

be one of the most persecuted minorities, one of the most persecuted populations on the planet. I think this particular resolution rightly shines a light on the abuses committed against them, calling for an end to all violence.

I urge all Members here, but also I urge the Government of Burma, to consider that we are at a point of crisis. If the government there does not reverse course immediately, it will do irreparable damage to its standing in the world and earn it a place among the most egregious human rights abusers in modern history. So what we ask is a reversal of these policies.

I urge all colleagues to vote in favor, send a clear signal that the U.S. will not turn a blind eye toward these atrocities.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 90.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays. The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

RESIGNATION FROM THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following resignation from the House of Representatives:

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 5, 2017.

Hon. PAUL RYAN,
Speaker, House of Representatives,
Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. SPEAKER: I have made the decision to retire from my position as the Member of the United States House of Representatives from Michigan's Thirteenth Congressional District effective today.

Sincerely,

JOHN CONYERS, Jr.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, December 5, 2017.

Hon. RICK SNYDER,
Governor of Michigan,
Lansing, MI.

DEAR GOVERNOR SNYDER: I have made the decision to retire from my position as the Member of the United States House of Representatives from Michigan's Thirteenth Congressional District effective today.

Sincerely,

JOHN CONYERS, Jr.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under clause 5(d) of rule XX, the Chair announces to the House that, in light of the resignation of the gentleman from

Michigan (Mr. CONYERS), the whole number of the House is 433.

TAYLOR FORCE ACT

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1164) to condition assistance to the West Bank and Gaza on steps by the Palestinian Authority to end violence and terrorism against Israeli citizens, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1164

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Taylor Force Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The Palestinian Authority's practice of paying salaries to terrorists serving in Israeli prisons, as well as to the families of deceased terrorists, is an incentive to commit acts of terror.

(2) The United States does not provide direct budgetary support to the Palestinian Authority. The United States does pay certain debts held by the Palestinian Authority and funds programs for which the Palestinian Authority would otherwise be responsible.

(3) The United States Government supports community-based programs in the West Bank and Gaza that provide for basic human needs, such as food, water, health, shelter, protection, education, and livelihoods, and that promote peace and development.

(4) Since fiscal year 2015, annual appropriations legislation has mandated the reduction of Economic Support Fund aid for the Palestinian Authority as a result of their payments for acts of terrorism including, in fiscal year 2017, a reduction "by an amount the Secretary determines is equivalent to the amount expended by the Palestinian Authority, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and any successor or affiliated organizations with such entities as payments for acts of terrorism by individuals who are imprisoned after being fairly tried and convicted for acts of terrorism and by individuals who died committing acts of terrorism during the previous calendar year".

SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

Congress—

(1) calls on the Palestinian Authority, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and any successor or affiliated organizations to stop payments for acts of terrorism by individuals who are imprisoned after being fairly tried and convicted for acts of terrorism and by individuals who died committing acts of terrorism and to repeal the laws authorizing such payments;

(2) calls on all donor countries providing budgetary assistance to the Palestinian Authority to cease direct budgetary support until the Palestinian Authority stops all payments incentivizing terror;

(3) urges the Palestinian Authority to develop programs to provide essential public services and support to any individual in need within its jurisdictional control, rather than to provide payments contingent on perpetrating acts of violence;

(4) urges the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations to use the voice, vote, and influence of the United States at the United Nations to highlight the issue of Palestinian Authority payments

for acts of terrorism and to urge other Member States to apply pressure upon the Palestinian Authority to immediately cease such payments; and

(5) urges the Department of State to use its bilateral and multilateral engagements with all governments and organizations committed to the cause of peace between Israel and the Palestinians to highlight the issue of Palestinian Authority payments for acts of terrorism and to urge such governments and organizations to join the United States in calling on the Palestinian Authority to immediately cease such payments.

SEC. 4. LIMITATION ON ASSISTANCE TO THE WEST BANK AND GAZA.

