

friends and allies to constantly contain and confront Iranian aggression in the region. The United States and Israel must always stand together to confront that threat. The fact remains that Iranian support for their terrorist proxy Hezbollah continues to destabilize Lebanon and poses a direct threat to Israel, as does its support for Hamas. We must do all we can to ensure that our ally Israel maintains its qualitative military edge in the region, including providing increased funding for Israel's Arrow anti-ballistic missile and Iron Dome anti-rocket systems. Consideration should also be given to previously denied weapons if a need for such enhanced capabilities arises. We must always remember that some of Iran's leaders have called for the destruction of Israel and we must never forget the awful past that teaches us not to ignore those threats.

The threats Iran poses in the region are real. But all those threats are compounded by an Iran that is a threshold nuclear weapons state. This agreement will roll back the Iranian nuclear program and provide us with greater ability to detect and more time to respond to any future Iranian attempt to build a nuclear weapon.

For all of the reasons given above, I've concluded that this is an historic agreement that should be supported by the Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 412, the previous question is ordered on the resolution and on the preamble.

The question is on the resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the yeas appeared to have it.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—yeas 245, nays 186, not voting 2, as follows:

[Roll No. 492]

YEAS—245

Abraham	Comstock	Gosar
Aderholt	Conaway	Gowdy
Allen	Cook	Granger
Amash	Costello (PA)	Graves (GA)
Amodel	Cramer	Graves (LA)
Babin	Crawford	Graves (MO)
Barletta	Crenshaw	Griffith
Barr	Culberson	Grothman
Barton	Curbeo (FL)	Guinta
Benishek	Davis, Rodney	Guthrie
Bilirakis	Denham	Hanna
Bishop (MI)	Dent	Hardy
Bishop (UT)	DeSantis	Harper
Black	DesJarlais	Harris
Blackburn	Diaz-Balart	Hartzler
Blum	Dold	Heck (NV)
Bost	Donovan	Hensarling
Boustany	Duffy	Herrera Beutler
Brady (TX)	Duncan (SC)	Hice, Jody B.
Brat	Duncan (TN)	Hill
Bridenstine	Eilmers (NC)	Holding
Brooks (AL)	Emmer (MN)	Hudson
Brooks (IN)	Farenthold	Huelskamp
Buchanan	Fincher	Huizenga (MI)
Buck	Fitzpatrick	Hultgren
Bucshon	Fleischmann	Hunter
Burgess	Fleming	Hurd (TX)
Byrne	Flores	Hurt (VA)
Calvert	Forbes	Issa
Carter (GA)	Fortenberry	Jenkins (KS)
Carter (TX)	Foxen	Jenkins (WV)
Chabot	Franks (AZ)	Johnson (OH)
Chaffetz	Frelinghuysen	Johnson, Sam
Clawson (FL)	Garrett	Jolly
Coffman	Gibbs	Jones
Cole	Gibson	Jordan
Collins (GA)	Gohmert	Joyce
Collins (NY)	Goodlatte	Katko

Kelly (MS)	Noem	Sessions
Kelly (PA)	Nugent	Shimkus
King (IA)	Nunes	Shuster
King (NY)	Olson	Simpson
Kinzinger (IL)	Palazzo	Smith (MO)
Kline	Palmer	Smith (NE)
Knight	Paulsen	Smith (NJ)
Labrador	Pearce	Smith (TX)
LaMalfa	Perry	Stefanik
Lamborn	Pittenger	Stewart
Lance	Pitts	Stivers
Latta	Poe (TX)	Stutzman
LoBiondo	Poliquin	Thompson (PA)
Long	Pompeo	Thornberry
Loudermilk	Posey	Tiberi
Love	Price, Tom	Tipton
Lucas	Ratcliffe	Trott
Luetkemeyer	Reed	Turner
Lummis	Reichert	Upton
MacArthur	Renacci	Valadao
Marchant	Ribble	Wagner
Marino	Rice (SC)	Walberg
Massie	Rigell	Walden
McCarthy	Roby	Walker
McCaul	Roe (TN)	Walorski
McClintock	Rogers (AL)	Walters, Mimi
McHenry	Rogers (KY)	Weber (TX)
McKinley	Rohrabacher	Webster (FL)
McMorris	Rokita	Wenstrup
Rodgers	Rooney (FL)	Westerman
McSally	Ros-Lehtinen	Westmoreland
Meadows	Roskam	Whitfield
Meehan	Ross	Williams
Messer	Rothfus	Wilson (SC)
Mica	Rouzer	Wittman
Miller (FL)	Royce	Womack
Miller (MI)	Russell	Woodall
Moolenaar	Ryan (WI)	Yoder
Mooney (WV)	Salmon	Yoho
Mullin	Sanford	Young (AK)
Mulvaney	Scalise	Young (IA)
Murphy (PA)	Schweikert	Young (IN)
Neugebauer	Scott, Austin	Zeldin
Newhouse	Sensenbrenner	Zinke

NAYS—186

Adams	Doyle, Michael	Lipinski
Aguilar	F.	Loeb sack
Ashford	Duckworth	Lofgren
Bass	Edwards	Lowenthal
Beatty	Ellison	Lowe y
Becerra	Engel	Lujan Grisham
Bera	Eshoo	(NM)
Beyer	Esty	Lujan, Ben Ray
Bishop (GA)	Farr	(NM)
Blumenauer	Fattah	Lynch
Bonamici	Foster	Maloney, Sean
Boyle, Brendan	Frankel (FL)	Matsui
F.	Fudge	McCollum
Brady (PA)	Gabbard	McDermott
Brown (FL)	Gallego	McGovern
Brownley (CA)	Garamendi	McNerney
Bustos	Graham	Meeks
Butterfield	Grayson	Meng
Capps	Green, Al	Moore
Capuano	Green, Gene	Moulton
Cárdenas	Grijalva	Murphy (FL)
Carney	Gutiérrez	Nadler
Carson (IN)	Hahn	Napolitano
Cartwright	Hastings	Neal
Castor (FL)	Heck (WA)	Nolan
Castro (TX)	Higgins	Norcross
Chu, Judy	Himes	O'Rourke
Cicilline	Hinojosa	Pallone
Clark (MA)	Honda	Pascrell
Clarke (NY)	Hoyer	Payne
Clay	Huffman	Pelosi
Cleaver	Israel	Perlmutter
Clyburn	Jackson Lee	Peters
Cohen	Jeffries	Peterson
Connolly	Johnson (GA)	Pingree
Conyers	Johnson, E. B.	Pocan
Cooper	Kaptur	Polis
Costa	Keating	Price (NC)
Courtney	Kelly (IL)	Quigley
Crowley	Kennedy	Rangel
Cuellar	Kildee	Rice (NY)
Cummings	Kilmer	Richmond
Davis (CA)	Kind	Roybal-Allard
Davis, Danny	Kirkpatrick	Ruiz
DeFazio	Kuster	Ruppersberger
DeGette	Langevin	Rush
Delaney	Larsen (WA)	Ryan (OH)
DeLauro	Larson (CT)	Sanchez, Linda
DeBene	Lawrence	T.
DeSaulnier	Lee	Sanchez, Loretta
Deutch	Levin	Sarbanes
Dingell	Lewis	Schakowsky
Doggett	Lieu, Ted	Schiff

Schrader	Swalwell (CA)	Veasey
Scott (VA)	Takai	Vela
Scott, David	Takano	Velázquez
Serrano	Thompson (CA)	Visclosky
Sewell (AL)	Thompson (MS)	Walz
Sherman	Titus	Wasserman
Sinema	Tonko	Schultz
Sires	Torres	Waters, Maxine
Slaughter	Tsongas	Watson Coleman
Smith (WA)	Van Hollen	Welch
Speier	Vargas	Yarmuth

NOT VOTING—2

Maloney, Wilson (FL)
Carolyn

□ 1722

So the resolution was agreed to. The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

Stated against:

Ms. WILSON of Florida. Mr. Speaker, on roll call No. 492, had I been present, I would have voted "no."

APPROVAL OF JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF ACTION

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 412, I call up the bill (H.R. 3461) to approve the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, signed at Vienna on July 14, 2015, relating to the nuclear program of Iran, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 412, the bill is considered read.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3461

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

SECTION 1. APPROVAL OF JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF ACTION.

Congress does favor the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, signed at Vienna on July 14, 2015, relating to the nuclear program of Iran.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The bill shall be debatable for 3 hours equally divided and controlled by the chair of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the minority leader or their designees.

The gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) will control 90 minutes. The gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY), and the gentlewoman from California (Ms. MAXINE WATERS) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous materials on this measure.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, in the Foreign Affairs Committee, we have held 30 hearings and briefings on Iran since these negotiations began. We have reviewed this

agreement in depth; but, Mr. Speaker, I can come to no other conclusion than not only does it come up short, it is fatally flawed and, indeed, dangerous. I will oppose the measure before us. We should have gotten a better deal.

Indeed, when the House passed stiff Iran sanctions legislation—now, this was in 2013—in the prior Congress, we passed this legislation, authored by myself and Mr. ENGEL, by a vote, a bipartisan vote in this body, of 400–20.

The intention of that legislation was to put that additional leverage on Iran and force the Ayatollah to make a choice between real compromise—real compromise—on his nuclear program and economic collapse if he did not.

□ 1730

Unfortunately, the Secretary of State and the administration worked to ensure that the other body never took that measure up.

This legislation would have put more pressure, as I say, on Iran and might have led to an acceptable deal; but instead of an ironclad agreement that is verifiable and holds Iran to account, we are considering an agreement that leaves Iran, in a few short years, only steps away from a nuclear weapons program, one that would be on an industrial scale.

