

of the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act. I thank Chairman CORKER, who is on the floor here with me today, and Ranking Member CARDIN, also on the floor, for their statesmanship and the spirit of bipartisan compromise that they exhibited in negotiating the act. They did a great job.

According to the legislation, the President must submit any final agreement to Congress. Congress would then have 30 days to hear from negotiators and outside experts and to determine if additional action is warranted, including a resolution of approval or disapproval.

I believe congressional oversight is appropriate because the President, in order to implement any agreement with Iran, will need to set aside sanctions put in place by Congress. I also voted for this bill because it reasserts the proper role of Congress in providing oversight of the President's execution of foreign policy.

As a member of the Senator Foreign Relations Committee, I believe the best way to resolve the standoff over Iran's nuclear program is a hard-nosed agreement that cuts off all paths Iran could take to pursue a nuclear weapon.

It was therefore crucial for me that the legislation considered by the committee not hinder our negotiators' efforts to reach a strong agreement. I believe that standard should be maintained as the full Senate considers this legislation.

I believe it is also essential that the spirit of cooperation and bipartisanship that was demonstrated by Senators CORKER and CARDIN in forging a bipartisan bill continue this week as the full Senate takes up the Iran legislation. Amendments that undermine the administration's negotiations or structurally alter this careful bipartisan compromise should be rejected by the Senate.

While I supported this bill in the Foreign Relations Committee, if the bipartisan nature of the legislation is eroded on the floor, the bill will no longer merit my support. This is a serious matter that will require the Senate to rise above the desire of some to force votes on poison-pill amendments that would destroy the bipartisan balance. We have to rise above politics here because we are confronted by a dangerous and unacceptable status quo in Iran.

The benefits of a strong final deal could be significant. Such a deal would stop Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon and ensure that it could not pursue destabilizing activities in the region with impunity. It would prevent a nuclear arms race in the Middle East and advance greater long-term security for our regional allies. That is why, even as Congress reaffirms its role in reviewing any final agreement, we need to give the administration and its international partners every opportunity to bring these difficult negotiations to a successful conclusion.

With so much at stake for the United States, for Israel, and for the entire

world, it is more important than ever that the Senate rise above partisan politics and reaffirm bipartisan cooperation.

I yield the floor.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

I withhold the suggestion of the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator from Maryland.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I wish to thank Senator SHAHEEN. She talked about the bipartisan way the committee operated. She played a large part in bringing us together in the Senate Foreign Relations Committee and working over the recess. I want to thank the Senator for her input and the manner in which we were able to strengthen our negotiators and maintain the proper role for the Congress.

Mrs. SHAHEEN. Mr. President, if I could respond, I think one of the reasons for the success of the agreement was because of the efforts of Senator CARDIN and Chairman CORKER to solicit input from members of the committee to see what people could agree to and, where we had concerns, to respond to those in crafting the legislation. It truly was a bipartisan, very statesman-like effort, and I thank the Senators.

RECESS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Under the previous order, the Senate stands in recess until 2:15 p.m.

Thereupon, the Senate, at 12:31 p.m., recessed until 2:15 p.m. and reassembled when called to order by the Presiding Officer (Mr. PORTMAN).

PROTECTING VOLUNTEER FIRE-FIGHTERS AND EMERGENCY RESPONDERS ACT—Continued

Mr. CARPER. Mr. President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The senior assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

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

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

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

(The remarks of Mr. FRANKEN pertaining to the introduction of S. 1112 are printed in today's RECORD under "Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.")

Mr. FRANKEN. Mr. President, I yield the floor to the good Senator from Texas.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The majority whip is recognized.

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, today and for the next few days we will have the opportunity to consider a very important piece of legislation, the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of

2015—a piece of legislation that, like all the legislation we consider here, is important, but this particular legislation is important to our national security and, indeed, it is important to the peace and security of our allies around the world.

This bill represents a good, bipartisan effort. It passed unanimously out of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee by a vote of 19 to 0 earlier this month.

The reason this legislation is so important is because it would guarantee Congress the opportunity and the time necessary to scrutinize any agreement reached between the Obama administration and the P5+1 nations that are currently negotiating on the Iranian nuclear capacity. It would also prohibit the President from lifting sanctions on Iran during this period of review.

This is not important because we are U.S. Senators; this is important because we represent the American people, and the American people need to understand what is in this agreement and what it means to their safety and security and to that of future generations.

I think it is critical that Congress have this opportunity to understand completely and thoroughly any deal that is cut between this administration and Iran and, of course, its implications, particularly on a matter that is so vital to our national security. If the Congress can have a voice on ongoing trade negotiations—which we do—with many of our allies, how much more so should Congress have, at the very least, a review of the final negotiated deal with one of our stated adversaries?

As I have made clear before, I have serious reservations about the framework that has been announced with Iran. This framework, as it is called, is right now very vague, and it strikes me as somewhat convoluted. It also represents a significant departure from longstanding U.S. policy to prevent an Iranian nuclear weapon and instead puts us on a path—a feeble path, at that—to try to contain an Iranian nuclear weapon. Such an outcome is irresponsible, unacceptable, and dangerous. We simply cannot trust the Iranian leadership with threshold nuclear capabilities, which is exactly what the President's framework would do at this point. The concept of good-faith negotiations between us and Iran is a fantasy. Iran is a rogue regime and the world's foremost sponsor of international terrorism, and to trust them—to trust them—would be laughable and also reckless.

Iran and its proxies have been attacking and killing Americans and attempting to undermine our national security interests for at least the last three decades. Unfortunately, Iran's proxy war throughout the Middle East is well documented. Right at this moment, Iran's regional adventurism continues to destabilize areas where American interests are at stake, including war-torn Syria, Yemen, and Iraq. Even