(a) LIMITATION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—For fiscal year 2018 and each of the five subsequent fiscal years, funds authorized to be appropriated or otherwise made available for assistance under chapter 4 of part II of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2346 et seq.; relating to Economic Support Fund) and available for assistance for the West Bank and Gaza that directly benefits the Palestinian Authority may only be made available for such purpose if, except as provided in subsection (d), not later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and every 180 days thereafter, the Secretary of State certifies in writing to the appropriate congressional committees that the Palestinian Authority, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and any successor or affiliated organizations—

(A) are taking credible steps to end acts of violence against Israeli citizens and United States citizens that are perpetrated or materially assisted by individuals under their jurisdictional control, such as the March 2016 attack that killed former United States Army officer Taylor Force, a veteran of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan;

(B) have terminated payments for acts of terrorism against Israeli citizens and United States citizens to any individual, after being fairly tried, who has been imprisoned for such acts of terrorism and to any individual who died committing such acts of terrorism, including to a family member of such individuals;

(C) have revoked any law, decree, regulation, or document authorizing or implementing a system of compensation for imprisoned individuals that uses the sentence or period of incarceration of an individual imprisoned for an act of terrorism to determine the level of compensation paid, or have taken comparable action that has the effect of invalidating any such law, decree, regulation, or document; and

(D) are publicly condemning such acts of violence and are taking steps to investigate or are cooperating in investigations of such acts to bring the perpetrators to justice.

(2) ADDITIONAL CERTIFICATION REQUIREMENT.—The Secretary of State shall include in the certification required under paragraph (1) the definition of "acts of terrorism" that the Secretary used for purposes of making the determination in subparagraph (B) of such paragraph.

(b) EXCEPTION.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Subject to paragraph (2), the limitation on assistance under subsection (a) shall not apply to—

(A) payments made to the East Jerusalem Hospital Network;

(B) assistance for wastewater projects; and

(C) assistance for any other program, project, or activity that provides vaccinations to children.

(2) NOTIFICATION.—The Secretary of State shall notify in writing the appropriate congressional committees not later than 15 days prior to making funds available for assistance under subparagraph (A), (B), or (C) of paragraph (1).

(c) **RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.**—Funds withheld pursuant to this section—

(1) shall be deemed to satisfy any similar withholding or reduction required under any other provision of law relating to the Palestinian Authority's payments for acts of terrorism; and

(2) shall be in an amount that is not less than the total amount required by such other provision of law.

(d) **INITIAL USE AND DISPOSITION OF WITHHELD FUNDS.**—

(1) **PERIOD OF AVAILABILITY.**—Funds withheld pursuant to this section are authorized to remain available for an additional 2 years from the date on which the availability of such funds would otherwise have expired.

(2) **USE OF FUNDS.**—Funds withheld pursuant to this section may be made available for assistance for the West Bank and Gaza that directly benefits the Palestinian Authority upon a certification by the Secretary of State that the Palestinian Authority, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and any successor or affiliated organizations have met the conditions set forth in subsection (a). Except as provided in paragraph (3), such funds may not be made available for any purpose other than for assistance for the West Bank and Gaza that directly benefits the Palestinian Authority.

(3) **DISPOSITION OF UNUSED FUNDS.**—Beginning on the date that is 180 days after the last day on which the initial availability of funds withheld pursuant to this section would otherwise have expired, such funds are authorized to be made available to the Department of State for assistance under chapter 4 of part II of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C.2346 et seq.; relating to Economic Support Fund) for purposes other than assistance for the West Bank and Gaza.

(e) **REPORT.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—If the Secretary of State is unable to certify in writing to the appropriate congressional committees that the Palestinian Authority, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and any successor or affiliated organizations have met the conditions described in subsection (a), the Secretary shall, not later than 15 days after the date on which the Secretary is unable to make such certification, submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report that contains the following:

(A) The reasons why the Secretary was unable to certify in writing that such organizations have met such requirements.

(B) The definition of "acts of terrorism" that the Secretary used for purposes of making the determination in subparagraph (B) of subsection (a)(1).

(C) The total amount of funds to be withheld.

(2) **FORM.**—The report required by this subsection shall be submitted in unclassified form but may include a classified annex.

(f) **LIST OF CRITERIA.**—

(1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 15 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a list of the criteria that the Secretary uses to determine whether assistance for the West Bank and Gaza is assistance that directly benefits the Palestinian Authority for purposes of carrying out this section.

(2) **UPDATE.**—The Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees an updated list under paragraph (1) not later than 15 days after the date on which the Secretary makes any modification to the list.

SEC. 5. INITIAL REPORT.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 60 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit to the

appropriate congressional committees a report describing those programs, projects, and activities funded by the United States Government that have been or will be suspended by reason of withholding of funds under section 4.

(b) **FORM.**—The report required by subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form but may include a classified annex.

SEC. 6. ANNUAL REPORT.

(a) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, and annually thereafter for 6 years, the Secretary of State shall submit to the appropriate congressional committees a report including at a minimum the following elements:

(1) An estimate of the amount expended by the Palestinian Authority, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and any successor or affiliated organizations during the previous calendar year as payments for acts of terrorism by individuals who are imprisoned for such acts.