Under the agreement, Iran is not required to dismantle key bomb-making technology. Instead, it is permitted a vast enrichment capacity, reversing decades of bipartisan nonproliferation policy that never imagined endorsing this type of nuclear infrastructure for any country, never mind a country that lives by the motto “death to America.”

While Members of Congress insisted on anywhere, anytime inspections, U.S. negotiators settled for something called managed access. So, instead of allowing international inspectors into those suspicious sites within 24 hours, it will take 24 days, and that is to commence the process.

Worse, there have been revelations in recent days about an agreement between Iran and the United Nations’ nuclear watchdog. This agreement sets the conditions in which a key Iranian military site that is suspected of nuclear bomb work—suspected in the sense that we have 1,000 pages of evidence of that bomb work—will be explored.

Mr. Speaker, as we have heard, those details have been kept from Congress. We don’t have those details in our hands; but it is reported that, instead of international inspectors doing the inspecting, the Iranians, themselves, will take the inspection lead. Iran has cheated on every agreement they have signed, so why do we trust them now to self-police?

The deal guts the sanctions web that is putting intense pressure on Iran. Billions will be made available to Iran to pursue its terrorism. Indeed, Iran’s elite Quds Force has transferred funds—and this should bother all of

us—to Hamas. It has committed to rebuild the network of tunnels from Gaza to attack Israel.

Mr. ENGEL and I were in one of those tunnels last year. They have agreed in Iran to replenish the medium-range missile arsenal of Hamas, and they are working right now, they claim, to give precision-guided missiles to Hezbollah. I can tell you I was in Haifa in 2006 when it was under constant bombardment by those types of rockets, but they weren’t precision-guided. Every day, they slammed into the city, and there were 600 victims in the trauma hospital. Now Iran has transferred eightfold the number of missiles, and they want to give them the guidance systems. They need money to pay for those guidance systems.

Iran won late concessions to remove international restrictions on its ballistic missile program and on its conventional arms, and that imperils the security of the region and, frankly, the security of our homeland.

For some, the risks in this agreement are worth it as they see an Iran that is changing for the better. As one supporter of this agreement told our committee, President Obama is betting that, in 10 or 15 years, we will have a kinder, gentler Iran.

But that is a bet against everything we have seen out of the regime since the 1979 revolution. Already, Iranian leaders insist that international inspectors won’t see the inside of Iran’s military bases and that Iran can advance its missiles and weapons without breaking the agreement. It is guaranteed that Iran will game the agreement to its advantage.

So we must ask ourselves: Will international bureaucrats call out Iran, knowing that doing so will put this international agreement at risk? We are not calling them out now as they are transferring weapons.

Will this administration, which didn’t even insist that four American hostages come home as part of this agreement, be any tougher on Iran in implementing this deal?

Does this serve the long-term national security interests of the United States? Does it make the world and, frankly, the region more safe? more stable? more secure?

Is there any other reason Iran—an energy rich country—is advancing its nuclear technology other than to make a nuclear weapon?

And why do its leaders chant “death to America” and “death to Israel”?

The New York Times ran a story on Quds Day, which is the national parade. It was some weeks ago. There was President Rouhani—the so-called moderate—marching in that parade. Behind him, the crowd was chanting. It was chanting “death to America.” In front of them, they carried placards on either side of him that read, “Death to Israel.” Why does their leader march in the Quds parade, and why does that refrain constantly come from the clerics?

I hope that all Members will consider these questions as they consider this vote.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Over the past 2 years, I have supported our negotiating team in the P5+1. I have favored giving time and space to achieve a diplomatic breakthrough to foreclose Iran’s pathways to a nuclear weapon. I am grateful for the tireless efforts by President Obama, Secretary Kerry, Secretary Moniz, Secretary Lew, and Undersecretary Sherman. I appreciate the work of our P5+1 partners in concluding an agreement with Iran.

But, unfortunately, I cannot support the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, and I plan to oppose this resolution.

Let me say at the outset, I was troubled that Iran was not asked to stop enriching, while we were talking, despite several U.N. Security Council resolutions calling for a pause; and after using this review period to assess the details of the agreement, I am not convinced that this deal does enough to keep a nuclear weapon out of Iran’s hands.

I have raised questions and concerns throughout the negotiating phase and review period. The answers I have received simply don’t convince me that this deal will keep a nuclear weapon out of Iran’s hands. It may, in fact, strengthen Iran’s position as a destabilizing and destructive influence across the Middle East.

First of all, I don’t believe that this deal gives international inspectors adequate access to undeclared sites—24 days is far, far too long a time. Iran can stall, and, in 24 days, they can cover up whatever they have. I am especially troubled by reports about how the Iranian military base at Parchin will be inspected. With these potential roadblocks, the IAEA inspectors may be unable to finish their investigation into the potential military dimensions of Iran’s nuclear program. I don’t think it is essential that Iran provide a full mea culpa of its past activities, but we should have a clear picture of how far Iran has gotten in developing a nuclear weapon.

I also view as a dangerous concession the sunset of the international sanctions on advanced conventional weapons and ballistic missiles. I was told that these issues were not on the table during the talks; so it is unacceptable to me that, after 5 years, Iran can begin buying advanced conventional weapons and, after 8 years, ballistic missiles. Worse, if Iran were to violate the weakened provisions in this agreement, such an action wouldn’t violate the JCPOA and wouldn’t be subject to snapback sanctions.

In my view, Iran is a grave threat to international stability. It is the largest state sponsor of terrorism in the world. It continues to hold American citizens behind bars on bogus charges, and our prisoners still languish there. We have an agreement. Their release was not part of the agreement. Iran’s actions

have made a bad situation in a chaotic region worse.

Even under the weight of international sanctions these past few years—when Iran had no money, when its currency was worthless, when its economy was in the toilet—Iran found money to support international terror. Iran has been able to support terrorist groups, such as Hezbollah, Hamas, and other violent extremists. Awash in new cash provided by sanctions relief, Iran will be poised to inflict even greater damage in Syria, Yemen, Iraq, Lebanon, Israel, and our Gulf partners. Iran's leadership has every interest in shoring up support from hard-liners. After all, if a deal goes through, hard-liners will need to be placated.

I can tell you that, within the next few years—in the next Lebanon war with Israel—Hezbollah will have missiles raining down on Israel, and some of those missiles will be paid for by the windfall that Iran is going to get as a result of sanctions being lifted. I think that is unacceptable.

We can have no illusions about what Iran will do with its newfound wealth. We can have no doubt about the malevolent intent of a country's leader who chants "death to America" and "death to Israel" just days after concluding a deal. The ink was not even dry on the deal, and 4 days later, the Supreme Leader led a chant of "death to America." After negotiating with us and agreeing to this agreement, he could not even wait more than 4 days—back to the same old "death to America."

Finally and very importantly, I have a fundamental concern that, 15 years from now, under this agreement, Iran will be free to produce weapons-grade, highly enriched uranium without any limitation. What does that mean? It means Iran will be a legitimized nuclear threshold state after the year 2030, with advanced centrifuges and the ability to stockpile enriched uranium. So, in reality, this agreement does not prevent Iran from having a nuclear weapon; it only postpones it.

If Iran pursues that course, I fear it could spark a nuclear arms race across the region. After years of intransigence, I am simply not confident that Iran will be a more responsible partner.

Before I finish, I would also like to say a few words about the debate surrounding this issue so far.

We can disagree on the issues. We should debate the details of any important policy, such as this one, and we must rely on our democratic institutions to carry us forward as they have for so long; but we cannot question the motives of any Member of Congress no matter where he or she stands on this issue.

So, instead of using this time to grind a political ax, let's, instead, look down the road. After all, we know that this deal is going forward, and when that happens, we need to ask how we can make this agreement stronger.

How do we ensure the security of Israel and our other friends and allies

in the region? How do we keep resources out of the hands of terrorists as sanctions are lifted? What support does Congress need to provide so that the United States and our partners can hold Iran to its word and ultimately keep it from getting a bomb?

The time to start answering these questions is now.

That is why, in the days and weeks ahead, I will reach out to colleagues—Republicans and Democrats alike—to chart a path forward. I will be working with Chairman ROYCE and others on both sides of the aisle. I will develop new legislation to counter Iran as it dumps its soon-to-be-acquired billions of dollars into terrorist groups and weapons programs. I will work with other lawmakers toward new initiatives that support Israel and our Middle East allies so that they can stand up to an unleashed Iran; and I will work here in Congress and with the administration to make sure the deal is fully implemented to the letter.

We need to focus on strengthening our deterrence in the region; and, most importantly, we have to work hard to continue to enhance the U.S.-Israel relationship. We must reinvigorate the bipartisan consensus which has been the foundation of America's relationship with Israel; and we must ensure that Israel is able to maintain its qualitative military edge and its ability to defend itself.

The world is watching us this week. The United States is being looked to, not for rhetoric and outrage, but for leadership and resolve. So let's present our arguments and cast our votes. Then let's work together to move forward in a productive way. I appreciate how we have worked together on the Foreign Affairs Committee with Chairman ROYCE.

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

□ 1745

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the bipartisan relationship that all of the Members on the Foreign Affairs Committee have, but especially today, the words of Mr. ENGEL that every Member of this House should be mindful that impugning motives, questioning the motives of those who disagree with us, is not conducive to an honest and fair debate over these issues. I thank him for making that point on the floor today.

At this time, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. SCALISE), the majority whip.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, when the President started these negotiations with Iran, I think, when you look at the fatal flaw in the beginning of those negotiations, they should have started with one basic premise. That premise, Mr. Speaker, ought to have been to finally force Iran to dismantle their nuclear weapons program.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, that was not the objective of these negotiations. In fact, if you look, it seemed there

was more interest on making sure that a deal could be reached that China and Russia and Iran could finally agree to.

