosted then-Sen. Jeff Flake (R-AZ) in a Capitol elevator during the Brett Kavanaugh Supreme Court confirmation fight, pressing him on his support for the nominee. Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez later brought Archila as her guest to President Trump's 2019 State of the Union address.

Before joining the Mamdani administration in February, Archila co-founded and led Make the Road New York, a progressive organization. She also served as co-executive director at the Center for Popular Democracy and as co-director of the Working Families Party. She was not described as having significant experience in international affairs before her appointment.

That background matters. The Mayor's Office for International Affairs is supposed to manage New York City's relationships with foreign governments and international

organizations, a role that, at minimum, requires an understanding of the legal boundaries separating municipal engagement from federal diplomacy. Scheduling a meeting with the ambassador of a hostile foreign power during active negotiations is not a routine consular courtesy. It is the kind of move that triggers exactly the federal scrutiny now being requested.

The episode fits a broader pattern in the Mamdani administration. The mayor has already drawn fire for **refusing to enforce a Supreme Court ruling on deportation protections**, raising questions about his willingness to operate within legal boundaries set by higher authorities.

The Logan Act question

Logan Act prosecutions are exceedingly rare, the statute dates to 1799, and no one has been successfully prosecuted under it in the modern era. Critics have long debated whether the law is even enforceable. But the statute remains on the books, and its text is broad: it covers any U.S. citizen who, "without authority of the United States," directly or indirectly commences or carries on correspondence or intercourse with any foreign government or its agents with intent to influence that government's conduct in relation to disputes with the United States.

Whether Archila's scheduling of a meeting, later canceled, rises to that threshold is a legal question the DOJ would need to evaluate. The House Republicans' letter does not claim a violation occurred. It asks for an investigation to determine whether one did.

That distinction matters. The lawmakers are requesting scrutiny, not declaring guilt. But the underlying facts they cite, a city official arranging a sit-down with Iran's UN ambassador during sensitive negotiations, without apparent federal authorization, present a set of circumstances that federal prosecutors would ordinarily want to examine, regardless of how rarely the Logan Act is invoked.

A pattern of governance problems

The Iran meeting episode does not exist in isolation. Mamdani's administration has faced mounting criticism on multiple fronts since he took office. His decision to **drop a plan for 580 new NYPD officers** drew warnings from police unions about burnout and a looming summer crisis. His political operation has aggressively consolidated power

within New York Democratic politics, a dynamic that has generated friction even within his own party.

And the Archila appointment itself has drawn scrutiny. A Mamdani aide previously pressured ABC executives after a television host labeled the then-candidate an antisemite, an episode that raised questions about how the mayor's team handles criticism and exercises influence.

Taken together, these incidents paint a picture of a city administration that operates as though the normal rules of governance, legal boundaries, institutional norms, federal authority, are suggestions rather than constraints.

What happens next

The DOJ has not publicly responded to the letter or indicated whether it will open an investigation. Acting AG Blanche received the request Thursday morning, and no timeline for a response has been reported.

Several questions remain unanswered. Did Archila act on Mamdani's direction, or independently? The mayor says the meeting originated from an inbound request, but reporting indicates Archila allegedly did not inform Mamdani of the meeting at all, two claims that sit uneasily together. Who initiated the "request" that came into the international affairs office? What was the meeting supposed to accomplish? And what do the "updated protocols" the administration says it is developing actually look like?

The State Department has already made its view clear: the proposed meeting was unconscionable. Now fourteen members of Congress want to know whether it was also unlawful.

When a city mayor's office starts scheduling meetings with the ambassador of a hostile foreign power during active federal negotiations, the question isn't whether Congress should ask for an investigation. It's why anyone would object to one.