(2) An estimate of the amount expended by the Palestinian Authority, the Palestine Liberation Organization, and any successor or affiliated organizations during the previous calendar year as payments to the families of deceased individuals who committed an act of terrorism.

(3) An overview of Palestinian laws, decrees, regulations, or documents in effect the previous calendar year that authorize or implement any payments reported under paragraphs (1) and (2).

(4) A description of United States Government policy, efforts, and engagement with the Palestinian Authority in order to confirm the revocation of any law, decree, regulation, or document in effect the previous calendar year that authorizes or implements any payments reported under paragraphs (1) and (2).

(5) A description of United States Government policy, efforts, and engagement with other governments, and at the United Nations, to highlight the issue of Palestinian payments for acts of terrorism and to urge other nations to join the United States in calling on the Palestinian Authority to immediately cease such payments.

(b) **FORM OF REPORT.**—The report required by subsection (a) shall be submitted in unclassified form but may include a classified annex.

SEC. 7. APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES DEFINED.

In this Act, the term "appropriate congressional committees" means—

(1) the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives; and

(2) the Committee on Appropriations and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, today we consider the Taylor Force Act. This is bipartisan legislation that honors a courageous and patriotic young American, Taylor Force.

Taylor was an Eagle Scout. He was a West Point graduate who served his country with distinction in Afghanistan and Iraq before he enrolled in Vanderbilt's MBA program. He was a young man with big dreams and loads of potential. Then Taylor's life was tragically cut short at the age of 28 when he was murdered by a Palestinian terrorist while on a business school trip to Israel.

I had the honor of meeting again with Taylor's parents, Stuart and Robbi, who were on Capitol Hill today. They have worked so hard to make this bill a legacy for their son, to ensure that no other family has to experience what they have experienced. They have been so generous with their time, their spirit, their story. We are grateful for all of their efforts, and we wish them comfort as they continue to mourn the heartbreaking loss of their son.

We need to be clear about responsibility for this vicious attack. The Palestinian Authority gives salaries to Palestinians who attack innocent people like Taylor. If the attacker dies, then the attacker's family is compensated under their law. I know it is hard for us to adjust to this, but it is Palestinian law to reward Palestinian prisoners in Israeli jails with a monthly paycheck. The Palestinian leadership also pays the families of Palestinian suicide bombers.

It goes without saying that these policies clearly incentivize terrorism. In fact, this perverse pay-to-slay system uses a sliding scale: the longer the jail sentence, in other words, the greater the mayhem created there, the greater the reward. The highest payment goes to those serving life sentences, to those who prove, obviously, most brutal.

This system is a disgrace. It is also the result of an abiding climate of hatred that Palestinian leaders continue to foster toward Jews, toward Israelis.

As one witness told our committee: "Incitement" is the term we usually use, but hatred is what we mean . . . teaching generations of Palestinians to hate Jews by demonizing and dehumanizing them." That is what democratic Israel faces, and it is not getting any better.

Yet, for a generation, we have given economic aid to the Palestinians, in large part, to try to stabilize their society to promote peaceful coexistence between the Palestinians and Israelis. This goal is undermined every day that the PA makes payments for acts of terrorism. This must stop.

This bipartisan bill cuts off assistance that directly benefits the Palestinian Authority unless the PA takes credible steps to end acts of violence,

stops payments for acts of terrorism, revokes the laws requiring these payments, or takes actions comparable to revoking the laws, and publicly condemns these acts of violence.

Our bill also requires consistent reporting to Congress that clearly explains how the administration makes its determinations. If our assistance is being withheld, the administration must report which of the PA's dangerous actions are continuing so that Congress can determine how to apply pressure going forward.

Too many grieving families go to sleep every night knowing that money is changing hands as a reward for violence that killed one of their loved ones.

With this bill, we are using the weight of U.S. law to help see that no more families—American, Israeli, or anyone—join their tragic ranks. We do this in the name of one brave American, Taylor Force, to honor the memories of all victims and, importantly, help prevent future victims. We also do it in the hopes of peace.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bill, in strong support of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I would first like to thank ED ROYCE, the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee. I agree with everything he said in his remarks. I want to thank him for his hard work on this legislation. We worked closely together to make this bipartisan bill as strong as possible, while also taking care to limit any unintended consequences. That is what we have been doing on the Foreign Affairs Committee, and that is why we have been so successful in passing legislation. We do it in a bipartisan way.