And the problem is, when you look at the fatal flaw of that negotiation, what has it yielded? And why is there such strong opposition across the country from members of both parties to this agreement?

I think most Americans recognize that Iran cannot be trusted with a nuclear weapon. Just look at their own rhetoric. Just this week the Ayatollah himself led the chant "death to America."

These are the people that the President is negotiating with to ultimately end up at the end of this deal with the ability to develop not just a nuclear bomb, but a nuclear arsenal, Mr. Speaker.

Just look at the tenets of the deal itself. One of the conditions in the deal actually allows Iran to have more than 5,000 centrifuges. If they comply with the deal, they can keep more than 5,000 centrifuges to enrich uranium.

It took Pakistan about 3,000 centrifuges to develop their bomb, and Iran will have over 5,000 centrifuges if they comply with the deal, let alone if they cheat. And we know the history there.

Let's look at other components of the deal, Mr. Speaker. In this deal, if there is a site that is undeclared and our intelligence along the way over these next few years exposes the fact that there is something there that we want to go look at, that we question whether or not they are cheating, Mr. Speaker, we have to get permission under this deal and wait over 24 days.

Imagine all of the things that can be hidden in 24 days if we have the intelligence that they are cheating. How could this be part of a deal that we would agree to that is in the American best interest?

Ultimately, what we have to come to an agreement on is what is in the best interest of the United States of America.

Mr. Speaker, we also ought to be concerned about our allies, Israel, and the other Arab states in the region that have deep, grave concerns about this, others that are indicating that this will start a nuclear arms race in the Middle East.

Within 10 years, you could have nearly a half a dozen states in the Middle East with nuclear arms. This isn't the way we ought to go.

Then, of course, there are the secret side deals. We have seen evidence now that there are secret side deals that the President won't disclose.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CARTER of Georgia). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. ROYCE. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. SCALISE. Mr. Speaker, under the law that President Obama himself signed, the law actually says the President has to disclose to Congress and the American people all information

related to this deal, including “side agreements.”

And now we are hearing at least two secret side agreements exist, one that allows Iran to actually do their own inspections.

Mr. Speaker, these are the people that this deal is going to allow to inspect their own nuclear facilities. The President ought to release to the American people the details of these secret side agreements right now or withdraw this entire proposal.

President Reagan said, “Trust, but verify.” Under this agreement, President Obama is saying trust Iran to verify. You cannot allow this to go through.

I urge all of my colleagues to reject this deal. The President lays out a false premise that it is this deal or war.

I would suggest, Mr. Speaker, there is a much different approach, a much better approach, and that is to go get a better deal that protects the interest of the United States of America for today and for decades to come.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN), a very valued member of our committee and one of the subcommittee ranking members.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, when I came to this House in 1997, a few months after I started serving on the Foreign Affairs Committee, I said back then that the Iran nuclear program was the greatest single threat to the security of Americans. It was true then. It is true now.

On July 14, a few hours after the deal was published, I came to this floor and said that what this House ought to do is consider a Resolution of Approval of the nuclear deal and to vote it down by a large vote. That is exactly what we will do tomorrow morning.

Let me go through a number of points that proponents and opponents of this deal can both agree on. The first is this resolution is quite a bit different than the one we have been thinking about for the last month.

This is a Resolution of Approval. And even if we vote it down, the President can and will carry out this agreement.

That is very different from the Resolution of Disapproval that we have all talked about and made commitments about.

We don't have any commitments on this resolution. It is a totally new resolution. This resolution will express the feelings of Congress, but will not prevent the President from carrying out the deal.

Second, we can agree this deal is better during the next year and a half than it is the next decade. The controls on Iran's nuclear program are much stronger for the first 10 years than they are thereafter.

Whether you like the deal or hate the deal, you have got to agree that it is better up front than it is in the out-years.

The third thing we can agree on is that the President only promised Iran

that he would sign the deal and that he would carry out the deal and that he would use his veto, as he has threatened to do and has successfully done, in effect—that he would carry out the deal using his powers to do so. That is already settled.

Mr. Speaker, the President never told Iran that Congress would approve this deal. Why should we give Iran more than they bargained for? They bargained for the President's signature together with his freedom to carry out the deal. That is already settled. Why should we give Iran something extra in return for nothing?

We should not vote to approve this deal.

The next thing we can all agree on is that this deal is not a binding agreement as a matter of U.S. Constitutional law or international law.

The Constitution defines a treaty. This is not a treaty and certainly wouldn't get a two-thirds vote confirmation in the Senate.

If you look at the Vienna Convention on the law of treaties, this is not a ratified treaty, it is not an unratified treaty, it is not a legislative executive agreement. It is simply an agreement between the executives of the respective governments.

Mr. Speaker, the next thing we can agree on is that we don't know what the best policy for America is in the next decade. Let's keep our options open. Iran is not legally bound by this agreement. Even if they were, they would conveniently ignore that any day of the week.

We cannot feel that we are legally bound. Now, as a legal matter, we are not. But appearances matter. And if this agreement that has been signed by the President gets a positive vote of approval in this House, there will be those around the world who believe that it is binding on the United States, even while, as a legal matter, it is not binding on Iran and, oh, by the way, their legislature hasn't voted to approve it.

So we need freedom of action. What form will that action take? Will we demand that Iran continue to limit its nuclear program beyond year 10, beyond year 15?

After all, we are continuing the sanctions relief all through the next decade. I don't know if that will be the right policy or not.

Mr. Speaker, the current President's hands are untied. He gets to carry out his policy for the remainder of the term. Vote no on this resolution. Because if we vote yes, we are tying the hands of future Presidents in a decade to come.

Mr. ROYCE. I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), chairman emeritus of the Committee on Foreign Affairs who currently chairs our Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I want to highlight the hard work of our esteemed chairman, Mr. ROYCE of Cali-

fornia, and our ranking member, Mr. ENGEL, who have done an incredible job throughout—I don't know how many hearings we have had in our Foreign Affairs Committee—highlighting the many flaws of this deal and giving the other side the opportunity to present what is good about this deal.

Mr. Speaker, after all of those hearings in our Foreign Affairs Committee led by Mr. ROYCE and Mr. ENGEL, it is simple to realize what is before us today. This deal paves the way for a nuclear-armed Iran in as little as 15 years.

This deal lifts the arms embargo. This deal lifts the sanctions on Iran's ballistic missile program. This deal releases billions of dollars that will allow the regime to increase funding to support terror, as it has been doing, to support its regional hegemonic ambitions.

If all of that were not bad enough, with this deal, the P5+1 countries will actually be obligated to help Iran modernize and advance its nuclear program. Yes. You heard that right. This is important because this modernization requirement gets lost with all of the other many flaws of this deal.

We actually have an agreement before us to help Iran strengthen its ability to protect against nuclear security threats, to protect it against sabotage, to protect all the physical sites.

Incredibly enough, we will be helping Iran with its nuclear program. So now, not only do we have to allow Iran to enrich, not only do we have to allow Iran to become a nuclear threshold state, but, yes, we must actually protect Iran's nuclear program from sabotage and outside threats.

Mr. Speaker, how does a rogue regime that has been in violation of its nonproliferation treaty obligations for decades, a rogue regime that has been in violation of—one, two, three, four, five—six United Nations Security Council resolutions and a regime that violates other international obligations get to be the beneficiary of such protections from the U.S. and other P5+1 countries?

This is madness, Mr. Speaker. It simply defies logic. We must oppose this deal. Let's vote that way.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH), a very important member of the committee, the ranking member of the Middle East and North Africa Subcommittee.

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member for yielding. I thank the chairman for his leadership in the committee.

Mr. Speaker, there have been a lot of points made during this debate. I would like to set some context for the rest of the evening.

Iran's regime is anti-American. They are anti-Israel. They are homophobic. They are misogynistic. They violate the human rights of their people.

Iran's support for terrorists has led directly to the deaths of American citizens. It actively works to destabilize

the Middle East. It vows to destroy Israel.

It is responsible for the death of civilians and members of the military from Beirut to Buenos Aires. It has assisted in Assad's slaughter of 300,000 of his own people.

As we gather here today, four Americans—Jason Rezaian, Amir Hekmati, Saeed Abedini, my constituent Bob Levinson—are in Iran, held by the regime and unable to return home to their families.

Mr. Speaker, it is well known that I oppose this deal. On the nuclear issue, it does not dismantle Iran's nuclear program. It pauses it.

Now, inspections in Nantanz and Fordow are very positive, as is the monitoring of the fuel cycle and the reduction in enriched uranium. But we cannot access other suspected nuclear sites in less than 24 days.

If we find Iran in violation of this agreement, we cannot restore sanctions to the punishing level of today and, if we snap back sanctions, Mr. Speaker, Iran has the right to cease performing its obligations under the agreement altogether.

□ 1800

While there has been a lot of speculation about what could happen in the absence of a deal, we know that, under this deal, the regime will get billions of dollars to support terrorism; we know the arms embargo will be lifted, meaning that the most advanced weapons will be available to the regime; and we know that the ban on the development of ballistic missiles will be lifted.

Now, I have heard a lot of criticism of those of us who oppose the deal. I don't want war, Mr. Speaker. To the contrary, I want to prevent Iran from using billions of dollars to cause more violence and its surrogates to cause more bloodshed.

I don't want the start of an arms race. To the contrary, I want to prevent Iran from developing advanced centrifuges and an industrial nuclear program with an unlimited number of centrifuges so that other nations will not seek nuclear weapons.

Mr. Speaker, I don't oppose this deal because of politics or my religion or the people who live in my district. I have simply concluded that the risks are too great.

Now, these past few weeks have been challenging for all of us. Reasonable people can disagree, and I am saddened by the often vitriolic comments hurled at those of us with different views on both sides. I also disagree with the decision by the Republican leadership to make up new rules, ignoring our ability to have an impact right now through the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act that passed 400-25.

