



United States
of America

Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114th CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

Vol. 161

WASHINGTON, TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 8, 2015

No. 128

Senate

The Senate met at 2 p.m. and was called to order by the President pro tempore (Mr. HATCH).

PRAYER

The Chaplain, Dr. Barry C. Black, offered the following prayer:

Let us pray.

Eternal God, our King, we praise You for providing for our needs. Great is Your faithfulness.

Abide with our lawmakers, enabling them to discover the unshakeable even as they labor during shaken times. In this perishable world, show them what is truly secure and constant. Lord, keep them humble, tolerant, and open-minded, always aware of their limited, fallible knowledge. Remind them that the anvil of Your everlasting truth will wear out the many hammers of skepticism, cynicism, and despair.

Lord, thank You for being the same yesterday, today, and forever.

We pray in Your great Name. Amen.

PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The President pro tempore led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mr. BARASSO). The majority leader is recognized.

IRAN NUCLEAR AGREEMENT RESOLUTION OF DISAPPROVAL

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, today we will begin consideration of the resolution to disapprove the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action negotiated by China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United King-

dom, the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the United States. This resolution seeks to constrain Iran's nuclear weapons program. I will ask all Senators to be present in the Chamber beginning tomorrow afternoon to commence debate on this important issue.

Let me extend my appreciation for the time and research many of our colleagues have given to understanding the details, the strengths, and the weaknesses of this agreement. For many, this has been a very difficult decision. For some, it was made even more difficult by assertions from the administration that the only choice was between this agreement and war. Of course, that was never, never true. All such political statements really say is that the administration lacks the will and the leadership to pursue a stronger agreement, additional sanctions, and policies intended to end Iran's enrichment program if it cannot attain congressional agreement on the President's deal with Iran.

The Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act passed the Senate by a vote of 98 to 1 earlier this year. It provided each of us with the opportunity to truly represent our constituents on this important issue. I expect that every Senator who voted for that measure is now entitled to an up-or-down vote—not a filibuster or artificial limits on passage but an important vote—on this resolution.

Along with the Americans we were sent here to represent, countries, businesses, and proliferation networks seeking to expand ties with Iran stand to have a simple question answered. All of the people involved in this around the world deserve to have a simple question answered: Does the Senate disapprove of this deal with Iran? Does the Senate disapprove of this deal with Iran? The Senate should not hide behind procedural obfuscation to shield the President or our individual views.

This debate should not be about a President who will leave office in 16

months; it should be about where our country will be in 16 years.

The Democratic leader said that his party strove to preserve the Corker-Cardin bill and that it was incumbent on Congress to review this agreement with the thoughtful, level-headed process this agreement deserves. I agree that is exactly what is needed right now. I know that is exactly what nearly every Senator in this body voted for. And I call on every Senator to resist attempts to obstruct a final vote and deny the American people and Congress the say they deserve on this extremely important matter.

The facts have already led many of our Democratic colleagues—including the top Democrat on the Foreign Relations Committee in the Senate and the Foreign Affairs Committee in the House, as well as the likely next leader of the Democratic Party in the Senate—to come out in opposition to this agreement. Certainly those were not easy decisions for them. But these Democrats are joined in their skepticism by Americans of every political persuasion who believe this deal will make our country less safe—less safe.

Even those lawmakers who have come out in favor of the President's agreement use terms such as "deeply flawed" to describe it. Let's remember why that is. The American people were led to believe that negotiations with Iran would be about ending its nuclear program, but that is not what the deal before us would do. We know the President's deal with Iran will not end its nuclear program but will instead leave Iran with a threshold nuclear capability recognized as legitimate by the international community—quite the opposite of the original goal. We know the President's deal with Iran will leave it with thousands of centrifuges, an advanced research and development program, and access to billions of dollars, at least some of which the President himself has acknowledged will be used to support terrorism. We know

• This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.



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