Let me begin by saying that the Palestinian system of so-called martyr payments is downright disgusting. We are talking about a system that involves paying people on a sliding scale based on the death and destruction that they cause. It is simply sickening.

These payments clearly incentivize terrorist attacks, and they further threaten prospects for peace, pushing the chance for a Palestinian state further and further out of reach.

This legislation was named for Taylor Force, an American victim of Palestinian terrorism. He was a West Point graduate and a veteran of the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. He was stabbed to death in Jaffa in 2016.

The question we face is: How do we compel the PA, the Palestinian Authority, to end the martyr payment system?

In 2015, appropriations bills began to include language cutting off funds for the Palestinian Authority by the amount that they spent on so-called martyr payments, but that didn't curb the practice.

□ 1500

We stopped giving the Palestinian Authority direct assistance, but the Palestinian Authority hasn't budged.

We are now considering this legislation, which cuts all funds that directly benefit the Palestinian Authority if the Palestinian Authority continues to make these payments. This will make it crystal clear to the Palestinian Authority that so-called martyr payments are unacceptable, period.

At the same time, the bill allows the United States to continue humanitarian and democracy assistance, which is in our interest and the interest of our ally Israel. It also includes a thoughtful exemption proposed by the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY) which exempts childhood vaccinations from the cuts required under this bill.

Overall, I believe that this version of the Taylor Force Act strikes the right balance. Chairman ROYCE and I worked very hard to come up with a piece of legislation that both sides would support. The Foreign Affairs Committee unanimously passed this legislation. The message should be clear: this is not a partisan issue.

We must send a message to the Palestinian Authority that these so-called martyr payments, which are "killing" payments, must stop.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation that ensures no unintended consequences, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN). He is the author of this important legislation.

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, this legislation is named after Taylor Force, and I wanted to say what a special honor it is that his parents are with us here today.

I would like to especially thank the Speaker and majority leader for bringing this legislation to the floor for a vote. I also want to thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL for their leadership and strong bipartisan support.

I introduced this bill last Congress and reintroduced it this Congress with Representative LEE ZELDIN because we absolutely must ensure that American taxpayer dollars don't incentivize terrorist attacks on our own citizens as well as Israelis. This commonsense measure now has 170 cosponsors.

I think most of the American people are aware of Taylor's story by now, but it bears repeating again as we prepare to vote on this legislation in the people's House.

Last year, a 28-year-old American student named Taylor Force was visiting Israel on a school trip. While walking near the beach in Tel Aviv, a 22-year-old Palestinian stabbed him to death in a terrorist attack.

Taylor Force was an Eagle Scout, West Point graduate, and a veteran of both Iraq and Afghanistan. He rep-

resents everything any parent could want their son or daughter to be.

As we know, Mr. and Mrs. Force lost their treasured son in this terror attack. They were left with only photographs and memories.

The terrorist who murdered Taylor was killed shortly after by the police, but the killer's family was left with something else: a lucrative financial reward.

The Palestinian Authority, led by President Mahmoud Abbas, gives financial rewards for terrorist attacks. The more people killed in an attack, the higher the financial reward. Families of terrorists receive a pension for life, which is triple the average salary in the West Bank, as well as a receiving free tuition and health insurance, a clothing allowance, and a monthly stipend.

More money goes to these kinds of payments than go to the entire civil service of the Palestinian Authority. This must be stopped.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation and send as strong and clear a message as possible that the United States will not allow our taxpayer dollars to be used to incentivize terrorist attacks.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH), the ranking member of the Middle East and North Africa Subcommittee, and a valued member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from New York, my friend, the ranking member, for yielding.

I rise in support of H.R. 1164, the Taylor Force Act.

Mr. Speaker, the pursuit of a negotiated two-state solution to end the Israeli-Palestinian conflict requires a commitment to peace, but it is impossible for the Palestinian Authority to demonstrate that commitment to peace while paying terrorists for attacks on innocent civilians. But that is the reality today, and that is what this bill seeks to end.

Under current Palestinian law, the PA pays salaries to terrorists and their families more money for worse crimes, typically well exceeding the mean salary for Palestinian workers. If a terrorist is sentenced to life in prison for a horrific attack that kills Israeli citizens, he will get a four-times higher monthly salary than if he had been sentenced to only a couple of years in prison for a lesser attack. This is blatant incentive to terrorism; the same type of terrorism that we have seen tear through buses, shopping malls, nightclubs, and places of worship around the world.