The consequences of this deal, Mr. Speaker, present us with some harsh realities, but rather than denying them, it is now time for Congress to begin the work of defying them, and it will require bipartisan support to do it.

That means ramping up intelligence sharing and counterterrorism cooperation with Israel and our Gulf partners and making clear to our allies that Iran's violent activities in the region will not be tolerated. It means enhancing Israel's qualitative military edge and making Iran know that the penalties should it cheat and break out to a bomb will be punishing.

It means intensifying sanctions already enshrined in U.S. law for Iranian support for terrorism and violation of human rights. President Obama rightly made this point last week: nothing in this deal prevents the United States from sanctioning people, banks, and businesses that support terrorism, and we must do so together.

What happens next? I will vote against the deal. Mr. Speaker, there will be a day after the final resolution of this nuclear deal, and on that day, this House must work together to ensure that Iran's terrorism is checked and that Iran never obtains a nuclear weapon. On that, we all agree.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MCCAUL), chairman of the Committee on Homeland Security and a member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, for the last decade, Congress has passed bipartisan sanctions to get to the point where we are today, and the purpose of these sanctions was to dismantle Iran's nuclear weapons program.

This agreement does not achieve that goal. In fact, this agreement puts Iran, the world's largest state sponsor of terror, on a glidepath to a nuclear bomb. Proponents say it is the only alternative to war, but I believe that is a false choice.

I recently met with Prime Minister Netanyahu, and he agreed that our goal should be a good deal, but that we cannot put our security at risk for a bad deal. Make no mistake, this is a bad deal for America and for our allies.

It will not stop Iran's nuclear program. It will leave Iran with the ingredients for a bomb and infrastructure to build it, and it will spark a nuclear arms race in the Middle East. It will give Iran a cash windfall, freeing up over \$100 billion to fuel the regime's global campaign of Islamist terror.

Incredibly, this agreement lifts restrictions on Iran's ballistic missiles, which the Ayatollah himself said that they will mass-produce. There is only one reason to develop an ICBM, Mr. Speaker, and that is to deliver a nuclear warhead across continents, which means the United States.

A top Iranian general bragged recently that his country will have "a new ballistic missile test in the near future that will be a thorn in the eyes of our enemies."

President Reagan's famous negotiating advice was to "trust, but verify." We can't trust a regime that has cheated on every deal. President Rouhani says his country's centrifuges will

never stop spinning and that they will "buy, sell, and develop any weapons we need and will not ask for permission or abide by any resolution."

Now, the White House is counting on verification measures spelled out in secret side deals between Iran and the IAEA, which Secretary Kerry testified to me that even he has not seen. Astonishingly, the AP reports that the side deal allows Iran to self-inspect its nuclear sites.

Now, the American people, through their representatives in Congress, are expected to vote on this measure without seeing these secret deals, which goes to the heart of verification. This, in my judgment, is nothing short of reckless.

Let's be clear-eyed about what we are debating. This was not a negotiation with an honest government; it was a negotiation with terrorists who chant "death to America" and are responsible for more than a thousand American casualties in Iraq alone. If we allow this deal to go forward, we are putting the security of the world at grave risk.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, for the sake of our Nation's security and in defense of the free world, I cannot in good conscience support this agreement.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I now yield 3½ minutes to the gentleman from Florida, DEBBIE WASSERMAN SCHULTZ.

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the motion to approve this agreement. After a thorough review process, I believe it is in the best national security interests of the United States and our allies for Congress to support the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

I have been a public official for nearly 23 years. This is the most consequential vote I have taken and the most difficult decision I have ever faced. I have spent the review period methodically going through the agreement, raising concerns with the administration, and speaking with independent sources, including nuclear nonproliferation experts, economists, and foreign ambassadors.

I also held a series of meetings and spoke with many constituents who fervently hold very strong and differing positions. My goal was to determine whether the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action is the most likely path to prevent Iran from achieving their nuclear weapons goals.

This agreement is clearly not perfect. It is one tool that we have to combat Iran's nuclear ambitions. Ultimately, my support is based on substance. Importantly, my Jewish identity and Jewish heart weighed heavily in my decisionmaking process.

As we listen to Iran's leaders call for the destruction of the Jewish people in Israel, history offers a brutal reminder of what happens when we do not listen.

Iran continues to be a leading state sponsor of terrorism, but an Iran with a nuclear weapon or Hezbollah or Hamas with a nuclear shield is far

more dangerous. With the JCPOA in place, we will have Iran's nuclear program under the most intrusive monitoring and inspection mechanisms in place, while we continue to combat Iran's terrorist reach.

I have personally spoken with the President and my colleagues about steps that we must and will take to continue strengthening Israel's and our other allies' intelligence and military capabilities. Opponents say we must press for a better deal, but after thoroughly investigating this prospect, I am left with no evidence that one is likely or even possible.

I heard directly from our allies, top diplomats, and analysts from across the political spectrum that the sanctions regime that we have in place now will erode, if not completely fall apart. Moreover, our partners will not come back to the negotiating table, and neither will Iran, and no one opposed to this deal has produced any evidence to the contrary.

I cannot comprehend why we would walk away from the safeguards in this agreement, leaving Iran speeding toward a nuclear weapon. Safeguards like 24/7/365 access, monitoring all of Iran's previously declared nuclear sites, eliminating 98 percent of Iran's highly enriched uranium stockpile, and the unprecedented standard of monitoring every stage of the nuclear supply chain.

Even if Iran cheats, we will know much more about their nuclear program, allowing us to more effectively eliminate it if that ever becomes necessary.

As a Jewish mother and as a Member of Congress, nothing is more important to me than ensuring the safety and security of the United States and Israel. I am confident that supporting this agreement is the best opportunity that we have to do that.

Mr. Speaker, we have an expression in Judaism, may the United States go from strength to strength, and as we say in synagogue, the people of Israel live—am Yisrael chai.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HENSARLING), chairman of the Committee on Financial Services.

Mr. HENSARLING. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to President Obama's nuclear deal with Iran. Now, the President says it is a good deal; and you know what, he is right. It is a very good deal for Iran; but it is a very bad deal for America.

I fear, in his rush to try to build a legacy, the President has clearly given up far too much for far too little. He has done this at the expense of our security, as well as the security of our friend Israel and other U.S. allies.

Mr. Speaker, this is a deadly serious matter. The first thing the President does in his agreement with Iran is to give them some startup capital. An estimated \$120 billion held abroad will now be repatriated back to Iran's central bank, \$120 billion to a regime

whose Supreme Leader, to this day, calls for the annihilation of Israel, a regime that still chants "death to America," a regime that has put bounties on the heads of American soldiers and has the blood of American citizens on its hands, a regime whose sponsorship of Hezbollah has left our closest ally in the region, Israel, with 80,000 rockets trained on it.

In sum, it is a regime that simply represents the world's largest and most dangerous state sponsor of terrorism.

Now, President Obama would have us believe that waiving sanctions against this regime would make the world safer, but this is the very same President that dismissed the Islamic State as the JV team, and we see what that has gotten us.

This is simply not an administration whose assessment of national security threats is credible, and the stakes involved with a nuclear Iran leave zero room for error.

In truth, Mr. Speaker, I fear it is we who sent the JV team to negotiate with Iran. Sadly, they were outplayed, outmaneuvered, and outwitted; and the result of their failure is the dangerous agreement we have before us today.

It is such a flawed agreement that the President, yet again, tells Congress we have to pass something to actually find out what is in it. In other words, the President has utterly failed to provide the secret side agreements.

President Obama once told us we cannot allow Iran to get a nuclear weapon, but under his deal, Iran's nuclear program will not be dismantled, only temporarily slowed, and that is if the Iranians don't cheat; but the President's team has failed to achieve anytime, anywhere inspections. Thus, it will be impossible to ensure the Iranians aren't cheating.

Ah, but don't worry, Mr. Speaker, we are told the Iranians will turn themselves in if they cheat—really? In short, the President's agreement rewards Iran's terrorist-sponsoring regime with billions of dollars in relief without any guarantee of compliance.

When you look at the record, Mr. Speaker, I don't trust this administration. I don't trust the Iranians. Why would we ever trust the two together? For the sake of our national security, I urge all of my colleagues to reject this flawed, dangerous agreement.

Mr. ENGEL. I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE).

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this historic nuclear agreement reached by the United States and our negotiating partners with Iran. For the sake of our national security and that of our allies, we must seize this unique opportunity.

In the midst of all these wild charges, let's just try to get some perspective. In fact, this agreement goes far beyond any negotiated nuclear deal in history.

□ 1815

It will reduce Iran's stockpiled uranium by nearly 98 percent; it will per-

manently prevent the plutonium pathway to a nuclear weapon at Arak; it will disable and mothball two-thirds of Iran's enrichment centrifuges, including more advanced models; it will terminate all enrichment at Fordow; and it will provide for intrusive inspections of nuclear sites in perpetuity.

This is an unprecedented degrading—not just a freezing, a massive degrading—of Iran's nuclear program. No military strike or strikes could achieve as much.

I challenge any of the agreement's detractors to present a viable alternative that achieves the same result and will verifiably prevent a nuclear-armed Iran for the foreseeable future. They won't—and they haven't—because they can't. There simply isn't a viable diplomatic or military alternative for preventing an Iranian nuclear weapon.

The notion that we could somehow unilaterally reject the agreement and still compel the P5+1 to resume negotiations is pure fantasy. Our international partners have made clear that reinstating the effective sanctions regime that brought Iran to the negotiating table would be impossible. For Congress to scuttle the deal would destroy our credibility as a negotiating party and would very likely put Iran right back on the path to developing a weapon.

