

and sell these weapons to Saudi Arabia? The administration cites in its documents, in its notice, Iranian malign activity in the region. The administration claims that the “rapidly-evolving security situation in the region requires an accelerated delivery of certain capabilities to U.S. partners in the region.”

We all know that Iran is a malign actor in the region. This is nothing new. It has kept the Assad regime in Syria alive. It supports the Hezbollah in Lebanon, the Houthi rebels in Yemen, and a constellation of Shia militia groups in Iraq—all of which have contributed to instability in the region for a very long time.

The administration has not explained why all of a sudden this ongoing malign activity justifies an emergency declaration to circumvent this body in the House of Representatives, nor has it shown how the delivery of these weapons is going to provide some kind of an immediate benefit to either the United States or our allies.

What we really have is, this administration has, under the direction of National Security Advisor John Bolton, in a calculated effort, dramatically increased tensions with Iran to a point where we could easily have a miscalculation that leads to war.

This administration has ripped up the nuclear agreement, choked off Iran's oil exports, and, against the advice of America's military leadership, designated the Islamic Revolutionary Guard a terrorist organization while accelerating the movement of American ships and bombers into the Persian Gulf.

Maybe most troubling is that even when given multiple opportunities, Secretary of State Pompeo, has refused to acknowledge that the 2001 authorization to use military force, AUMF, would not justify the administration taking military action against Iran. The administration's failure to make that very clear shows the need and urgency for us to act in these areas. In fact, what we know from our intelligence communities, cited in public reports, there is zero evidence that Iran and al-Qaida have carried out any joint operations against the United States. In fact, to the contrary, ISIS, which we know is an al-Qaida descendant in Syria and Iraq, took credit for a 2017 attack on Iran's Parliament building and tomb of the Islamic Republic's founder, the Ayatollah Khomeini, which according to Iran's state media killed at least 12 people.

Anyone who knows anything about the history in this region knows that while Iran is a malign actor, they have been an enemy of al-Qaida and an enemy of ISIS—Iran, of course, being a majority Shia country and ISIS and al-Qaida being extreme elements of a Sunni ideology.

As we sit here and watch the President invoking these emergency powers to undermine the separation of powers, we are not doing our job so we need to

begin to take action. Yet what the President is learning from our inaction is the ability to continue down this road of claiming emergency powers to take further measures.

As I said just last week, we also saw the President invoke emergency powers to put in place a mechanism to dramatically increase tariffs on Mexico over a period of time. That, of course, would be incredibly costly to American consumers, costly to American businesses, but it is also incredibly costly to our system of government and separation of powers, where article I clearly gives this Congress power in the area of setting trade policy. Yet where are we? We are AWOL, totally AWOL when it comes to standing up for the Constitution. We are allowing this President to, time after time, claim emergency powers to accomplish certain goals. Some may justify it by saying: OK. I agree with the outcome in that particular use of emergency powers.

This pattern of conduct is going to set a very dangerous precedent. While some of my colleagues may like some of these outcomes today, you have another President in the White House who starts claiming emergency powers left and right, and all of a sudden, I can assure you, my colleagues will take a different view. This is the moment when people need to come together and stand up for the Constitution and do our jobs as a separate branch of government. We can't contract this all out to the courts to make these determinations. Of course, earlier in the year, the President claimed emergency powers to divert moneys from important national security efforts, including the effort in Afghanistan and to build the wall along the U.S.-Mexico border.

Again, I suggest, don't be lured into going along with this process simply because you like the outcome. We can disagree about whether it is smart and cost-effective to build a wall along the U.S.-Mexico border, but we should not disagree that it is an abuse of power to continue to manufacture or claim emergency authorities to override the will of Congress.

This is an important moment, especially as we consider the fact that Secretary Pompeo has not clearly indicated that the 2001 AUMF does not give this administration or any administration the power to use military action against Iran.

If we don't start standing up and doing our job, we will be undermining important constitutional principles that the Founders put in place to prevent an Executive from running wild over the legislative process. So I hope, as the Republicans and the Democrats see the President invoke these emergency powers of whether to sell arms to Saudi Arabia, to increase tariffs on Mexico, or to build a wall, we recognize that we are going down a very, very slippery slope and that we have a constitutional obligation to protect our democracy and the principles outlined in the Constitution.

I yield the floor.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. CRUZ). The Senator from Texas.

DIRECTING THE CLERK OF THE HOUSE TO MAKE A CORRECTION IN THE ENROLLMENT OF H.R. 2157

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of H. Con. Res. 45, which was received from the House.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The bill clerk read as follows:

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 45) directing the Clerk of the House to make a correction in the enrollment of H.R. 2157.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the concurrent resolution.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I further ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to and that the motion to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 45) was agreed to.

(The concurrent resolution is printed in the RECORD of June 3, 2019.)

EXECUTIVE CALENDAR—Continued

NOMINATIONS

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, this week, the Senate will consider another batch of well-qualified nominees. These are men and women who have chosen to serve the American people in a variety of ways throughout the Federal Government, and we owe it to them to get them off the Senate calendar and on the job.

Among the nominees we are considering this week is Susan Combs, who, as the Presiding Officer knows, is a fellow Texan who has been nominated to serve as the Assistant Secretary for Policy, Management and Budget at the Department of the Interior. Susan has led an impressive career in both the public and private sectors and has served our State as a member of the Texas House of Representatives, then as the first female agriculture commissioner, and, later, as the Texas comptroller of public accounts.

In each job, she gained the respect of virtually everyone she worked with. So, for those who know Susan, her nomination has come as no surprise. What is surprising, though, is how long it has taken her to reach this point and be confirmed. She was nominated in July of 2017. Within 1 month, she testified before the Committee on Energy and Natural Resources, and she received unanimous support. Suffice it to say, her nomination was not controversial. So why has it taken 2 years for her to get a vote on the Senate floor?