In March of last year, during a surge of deadly stabbings, shootings, and car rammings in Israel, we saw the consequences of this incitement and incentive to terror.

Taylor Force, a 28-year-old American tourist, a West Point graduate and then-Vanderbilt graduate student, who

had fought in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan, was stabbed to death on a promenade in Jaffa by a young Palestinian terrorist.

Taylor, by all accounts, was loved and humble. He enjoyed playing the guitar. He was an Eagle Scout and an Army veteran. His father described him as an all-American kid who made sure that everyone around him felt good. A friend of his in Nashville said simply: He made people better.

But rather than unambiguously condemn this attack against innocent civilians, as any responsible government would do, the PA instead has rewarded these types of attacks by paying more than \$1 billion to convicted terrorists over the past decade.

It is the job of the Palestinian Authority, like any responsible government, to deliver services to its people, including welfare to those who need it most, like a grieving widow who suddenly has to take care of her family without the breadwinner. But this is not welfare.

The current law essentially tells Palestinians: If you tragically die in a car accident, your family gets nothing; but if you die driving your car into a group of Israeli civilians, your family will be taken care of for life.

That is not welfare. That is incentive to terror. It is pay for slay, and it must end.

I am proud of the bipartisan manner in which today's bill was crafted, and it is carefully written in a way that targets only those funds that directly benefit the Palestinian Authority, thereby creating real incentives for the PA to end this practice without damaging the vital U.S. investments in humanitarian assistance and grassroots people-to-people programs that are essential to achieving our overall objective of peace.

Taylor Force served our country to advance and protect peace. His life was taken by terrorists seeking to undermine peace.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman from Florida.

Mr. DEUTCH. It is our duty to call on the PA to end this indefensible practice of rewarding terror and to demonstrate a real commitment to peace, a peace where Israel can live safely and securely as a Jewish and democratic state next to a Palestinian state that does not seek its destruction.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation honors Taylor Force's name and memory by stopping an abhorrent practice. In his name, and in the name of peace, the PA must end these payments to terrorists, and I urge my colleagues to support this effort to make them stop.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), who chairs the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa. She is also our chairman emeritus.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman and my good friend, Ranking Member ELIOT ENGEL, for his hard work. I especially want to thank the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN) for offering this important bill.

Sadly, as we have heard, Mr. Speaker, Taylor Force is the name and the face of the disgusting and reprehensible practice in place by the Palestinians that we know as pay to slay.

Taylor Force, as we have heard, was an Eagle Scout, a West Point graduate, a veteran of two wars, who served our Nation bravely and with distinction. It was a life cut tragically short at 28 years old, when he was murdered by a Palestinian terrorist while in Israel.

While the world condemned this attack and while Taylor Force's friends and family mourn his loss, the Palestinian leaders fail to take responsibility. No, instead, Abu Mazen and the Palestinian leadership continue to incite violence, continue to support terror. Because, make no mistake, Mr. Speaker, as long as the Palestinian Authority or the PLO—whatever name they want to use—make payments to terrorists, they are supporting terror.

How can you conclude otherwise?

It is irresponsible and it is shameful to think that the American taxpayer and the U.S. Government are in any way, shape, or form helping to support this pay-to-slay program. This is why this act will ensure that, until pay to slay is ended, we will not be a willing contributor to the Palestinian scheme. This is just another tool that Congress has given the administration to use in order to hold the Palestinian leaders accountable.

However, I do believe that we should not allow for exceptions, not allow for carve-outs in this important bill, because that flexibility, sadly, is sometimes used to circumvent the spirit of the law and the congressional intent.

I would like to remind our body that the administration already has the tools it needs to withhold assistance to the Palestinian Authority and the West Bank and Gaza, so we must exercise existing authorities and send a message to the Palestinians once and for all.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the administration to use all of the tools at its disposal, to not waive provisions of U.S. law, to not selectively enforce some laws and apply others. That means ending all assistance to the Palestinian Authority—all. It means closing the PLO office in D.C. until pay to slay has ended and until the Palestinians stop their incitement and stop their support for terror.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this important and tragic measure, and I urge the administration to use these tools that we continue to provide to it. I thank the chairman and the ranking member for rapidly bringing this important bill to the floor.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I think that points have been made on both sides of the aisle with which we all agree. If the Palestinian Authority is serious about peace and is serious about a two-state solution and is serious about living in peace with Israel, then I think they have to be serious about not paying people who murder, not paying people who are terrorists, not paying people who randomly go over and stab somebody.