The stakes couldn't be higher. The nuclear issue should transcend political opportunism and partisan rancor. We should be working together across party lines to ensure the swift and effective implementation of the JCPOA. We should be exploring ways that we can enhance cooperative efforts with Israel and the international community to address Iran's support for Hezbollah and its gross abuse of human rights as well as other critical challenges in the Middle East.

Today, we can start down that path by supporting the agreement. I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on the resolution of approval.

Mr. ROYCE. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from North Carolina (Ms. FOXX).

Ms. FOXX. I want to thank my colleague from the Foreign Affairs Committee for his leadership on this work.

Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my strong opposition to this legislation that would clear the way for the President's misguided deal with Iran.

The United States must continue to stand between Iran and nuclear weapons capability, but instead, the deal legitimizes Iran's nuclear achievements and strengthens its extremist regime.

The agreement gradually removes the key barriers that prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons capabilities, from growing its economic influence in the Middle East, and from continuing its state funding of terrorist organizations that threaten the security of the country and the well-being of our allies.

This deal lifts critical economic sanctions that have limited Iran's

scope of influence in the region, removes the arms embargo, and lifts mis- sionable material for a nuclear bomb for at least 15 years. The inspection and verification procedures against il- licit plutonium production or uranium enrichment are airtight.

For these reasons, I oppose the Presi- dent's deal and urge my colleagues to oppose this legislation.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to inquire how much time I have remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gen- tleman has 8 minutes remaining.

Mr. ENGEL. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LIPINSKI).

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, the Iran nuclear agreement should be judged on what is best for our national security and what is more likely to produce peace. I believe that peace has a better chance if we reject this deal, keep sanctions on, and go back to the negoti- ating table to get a better agreement.

This agreement was supposed to pre- vent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, but, at best, Iran will be a nu- clear threshold state in 15 years. By practically guaranteeing and legiti- mizing this access, there will be a rush by others in the region to gain their own nuclear weapons, creating an enor- mously dangerous arms race in the most volatile part of the world.

The inspections protocols in the agreement are troubling because they give Iran 24 days to delay inspection requests at suspected nuclear sites, a far cry from "anytime, anywhere." And the agreement contains deeply concerning sanctions relief on Iran's acquisition of conventional weapons and ballistic missile technology in 5 and 8 years, respectively.

These are just some of my concerns that lead me, after careful consider- ation, to oppose this agreement.

Mr. Speaker, we should and we can do better. I urge my colleagues to re- ject this resolution.

Mr. ROYCE. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. TROTT).

Mr. TROTT. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL for all of their hard work.

The fact that we are even debating whether to enter into this agreement is very troubling.

Let's be clear what we are talking about. The United States of America is going to enter into a deal with a rogue nation who refuses to release the four Americans they are holding, who has cheated on every deal they have been party to over the past 30 years, who is a party to secret deals we cannot see, who calls all of us the Great Satan, who calls for death to our citizens and wants to wipe Israel off the face of the Earth. And we are told the deal is nec- essary because the United States of America has no other option.

Has it really come to this? We have options. One option is a better deal, and a better deal looks like this: re- lease the four Americans, no sunset clause, and inspections just like we were promised—anytime, anywhere. And if these terms are unacceptable to Iran, then the United States of Amer-

ica will use all of its economic might to put tough sanctions back in place.

If we do this deal, let's look at what the next 25 years looks like.

Immediately, in the next 12 months, Iran will get their hands on \$50 billion to \$150 billion. The money will not be used for their citizens. It will be used to perpetuate terror around the world. Iran will get its money; we won't get our four Americans.

Over the next 12 months, they will start to cheat and they will get a bomb or two. Over the next 12 months, we are going to start an arms race in the Mid- dle East. Over the next 1 to 5 years, we will try and snap back sanctions, but that will be ineffective because all the long-term contracts will be grand- fathered in.

In 5 years, Iran will be buying con- ventional weapons. In 8 years, they will have a ballistic missile. In 10 years, be- cause of their cheating, they will have a ballistic missile with a nuclear bomb pointed at the United States of Amer- ica. And in 25 years, our friend and ally Israel may not exist.

I was in business for 30 years before I got here, and the one thing I knew is you cannot do a good deal with a bad guy.

We cannot do this deal with Iran.

Mr. ENGEL. I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. NAD- LER).

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the resolution of approval of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

Throughout this debate, there have been accusations questioning the mo- tives and loyalties of Members in mak- ing this decision. It is precisely be- cause I believe this agreement is in the interest of the United States and be- cause I have been a strong supporter of Israel my entire life that I am sup- porting the Iran nuclear agreement.

This must not be a vote of politics but of conscience. I, for one, could not live with myself if I voted in a way that I believe would put the lives of Americans and Israelis at greater risk of an Iranian nuclear bomb.

My priority and overriding objective in assessing this agreement has been to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear bomb. The interests of the United States and of Israel in this respect are identical. In addition to constituting an existential threat to Israel, a nu- clear-armed Iran would make Iran's conventional threats more dangerous and difficult to counter and pose a greater danger to the United States, to the region, and to the world.

The question before us is not whether this is a good deal. The question is which of the two options available to us—supporting or rejecting the deal—is more likely to avert a nuclear-armed Iran. I have concluded, after examining all the arguments, that supporting the Iran nuclear agreement gives us the better chance of preventing Iran from developing a nuclear weapon.

The agreement will shut Iran's path- ways to developing the necessary fis-

sionable material for a nuclear bomb for at least 15 years. The inspection and verification procedures against il- licit plutonium production or uranium enrichment are airtight.

The questions that have been raised about inspection procedures—the so- called side deals, the alleged self-in- spection—do not relate to the central issue of production of fissionable mate- rial. And without fissionable material, you cannot make a bomb.

Even after 15 years, when some of the restrictions will be eased, we would still know instantly about any attempt to make bomb materials because the inspectors and the electronic and pho- tographic surveillance will still be there. The options available to a future President for stopping Iran then would be better than the options available now if the deal is rejected because we would have more access, instant intel- ligence, and more knowledge of the Ira- nian program.

The argument that if we reject the deal, we can force Iran back to the ne- gotiating table and obtain a better deal is a fantasy. It is not a viable alter- native. The other countries that have joined us in multilateral sanctions against Iran have made it clear that they will drop their sanctions if we re- ject the deal; and American sanctions, by themselves, have been proven ineffect- ive in coercing Iran.

We must be very clear that, if nec- essary, the United States will use mili- tary force to prevent an Iranian nu- clear bomb; but the odds of that being necessary are significantly less with approval of this deal than with rejec- tion of the agreement.

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

Mr. ENGEL. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. NADLER. Going forward, it re- mains vital that we continue to pursue ways to further guarantee the security of the United States, of Israel, and of our other allies in the Middle East. This will require strict and diligent oversight of the implementation of the agreement, maintaining Israel's quali- tative military edge, and countering Iran's support for terrorism and other destabilizing conduct.

We must be ready to take action against Iran's nefarious behavior, and Iran must know that the United States will never allow it to pose a nuclear threat to the region and the world.

Mr. ROYCE. I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. DENT), chairman of the Committee on Ethics.

Mr. DENT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in op- position to this bill and the underlying Iran nuclear agreement.

Despite entering into these negotia- tions from a position of strength—that would be the United States—the deal before us fails to achieve the goal of preventing Iran's capacity to develop a nuclear weapon. It simply contains or manages Iran's nuclear program.

By agreeing to a lax enforcement and inspections regime and fanciful, unrealistic snapback sanctions, the administration has accepted that Iran should remain 1 year away from a nuclear bomb. I am not prepared to accept that. The sanctions relief will provide Iran with billions of dollars of funds that will bolster the Revolutionary Guard and nonstate militant groups. The deal ends the conventional arms embargo and the prohibition on ballistic missile technology. Not only will this result in conventional arms flowing to groups like Hezbollah, it concedes the delivery system for a nuclear bomb.

This agreement will provide Iran with nuclear infrastructure, a missile delivery system, and the funds to pay for it all. And, by the way, the I in ICBM means "intercontinental." I don't believe that New Zealand and Mexico are the intended targets. That would be us.

This deal cripples and shatters the current notion of nuclear nonproliferation. If Iran can enrich uranium, which they can under this agreement, their Gulf Arab neighbors will likely want to do the same.

I do not want a nuclear arms race, a nuclearized Middle East, a region of state instability in irrational nonstate actors. Someone explain to me how deterrence works under that scenario. We should not reward the ayatollahs with billions of dollars and sophisticated weapons in exchange for temporary and unenforceable nuclear restrictions.

Mr. Speaker, I have always supported a diplomatic resolution to the Iran nuclear issue, but this is a dangerously weak agreement. I urge my colleagues to reject it.

□ 1830

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. VARGAS).

Mr. VARGAS. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from California for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action between the P5+1 and Iran. The deal fails to dismantle Iran's nuclear program. It fails to guarantee intrusive enough inspections to ensure that Iran does not cheat, it fails to keep Iran from achieving nuclear threshold status, and it rewards Iran's horrific behavior.

In the initial phase of this agreement, Iran would quickly receive a whopping sanctions relief package potentially totaling \$150 billion. We all know that Iran is the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism and that this money will embolden a regime openly committed to confronting the United States and destabilizing the Middle East.

In 8 years, Iran legally begins expanding its ballistic missile program and continues expanding its intercontinental ballistic missile program under the guise of satellite testing.

And who do we think these missiles are aimed at?

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

Mr. ENGEL. I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman.

Mr. VARGAS. As recently as yesterday, Ayatollah Khamenei declared: "I am saying to Israel that they would not live to see the end of these 25 years. There will be no such thing as a Zionist regime in 25 years."

