

Longtime Cruz Aide Will Now Help Lead Trump's Counterterrorism Efforts

A longtime aide to U.S. Sen. Ted Cruz (R-Texas) is now going to work for the Trump administration.

Dr. Victoria Coates, a foreign policy expert who previously worked for former Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and former Texas Gov. Rick Perry, has been a top Cruz aide and confidante since 2013. She crafted much of his national security policy during his unsuccessful bid for the GOP presidential nomination last year.

In her new role as senior director for strategic assessments at the National Security Council, she will manage long-term threats to the U.S. According to *The Washington Free Beacon*, which broke the story Tuesday afternoon, this is a sign President Donald Trump intends to ramp up the pressure on Iran.

According to the *Free Beacon*:

Coates was instrumental in Cruz's effort to counter the Obama administration's diplomacy with Iran that resulted in the nuclear agreement. She also led behind-the-scenes efforts to investigate the former administration's secret diplomacy with Iran that resulted in the payment of billions of dollars to Tehran.

Coates' precise role in the White House was misreported earlier this week by both *The Wall Street Journal* and *The Washington Post*. The *Journal* said she would oversee "strategic initiatives," while the *Post* said only that was joining the "strategic initiatives group."

Trump's latest executive order to halt immigration closely resembles a legislative effort by Cruz to pause immigration to the United States by any individual originating in a high-risk area, such as countries where al Qaeda, ISIS, and other terror groups hold significant territory.

Cruz told the Free Beacon that Coates would help Trump's national security team craft an aggressive response to the rise of Islamic terrorism and its threat against the American homeland.

"Dr. Coates brings together brilliance, judgment and a deep understanding of the perils facing America in this increasingly dangerous world," Cruz said. "For the last four years, she has played a central role in the Senate helping formulate our response to a feckless administration that was willfully blind to the threat of radical Islamic terrorism."

"Although we will miss her greatly in our office, I'm thrilled that Dr. Coates will now play a leading role at President Trump's NSC, helping plan for an uncertain future, strengthen our alliances, and defeat our enemies," Cruz said.

During the Republican presidential race last year, Coates sat down for a wide-ranging interview with Ben Weingarten of . [Click here](#) for a transcript of the relevant portions of that interview. {eo}