Taylor Force happened to be in the wrong place at the wrong time. No other reason. That should not be left to stand. I think our colleagues have all talked about what a wonderful young man he was, an exemplary American, someone who played by the rules, kept his country safe, did the right things, respected his own faith. We should respect him and all the other people as well.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GOTTHEIMER), my friend on the Financial Services Committee, a rising star in Congress.

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H.R. 1164, the bipartisan Taylor Force Act. I want to thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ELIOT ENGEL, who is my friend and colleague and a real leader for our party and for this issue, for all of their hard work and leadership to bring this legislation to the floor. All of us in Congress could learn from and emulate their friendship and bipartisan working relationship, especially when it comes to our foreign policy and support for our vital ally Israel, and in our fight against terror around the world.

I commend the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN) for introducing this important legislation, and I am proud that Ranking Member ENGEL and I were the very first Democrats in the House to cosponsor this measure.

Mr. Speaker, I serve on the House Financial Services Committee's Subcommittee on Terrorism and Illicit Finance, where, day in and day out, my colleagues and I track the flow of money to terrorist groups like Hamas, Hezbollah, and ISIS through illicit financial networks.

For years, the Palestinian Authority has shamelessly engaged in an equally heinous practice out in the open: the awarding of official payments to terrorists it inspires to go out and kill innocent civilians, including American citizens like U.S. Army veteran Taylor Force.

Israeli citizens live under the constant threats of stabbings, suicide bombings, and vicious terrorist attacks. Palestinian leaders, including President Abbas, have not just refused to call for an end to these attacks or to speak out against those who promote hate and violence, rather, they celebrate, defend, and promote terrorism through an elaborate system whereby the Palestinian Authority literally "pays to slay."

□ 1515

That is because for decades the PLO and the PA have provided payments in some form or another to terrorists and their families, as well as various other awards and titles and honorifics, but the practice is especially heinous because today it is enshrined into Palestinian law. The deadlier attacks of terrorism will be rewarded with even more money.

I know because I have read the laws and seen the accompanying payment charts. There is literally a payment schedule based on the severity of the terrorist attack, which encourages more severe and gratuitous violence and terrorist activity.

For instance, a terrorist who slayed three people in 2015, including an 18-year-old American citizen, Ezra Schwartz, who was spending his gap year in Israel and planned to attend business school at Rutgers University in New Jersey, would be rewarded by the PA with a monthly salary—the terrorist—of more than \$3,000.

In sum, these payments total hundreds of millions of dollars that the PA redirects from its own budget to pay off the murderers of Jews, Israelis, and foreigners. The Taylor Force Act will eliminate U.S. foreign aid to the West Bank and Gaza that directly benefits the Palestinian Authority until the Secretary of State can guarantee that they have ended these payments. This legislation is carefully targeted to achieve maximum leverage over the PA to end the funding of terror.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation stands in stark contrast to a partisan, one-sided, offensive, and harmful bill recently introduced in Congress under the guise of promoting human rights that would cut aid to Israel for cracking down on terrorism. Israel has the right and obligation to defend itself and its civilians who have been the targeted victims of brutal attacks and murders while going about their daily lives. The United States ought to stand with them by condemning Palestinian incitement.

Members of both parties have been working together to do just that. Since fiscal year 2015, Congress has reduced, dollar for dollar, the amount of money that the PA and PLO pay to terrorists and their families from the Economic Support Fund aid that the U.S. provides. While this has resulted in the reduction of our foreign aid, it has not yet brought an end to this practice.

In May, I joined Representatives CLAUDIA TENNEY and TOM SUOZZI and 33 of our colleagues who demanded that Secretary of State Rex Tillerson address these terror payments directly with Palestinian President Abbas during his visit to Washington, D.C.

It has been suggested that the PA may be more receptive to international pressure. I am glad that this bill urges the Secretary of State and the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations to highlight this issue with the international community to

condemn these horrific acts of violence. But that is simply not enough.

The United States must use every tool at our disposal to counter violence and terrorism. The PLO and the PA may well continue down the path of more hatred, violence, and terror without regard for the damage inflicted or for their role in diminishing the prospects for peace. But so long as they pay citizens to murder civilians, then they will do so without benefiting from the support of the United States taxpayer. There is no question that should be asked about that.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to join me in standing in solidarity with the families of the victims of terror to bring an end to this appalling system of paid violence, and I urge support for this bill.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), chairman of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ELIOT ENGEL for, again, working so well together to bring this legislation to the floor; and LEE ZELDIN, one of the principal cosponsors of the bill; and DOUG LAMBORN, of course, the prime author of this legislation.