This is a bad deal, and we should reject it.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CONAWAY), chairman of the Committee on Agriculture.

Mr. CONAWAY. I thank Chairman ROYCE for yielding time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to the approval process that is going on and the underlying deal with Iran. It is one of the most consequential foreign policy issues that we will confront, certainly since I have been here and, I expect, for the next several decades.

This is a terrible deal. I can't state it any more forcefully.

We have seen this movie before. In 1994, President Bill Clinton made a deal with North Korea. His deal with North Korea would rid the Korean Peninsula of nuclear weapons and would usher North Korea onto the stage as a responsible citizen of the world's nations. That didn't happen. This is the exact same verbiage we heard on this floor then that is being said tonight, and this is the exact same outcome we will get with Iran and their nuclear program.

Look at their current record. Chief sponsor of state terrorism around the world. As their economy improves with the dropping of the sanctions and the resources they will get, do you realistically think that this ayatollah will, in fact, become a moderate voice within his country?

Do you not think he will take those resources and expand the mischief and terror that he has conducted around the world already under the sanctions that were in place?

The other side has already given up on the snapback provisions. They have argued very eloquently that those won't happen because we can't reinforce the sanctions that were the heart of what got Iran at the table today.

Mr. Speaker, this deal ushers in a world that is less safe, less stable, and less secure.

Trust must be earned. I trust Iran's word when they say that Israel must go away. I trust Iran when they say "death to America." I do not trust Iran when they say they will abide by this agreement.

I wouldn't play golf with these people because golf is one of those events where you have to self-assess your penalties. They will not do that in playing golf, and they are not about to do it with respect to this nuclear program that is going on.

We have no way of knowing what their covert activities might be over the next several years. They will cheat. They have cheated, and they will continue to cheat. We cannot trust these people with a deal.

I urge my colleagues to vote "no" on the motion of approval and reject this deal. Tell the world where we stand. Whether our partners around the world can see the clear-eyed threat that these folks represent to the world for the next several decades, we can see it, and we must vote "no."

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1½ minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HINOJOSA).

Mr. HINOJOSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in opposition to H.J. Res. 64, which disapproves of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action negotiated by the P5+1.

I reviewed the agreement thoroughly, participated in classified briefings, and listened to the many details and intricacies present by the nuclear and security experts on all sides. This agreement may not be perfect, but it is the most viable option we have in reducing Iran's capability of acquiring a nuclear weapon.

The JCPOA prolongs Iran's nuclear weapon breakout time, reduces their number of operating centrifuges, and decreases Iran's current stockpile of low enriched uranium.

More importantly, the agreement allows the International Atomic Energy Agency the ability to access and inspect Iran to verify and ensure compliance.

Should Iran cheat, the international community will come together and once again reimpose the sanctions that brought Iran to the negotiating table.

In every situation that involves the possibility of using military force to overcome a threat, I will always side with exploring and exhausting every possible avenue towards a diplomatic resolution first.

I support the JCPOA because it provides a reasonable, balanced, and diplomatic solution rather than a worst-case scenario.

In closing, with the support of 36 retired generals and admirals and 29 of the Nation's top scientists, I am confident we are on the right track with this plan. All of these highly distinguished and experienced leaders agree that this agreement is the most effective means currently available to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. MESSER), the chair of the Republican Policy Committee.

Mr. MESSER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to oppose this legislation and the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, also known as the Iran nuclear deal. A chief reason for this opposition is important, yet simple: The Iran nuclear deal doesn't make America safer, it doesn't make Israel safer, and it doesn't make the rest of the world safer either.

Whatever your thoughts on this Iran nuclear deal, we should all be able to agree, the world will be a much more dangerous and unstable place if Iran were to obtain a nuclear weapon. Unfortunately, the deal the President negotiated won't stop that from happening.

Instead, under this deal, Iran gets to keep its nuclear facilities. Amazingly, it will be allowed to self-police those facilities and report directly to the IAEA, an idea that would be laughable if it were not so crazy.

Iran will get to enrich uranium, all while receiving sanctions relief to the tune of \$150 billion—\$150 billion pumped into a \$400 billion a year national economy; \$150 billion that will no doubt be used by Iran to bankroll terrorist organizations, further destabilize the Middle East, and continue their work to wipe Israel off the map.

It was Ronald Reagan who said “trust but verify” during arms control negotiations with Communist Russia more than a generation ago, but it seems the Obama administration is asking us to trust Iran and then trust some more. Well, I'm not willing to do that, and the American people aren't willing to do that either.

We need to stop this bad deal before it is too late and negotiate a better deal, a deal that stops Iran's nuclear program and ensures the safety of America, Israel, and the rest of the world now and into the future.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) has expired.

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

I rise in support of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and against the resolution—well, actually, in favor of the resolution of approval.

I must say, in starting, we are at a paradoxical moment. The fears, the haunting specter, a terrible thing, the existential threats posed by a nuclear Iran are all legitimate fears and legitimate haunting specters, regional hegemony to be avoided.

But ironically, those concerns and those fears and those outcomes raised by my friends on the other side of the aisle and the opponents of this agreement actually come true and are realized if we do what they want us to do, which is to reject this agreement.

The alternative to this agreement is an opaque, unconstrained Iranian nuclear program, Mr. Speaker, hanging like the sword of Damocles over all of our heads. And the security of the United States and Israel and regional partners, who knows?

The false hope offered by the critics is let's return to the negotiating table to seek a better deal. A man that I respect, at one of our hearings that Chairman ED ROYCE chaired on the House Foreign Affairs Committee, former Senator Joe Lieberman, said just that.

I said: How did that work? He said: Well, let's just go back to the partners

and Iran and say, we just couldn't sell it; let's start over.

The proposition that we would renounce our own agreement that we negotiated, wrought by more than a year of tough negotiations, and expect that our negotiating partners, including Russia and China and, of course, Iran itself, would sit back down at the table and start all over again under our leadership is specious, if not delusional, as an argument.

We cannot be naive about the scenario in which Congress rejects this agreement brokered by our own country. Among our allies, we divest ourselves of the goodwill that undergirded these negotiations; and among our adversaries, we would confirm their suspicion we cannot be trusted.

The international sanctions regime that drove Iran to the negotiating table would collapse, and our diplomatic leverage would be diminished in all future U.S.-led negotiations.

Most concerning of all, we would return, once again, to the situation we are at, one of deep anxiety and uncertainty regarding Iran's nuclear ambitions.

Critics of the agreement have offered no alternative and have tried to define that agreement by what it is not. It is not a perfect deal that dismantles every nut and bolt of the Iranian nuclear development program, peaceful or otherwise.

It is not a comprehensive resolution of the entire relationship and the myriad issues the U.S. and our allies have with the repressive regime in Tehran and its reprehensible support for terrorist insurgencies in the region. No one ever said it would be.

What arms control agreement in the history of our country has ever attempted to circumscribe every aspect of a relationship with an adversary?

And certainly not this one. In other words, this agreement is the diplomatic alternative we sought to attain when we entered into these very negotiations.

The deal adheres to the high standards of verification, transparency, and compliance on which any acceptable agreement with Iran must be founded. That isn't just my word. That is what former Republican Secretary of State Colin Powell says. That is what Republican former NSC Adviser Brent Scowcroft says. That is what former Republican Senator John Warner from my State says.

The agreement erects an unprecedented and intrusive inspection regime that provides the IAEA with access to declared nuclear facilities and suspected covert nuclear development sites.

Additionally, they will be able to monitor Iran's entire nuclear program supply chain, including uranium mines, mills, centrifuges, rotors, bellows production, storage facilities, and dedicated procurement for nuclear-related or dual-use materials technology.

The agreement also rolls back major components and places strict restric-

tions on the Iranian nuclear program. If these restrictions are not adhered to, the United States can, at any time, unilaterally revive the sanctions currently in place.

Congress should immediately begin to conduct close oversight to ensure those terms are implemented and that Iran is living up to its obligations.

This isn't about trust. It was Ronald Reagan who said “trust, but verify.” Former Secretary of State Clinton today kind of echoed those words, saying “distrust and verify,” and that is why she supports the agreement. It does just that.

More broadly, the United States must signal to Iran that its condemnable record on human rights, terrorism, and regional subversion will not be tolerated; nor will we hide, with this agreement, that action and our response to it. In fact, quite the opposite. We will redouble our efforts to stop them in that egregious behavior.

□ 1845

Mr. Speaker, in closing, article I, section 8, clause 11, of the Constitution vests Congress with the duty to authorize war.

Implicit in that text is Congress' additional responsibility to exhaust all reasonable alternatives before committing the American people and our men and women in uniform to such a fateful path.

The Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action represents our best endeavor to provide just that alternative. It is the product of earnest diplomacy. Congress should put aside partisanship and support it for the sake of our country.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, several Members spoke of Iran's commitments under this agreement. While it is true that Iran has committed to taking certain steps under the agreement, it is also true that Iranians have never complied with any agreement related to its weapons program.

So let's start with considering what Iran's leaders have been saying today about this agreement. This is what they say. They say that Iran can pursue the development of missiles without any restrictions. How can that be, given what is in this agreement?

Well, President Rouhani—the supposed moderate here—has argued repeatedly that the only restrictions on Iran's missile developments are in the U.N. Security Council resolution.

Endorsing the deal, he says, it is not in the agreement itself. They don't recognize the Security Council resolution. So he says: We are not restricted by this agreement. So what the gentleman is quoting, they say they are not restricted by that.

Mr. Speaker, Iranian leaders say that Iran can violate the U.N. Security Council resolutions without violating the agreement. Sanctions do not, therefore, snap back if Iran violates

the U.N. Security Council resolutions, according to Iran, and that Iran intends to violate the U.N. Security Council restrictions on weapons sales and on imports.