I, too, am proud to be a cosponsor. This is a very important bill that will serve as a measure of justice for the memory of U.S. Army Officer Taylor Force and many others who have been victimized over the years by Palestinian terrorism subsidized by the Palestinian Authority. It is well past time for us to apply real pressure to the Palestinian Authority for continuing incitement for anti-Israel, anti-Semitic, and anti-American violence. This bill takes aim at the PA's ongoing financial incentivizing of murder.

Mr. Speaker, when you pay someone to kill somebody else and pay their family to kill somebody else, that is a crime. So this just ought to be seen as a step in trying to say we mean business. Those who authorize those payments ought to be held liable for these crimes.

Although 2 years ago Congress deducted the PA's compensatory payments to terrorists and their families from U.S. assistance, there has been no change in the PA's twisted and perverted policy. By conditioning most U.S. assistance to the PA on its commitment to cease payments to terrorists, the Taylor Force Act takes the necessary next and important step to guarantee that American taxpayer dollars are not being used to reward terrorism.

Mr. Speaker, the PA cannot be a partner for peace until it stops subsidizing terrorism. Amidst increasing talk of a new peace initiative in the region, we must be absolutely clear that there could be no true peace until Pal-

estinian public policy stops inculcating a culture of death in the minds of the people.

Years of diplomacy, Mr. Speaker, and public pressure aimed at stemming Palestinian incitement have not succeeded. Congress must act now with the power of the purse.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, it is now my pleasure to yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. FRANKEL), my good friend and valued member of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Ms. FRANKEL of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the bipartisan Taylor Force Act, which eliminates United States aid to the Palestinians unless they end payments to terrorists. I thank my colleagues, the chair, and the ranking member for their leadership.

Today we are condemning an evil system that rewards terrorists based on how many innocent civilians they maim or kill. In recent decades, 1,600 people have been killed by Palestinian terror attacks, like 17-year-old Liana Sakiyan, a high-spirited girl, a friend to many. On a break from exams, she and her friends were in line for a night of celebration at a discotheque in Tel Aviv when a bomb went off, instantly snuffing out her life and 20 other innocent young Israelis.

As a reward for this heinous attack, the suicide bomber's family received thousands of dollars from the Palestinian Authority—this authority which continues to give hundreds of millions of dollars to terrorists and their families, a part of the so-called martyrs' fund. This legislation, which correctly exempts humanitarian and democracy-promoting programs, tells the Palestinian Authority: No more pay to slay.

Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of this bill.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. ZELDIN), a member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. He is the coauthor of this measure.

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, it is a privilege to serve on the House Foreign Affairs Committee under the leadership of Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ELIOT ENGEL. I am very grateful that they brought this legislation to the House floor for consideration today.

As a co-chair of the House Republican Israel Caucus, the original cosponsor on this piece of legislation, I would strongly encourage all of my colleagues to support this important bill.

I am thinking of values, what drove Taylor Force to sign up for the United States Military Academy at West Point, to deploy into combat, to protect and defend our freedoms and liberties; willing to lay it all on the line; willing to risk everything for our flag, for our Constitution, not just for family back home.

He is joined here—he is certainly with us in spirit—with his parents, Stuart and Robbi, who are in the gallery, and they know that the legacy of

Taylor Force's service and sacrifice is one that already is showing a change in policy in the interactions between our Nation and those in that region. Because as we think of values, the values of the Palestinian Authority is one that incites violence, that financially rewards terrorism, that treats terrorists like they are heads of state at their funerals and calls them martyrs.

I stand with Taylor Force. The House Foreign Affairs Committee stands with Taylor Force. This entire body, hopefully, when this comes to a vote, stands with the parents of Taylor Force, and our effective and better leveraging of our money because we should not provide \$1 of United States taxpayer funds if that money is going to go towards not only inciting violence, but also financially rewarding terrorism.

The United States taxpayers not only want to make sure that their money isn't going to financially reward Palestinian terrorists when they murder innocent Israelis, but this is also about Americans—U.S. tax dollars going to an entity that financially rewards terror.

I was moved greatly as I was listening to Chairman Emeritus ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN's remarks and the need to use all resources that are available to stand shoulder to shoulder with our Nation's greatest ally and change behavior of those bad actors. Those are the values, and we stand with Taylor Force.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, if there are no other speakers on this side, I am prepared to close. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, let me close by saying that this bipartisan legislation seeks to compel the Palestinian Authority to stop incentivizing acts of terrorism against innocent victims, including American Taylor Force.