This is President Rouhani again:

We will sell and buy weapons whenever and wherever we deem it necessary. We will not wait for permission from anyone or any resolution.

So Iran's defense minister has said that Iran is negotiating right now to purchase Russian fighter jets. We know they are negotiating in terms of ballistic missiles right now. They are in violation of the agreement, yet we don't see any intention to enforce that.

So we have got to ask ourselves: Just what kind of agreement is this? Who is this agreement with?

As the committee heard yesterday, it is an agreement with a regime whose world view was founded in large part on a fiery theological anti-Americanism and a view of Americanism as Satanism.

I don't have to tell the Members here. I mean, they hear it every week, those of you that are watching what is coming out of Iran "death to America" every week.

Mr. Speaker, this agreement gives up too much too fast with not enough in return, and we have to judge it on the long-term national security interests of the United States.

Does it make the region and the world more safe, secure, stable? In my mind, clearly it does not. So I don't feel this is worthy of the House's support.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. SANFORD).

Mr. SANFORD. Mr. Speaker, I too rise in opposition to the so-called Iran nuclear accord. I do so for all the reasons that have been well-articulated over the last couple of hours.

But I also do so based simply on the reason of history. And it is a history that is actually shared with the chairman, in that we were here together in the 1990s.

Then-President Clinton at that time met with North Korea. They formed an accord that basically said: We will give you benefits now for the promise of becoming a responsible member of the world community going forward. The benefits went and accrued to North Korea. The responsible membership in the world community never came.

In that regard, though, the President is certainly well-intended in his efforts. This promise will prove as real as this notion of, if you like your health insurance, you can keep it.

His intentions were good in that regard, with regard to providing health insurance, but it just didn't pan out. I don't think it will be any different in this particular deal.

In that regard, I think it is important to think about what neighbors think of neighbors. In this case, it is important to look at what the Prime Minister of Israel has said in that he believes this is a mistake of "historic proportions."

I think in many ways it mirrors what we saw in 1938. At that point, Neville Chamberlain negotiated with Hitler and gave away Czechoslovakia in the process.

But there in the Munich accords there was this promise of peace, lasting peace in our time. The peace lasted less than a year, and it did not materialize.

I think that the saying is that those who don't learn from history are destined to repeat it.

I think we would be very well-advised to look at the recent history of the 1990s in the North Korea deal, the history of the 1930s, and a whole lot of history across the last 1,000 years that say trading off peace for security is never something that works so well.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, before I recognize the gentleman from New York, I would simply say I think that last analogy is invidious.

The history of World War II is the fact that people ignored warnings for so long that, by the time Munich happened, it most certainly was appeasement.

What should have happened was active engagement to preclude that ever happening. That is precisely what this administration has done.

It will prevent a Munich. It will prevent appeasement. It will provide the dynamic engagement we need to prevent a nuclear Iran.

I now proudly yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS).

Mr. MEEKS. I thank the gentleman from Virginia.

Mr. Speaker, Dr. King once said, "On some positions, Cowardice asks the question, 'Is it safe?' Expediency asks the question, 'Is it politic?' Vanity asks the question, 'Is it popular?' But Conscience asks the question, 'Is it right?' And there comes a time when one must take a position that is neither safe, nor politic, nor popular, but one must take it because one's conscience tells one that it is right."

I have often reflected on those words when faced with tough decisions.

Today's vote on the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action is one of the most consequential votes we will take as Members of Congress.

My support for the Iran agreement is about doing what is right for America, our allies, and the world. It is, indeed, a matter of conscience.

Mr. Speaker, since the conclusion of the agreement, I have traveled to 10 nations and vetted this deal from every angle I could think of so that, at this moment of decision, I could act without reservation and with full understanding.

As I listen to this debate, I am deeply disheartened that we are not adequately weighing the realities of our globalized world.

After years of effort toward a more unified approach to addressing Iran's nuclear ambitions, key partners in the Middle East region and most of our allies consider the Iran agreement as an

important next step in diplomatic efforts.

Former U.S. ambassadors; former Israeli military; former U.S. Secretaries of State, including Colin Powell; and so many others from an array of vantage points have expressed support for this landmark deal, as have over 100 nations.

We should not ignore the considered judgment of scientists, security experts, renowned diplomats, and our allies. The consensus is that this is a good deal.

Now, some of my colleagues believe that, despite the risk, rejecting this deal can lead to a better deal down the road. Others oppose the deal out of reckless political gamesmanship.

But what has become clear to me in my assessment of the risks involved in supporting or rejecting the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action is that, if Congress derails this deal, history will record such act as a monumental mistake and the alternatives would not change Iranian nuclear and weaponization pursuits.

Mr. Speaker, rejecting the plan and resorting to unilateral sanctions would prove futile, as it has in the past, while relying on military action would not curb Iran's ambitions or erase its technical knowledge.

Critics also assert that this deal does not address concerns about issues with Iran that are outside the scope of the plan. We know from past experience that reaching an agreement on one critical issue does not preclude us from working on other serious concerns by other means.

We negotiated with the Soviet Union during Strategic Arms Limitation Talks, which took place in the midst of the Vietnam war that was waged against us with Soviet-made arms, yet those agreements lessened the danger of nuclear confrontation.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, the Obama administration has shown tremendous leadership on the world stage by choosing diplomacy first. Leadership is never easy. By definition, it is a lonely and sometimes an unpopular exercise.

Today we must show leadership, we must display fortitude, and do what is right. And what is right in this scenario is that we support the Iran agreement.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN).

Mr. LAMBORN. Mr. Speaker, this deal is a capitulation by the greatest nation in the world to the most rogue nation in the world.

What makes the deal so bad is that Iran doesn't even have to cheat to emerge in 10 or 15 years with an industrial-sized nuclear program and with little or no breakout time to achieve nuclear weapons capabilities.

By lifting the financial sanctions, we are literally financing the very weapons and terror that will be directed at us and our allies by the biggest state sponsor of terrorism in the world today.

Amazingly, we are abandoning the arms embargo and the ballistic missile embargo against Iran for good measure.

Not only is our national security threatened, but our close ally, Israel, fears for its very existence under this deal. We simply cannot abandon Israel.

Let history record that I stand against this weak and dangerous deal with a regime that hates the U.S. and hates Israel.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentlewoman from Maryland (Ms. EDWARDS).

Ms. EDWARDS. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the resolution approving the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action regarding the nuclear program of Iran negotiated by the Obama administration in concert with five other nations, the P5+1.

I want to commend President Obama's Secretary Kerry, Under Secretary Sherman, Secretary Moniz, and their teams for their leadership and continued, persistent engagement with our international partners and Members of Congress to make this moment possible.

None of us comes to this decision lightly. It is perhaps the most important decision of our public life, no matter what decision we come to.

But after reading the agreement and the classified and unclassified underlying documents, taking part in numerous briefings at the White House and here on Capitol Hill, meeting with constituents, and studying the analyses of experts, I am confident that this strong diplomatic achievement provides the only option that prevents Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon and, by some estimates, in as few as 2 to 3 months. This is not achieved by trust, Mr. Speaker, but through verification.

Mr. Speaker, after 14 years of continuous military engagement for our armed services, this agreement cuts off all pathways to an Iranian nuclear weapon and does so without unnecessarily risking American lives in yet another military action, even as the agreement preserves that ultimate option, should it become necessary in the event of Iran's default.

This agreement sends a clear message to Iran that the global community stands united today and well into the future in ensuring that Iran never obtains a nuclear weapon.

Much has been said of Iran's capacity after 10 to 15 years. And even there, the agreement places Iran in the confines of a nuclear non-proliferation treaty, just as the rest of us are.

If Iran violates the agreement, they will, without question, face complete isolation, even more severe repercussions, and the U.S. retains our ability to engage unilateral sanctions and our military option.

It is true that this agreement is not perfect. But if this agreement does not

go forward, there is no better deal, Mr. Speaker. In fact, there is no deal. No sanctions, no international partners, no inspections, no deal. This is a negotiation which is, by definition, not perfect.

□ 1900

It is my hope that we will divorce ourselves from the hyperbole and the rhetoric in favor of the seriousness this issue deserves. I have concluded that the agreement is the best path forward.

This is not just my considered judgment; it is the judgment of the highest levels of the military, nonproliferation experts, nuclear scientists, and our diplomatic partners who join in their overwhelming support of the agreement.

As a Congress, we can only do our best and our part to move forward to provide the necessary resources for proper oversight to ensure effective monitoring and aggressive verification. If Iran cheats, we will know it; we will know it quickly, and we will act decisively.

Once again, the world turned to the United States for our leadership on dealing with Iran and its nuclear program. This agreement, reached through rigorous diplomacy, in conjunction with our partners, provides the tools we need to ensure a pathway to peace and security for the United States, for Israel, the region, and the world.

I will vote to approve the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

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

I would just note that over 200 retired generals, flag officers, and admirals signed a letter in opposition; and we have heard continuously, including this week, from retired generals, officers, and admirals about their concerns about this agreement.

I yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Washington (Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS), the Republican Conference chair.

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, the votes this week on the President's nuclear deal with Iran are some of the most important we have taken in years. As the world's largest sponsor of terror, Iran continues to play an enormously destructive and destabilizing role in the world.

Iran's actions are destroying the lives of millions of vulnerable innocents. The current refugee crisis in the Middle East and Europe is only the most recent example.

Iran has been propping up Assad's regime in Syria for the past 4 years, sending weapons and thousands of fighters there to brutalize the Syrian people. ISIS has exploited these conditions, and now, millions of Syrians have been displaced, many of them going to unimaginable lengths to seek refuge in Europe. Iran bears responsibility for this.