Now, the encouragement of hooligans and thugs to just randomly try to kill people for no other reason than just to try to perpetrate violence needs to be stopped. While the Palestinian Authority seems to be encouraging knife attacks and terror attacks against Jewish Israelis, it is important to say that being in the wrong place at the wrong time leaves everybody vulnerable. That is what happened to Taylor Force. He wasn't Jewish. He happened to be American, and he happened to be a soldier in a war area and a very good, nice, decent human being. He didn't deserve it.

Nobody deserves to be a victim of terror. But certainly, the victims of terror, if we are going to cry out to help them, we have got to put a stop to this disgusting practice of calling these murderers martyrs. They are not martyrs. They are murderers. They have no regard for human beings. They have no regard for anything. It is time for us to say: Enough is enough.

In this current bill, it allows the United States to avoid any unintended consequences such as the cessation of humanitarian assistance, the right

thing to do. I hope that the Palestinian Authority will use this opportunity to stop these martyr payments, move away from incitement, and move toward a two-state solution. Again, this bipartisan legislation seeks to compel the Palestinian Authority to stop acts of terrorism, to stop aiding and abetting acts of terrorism against innocent victims, including American Taylor Force.

The gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH) said that if someone drives their car and hits somebody, nothing happens. But if someone drives their car and kills somebody, they get a martyr payment. There is something perverse about that. There is something just wrong about that. And it is something that the United States needs to put its foot down and say, once and for all: We will not tolerate violence.

Finally, let me say that this bill, aptly named as a tribute to Taylor Force, to his parents whom I had the pleasure of meeting, and to all of the people who knew him—he really was the driving force behind this legislation. Because when we heard what had happened, it was so abhorrent, it was so disgusting, that we felt we needed to get together and do something.

So I want to thank the Force family. I want to thank my colleagues on the other side of the aisle, especially Chairman ROYCE. This is something that every Member of Congress and both sides of the aisle should vote for.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

□ 1530

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In closing, Mr. Speaker, let me thank my friend and colleague, ELIOT ENGEL, for his eloquence in explaining the enormity of the tragedy here and the meaning of this terrorism. I think Mr. ENGEL has been such a diligent partner in not only helping us move this bill through, but helping us run the committee in a bipartisan way. I want to thank him at this moment as we pass this act for all of his work on this issue through the legislation and through the hearings. I think it has had an impact in the understanding of the Members here.

I also want to recognize and thank our former colleague, Senator LINDSEY GRAHAM. I have talked with him about this issue. He originated this bill in the Senate. I know also how passionately he feels about this, as do ELIOT and myself. I look forward to working with our Senate colleagues to ensure that the bill that we pass here in the House or the Senate bill, either one, the bottom line is that the Taylor Force Act must become law quickly. That is our objective.

The purpose of our aid, as we understand it, is to advance U.S. interests around the world. That is why we give aid. I think all of us can agree that

that does not include paying people to commit crimes of terrorism. The Palestinian Authority is flatout undermining U.S. interests by compensating and incentivizing violence, as articulated by my friend, Mr. ENGEL.

I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this bill, which ensures that there are consequences for this disgraceful policy and ensures that the U.S. plays no part, even indirectly, in participating in this behavior. The PA giving compensation for violence is beyond the pale. It is long past time that we treat it that way.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ROTHFUS). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1164, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

VENEZUELA HUMANITARIAN ASSISTANCE AND DEFENSE OF DEMOCRATIC GOVERNANCE ACT OF 2017

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2658) to provide humanitarian assistance for the Venezuelan people, to defend democratic governance and combat widespread public corruption in Venezuela, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2658

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the "Venezuela Humanitarian Assistance and Defense of Democratic Governance Act of 2017".

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

- Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.
- Sec. 2. Findings.
- Sec. 3. Sense of Congress.
- Sec. 4. Requirement for strategy to provide humanitarian assistance to the people of Venezuela.
- Sec. 5. Requirement for strategy to coordinate international humanitarian assistance.
- Sec. 6. Support for efforts at the United Nations on the humanitarian and political crisis in Venezuela.
- Sec. 7. Support for Organization of American States Inter-American Democratic Charter.
- Sec. 8. Concerns and report on the involvement of Venezuelan officials in corruption and illicit narcotics trafficking.
- Sec. 9. Sanctions on persons responsible for public corruption and undermining democratic governance in Venezuela.
- Sec. 10. Concerns over PDVSA transactions with Rosneft.