This deal is not reform. This deal is incentivizing bad behavior. A vote in favor of this deal is a vote that favors

party politics over the will of the American people and global security. It is a terrible way to do business.

The American people deserve full transparency from the White House on this deal, as required by the law and even basic respect for American voters.

The President is required to turn over all the agreements—even the side deals made with third parties—and he has yet to do that.

While I was home the last few weeks in my district in eastern Washington, not a day passed that I didn't hear grave concerns about this deal. It wasn't Republicans versus Democrats, liberals versus conservatives; it wasn't anti-President Obama. People are sincerely worried about what this deal means for our safety and security.

We were told by the administration early on that no deal was better than a bad deal. Now, the President claims it is either this deal or war.

Mr. Speaker, we aren't asking the President to stop his efforts to reach an agreement with Iran. We need a better deal. We are asking the President to continue and strengthen his efforts so that we get a deal that, first, truly denies Iran a path to a nuclear weapon by dismantling its extensive infrastructure; second, includes a robust inspections process, not one that is conducted by Iran itself; and, third, compels Iran to cease its support of terrorist organizations and brutal dictators like Assad, whose actions are destabilizing the entire region, as well as Europe.

Until this deal includes, at a minimum, these three components and the President has made his obligations under the law, I will continue to oppose it, and I will urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to do the same.

Let's send the President back to the negotiating table.

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

Maybe the President could get some advice from the leadership of the Republican Conference in how to figure out what resolution to bring to the floor.

I now proudly yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. CICILLINE), my friend.

Mr. CICILLINE. Mr. Speaker, the question before us today is whether or not this body will approve the negotiated agreement to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon. It is one of the most consequential issues of our time and requires serious and sober consideration by every single Member of this body.

You would think, Mr. Speaker, that in a matter of such gravity involving the foreign affairs of our Nation and the safety and security of our allies, particularly Israel, we could set aside urges to score political points and avoid dangerous hyperbole and instead debate the merits of this agreement.

I regret that the process for considering this agreement has sometimes devolved into a sad show of partisanship. Our Nation is better than this.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I am mindful of President Kennedy's inaugural address, which he delivered from the east front of the Capitol, just a few hundred feet from this Chamber. Addressing the threat from the Soviet Union, President Kennedy said: "Let us begin anew—remembering on both sides that civility is not a sign of weakness."

He went on to say: "Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate."

Those words still ring true today. This agreement shows the power of diplomacy to advance our national security interests and ensures that, before being required to send our brave men and women into a dangerous military conflict, that we have had the courage to exhaust every possible alternative.

Like all of my colleagues, I have spent the last 2 months carefully studying the terms of this agreement that the United States and our negotiating partners reached to prevent a nuclear Iran; meeting with military, scientific, and nonproliferation experts; participating in dozens of classified briefings and committee hearings; meeting with the President and members of his administration, as well as meeting with my constituents.

After a great deal of serious deliberation, I believe that the United States and the world are safer with this deal in place than without it.

I fully recognize that this agreement is not perfect—far from it—but like any decision in life, we have to confront the choices we face, not the one we would rather have before us or like to imagine.

I believe approval of this agreement is the most responsible and effective way to prevent Iran from developing a nuclear weapon. By its very terms, it affirms that under no circumstance will Iran ever seek, develop, or acquire any nuclear weapons.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to consider what we will be giving up if we reject this deal. This agreement requires Iran to submit to the most intrusive and rigorous inspections regimen ever negotiated. This is in stark contrast to the complete lack of access currently available to the international community to monitor Iran's nuclear program.

If Congress rejects the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, it will mean zero restrictions on Iran's nuclear ambitions, no limitations on their enrichment activities or centrifuge production, and no ability for international inspectors to monitor Iran's nuclear program.

Many experts agree that rejection of this agreement would mean Iran could develop a nuclear weapon in just a matter of months, the worst possible outcome.

Approval of this agreement does not end our responsibility, Mr. Speaker. Congress must work closely with the administration to ensure that we take additional steps to mitigate the risks reflected in the agreement, to discour-

age Iran from escalating its destabilizing activities in the region, and to enhance the likelihood that Iran complies with all the terms of the agreement.

Additional resources have to be devoted to supporting, monitoring, verification, and intelligence gathering activities.

Above all else, we must make it absolutely clear to Iran that any violation of the agreement will be met with swift and decisive action by the United States and the international community.

I look forward to working with the administration and my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to make certain that all of this happens.

In the end, this was not an easy decision or one I arrived at quickly. There is risk in accepting this agreement, and it contains real tradeoffs. No responsible person should claim otherwise.

I am certain, Mr. Speaker, that rejecting this agreement would present even greater and more dangerous risks to our national security and our allies than the risks associated with going forward. Because of this, I intend to support the resolution of approval and urge my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE), chairman of the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. GOODLATTE. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman ROYCE for his outstanding leadership on this issue.

Mr. Speaker, our Founding Fathers included in the preamble of the United States Constitution the intention of our government to provide for the common defense. Protecting and defending our Nation was not an afterthought; it was a first thought.

The defense of America and our allies has always been a strategic and moral goal. The agreement we have before us today, however, primarily meets Iran's goals. Sanctions are lifted; nuclear research and development continues, and America's safety is compromised. Under this deal, in a matter of years—likely in our lifetimes, but certainly in the lifetimes of our children and grandchildren—Iran will have a bomb.

The President of the United States has said that this agreement is not based on trust, but on verification. I wish that was true because this agreement shouldn't be based on trust. I certainly do not trust a government that has acted as a bank for terrorists.

Any agreement should be based on verification; but where is the simple assurance of anytime, anywhere inspections? We don't have verification. What we have is misplaced hope, hope that Iran has disclosed all of its past nuclear activities, hope that Iran will be transparent, hope that Iran has somehow changed.

Earlier this year, 367 bipartisan Members of Congress sent a letter to the President outlining several conditions that any final nuclear agreement

must address. Unfortunately, the agreement we have before us does not meet congressional standards and has numerous fatal flaws.

For example, in 2012, Congress barred Iranians from coming here to study nuclear science and nuclear engineering at U.S. universities. One would think that is a good policy, given that they are seeking to get a bomb.

In one of the most outrageous provisions of this deal, the Department of Homeland Security and the Department of State will no longer be allowed to enforce the bar. This deal will actually make the U.S. an accomplice to Iran's nuclear weapons program by granting Iranians the ability to come to the U.S. to acquire knowledge instrumental in their being able to design and build nuclear bombs.

Other concerns include giving Iran a signing bonus, lifting the arms embargo, failure to cut off Iran's pathway to the bomb, and the lack of protection for not only our own safety, but for the safety of the world. A nuclear Iran is a threat to our great ally, Israel, but is also a threat to the rest of the Middle East, America, and the world.

While the administration has said that any deal is better than no deal, Thomas Jefferson once said, "Delay is preferable to error," and I agree with Jefferson.

Had our negotiators remained at the table a while longer, perhaps we would not be where we are today; yet, as it stands, this so-called deal, if it goes through, will likely mark the pages of history as a great error.

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

I am reminded back to Churchill. He said it is always better to jaw-jaw than to war-war.

I now yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Ms. LEE).

Ms. LEE. Mr. Speaker, first, I want to thank Representative CONNOLLY for yielding me time and, really, for your tremendous leadership on this very vital issue. Also, I must salute our Leader PELOSI for her unwavering support and hard work for global peace and security.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 3461, a resolution to approve the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

Now, in the last two Congresses, mind you, I introduced the Prevent Iran from Acquiring Nuclear Weapons and Stop War Through Diplomacy Act, which called for the appointment of a high-level special envoy to address Iran's nuclear program and an end to the no-contact policy between our diplomats.

Since the 1970s, quite frankly, I have worked on many nuclear nonproliferation issues and believe very strongly that the deal that President Obama and our P5+1 partners negotiated demonstrates how effective diplomacy can be. It will lead us closer to a world where our children and future generations can live without the fear of Iran acquiring a nuclear weapon.

The JCPOA, supported by the majority of Americans and key international allies, including France, Germany, and Britain, though not perfect, it is the best way to prevent Iran from ever acquiring a nuclear weapon.

The Iran nuclear deal puts into place the most intrusive inspection system, including a 24/7 surveillance of Iran's enrichment facilities and reactors; it cuts off all of Iran's pathways to a nuclear weapon, and it will enhance regional and global security.

□ 1915

United Nations Ambassador Samantha Power stated in her recent political op-ed: "If we walk away, there is no diplomatic door No. 2, no do-over, no rewrite of the deal on the table."

Rejecting the Iran deal will isolate the United States from our international partners. It will not make us any safer, and it certainly won't result in a better deal with Iran. Instead, it would allow Iran to accelerate its weapons programs with no oversight. That is unacceptable. We cannot afford the alternative to this deal.

This is a defining moment for our country and for our world. Let us continue to work for peace. We all know that the military option is always there. I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this resolution of approval.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS), a member of the Committee on Financial Services.

Mr. ROTHFUS. I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong opposition to this resolution and against this disastrous nuclear agreement with Iran.

The actions that Iran will be allowed to pursue under this agreement are a direct threat to the United States and to our allies, and it falls far short of the commitment the President made to the American people, which is to verifiably prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon.

Under the deal, Iran will maintain a robust nuclear infrastructure. They will be able to conduct research on advanced centrifuges that are capable of rapidly enriching uranium and developing ballistic missiles that are capable of carrying a bomb to Israel, Europe, or the United States. Instead of anytime, anywhere inspections, the bureaucratic process ensures lengthy delays, which will allow Iran to cover its tracks.

This troubling deal will provide billions of dollars to fund Iran's international terror enterprise even as they call for Israel's annihilation and chant "death to America."

It is time to lead the world to a better deal that will result in Iran's forever abandoning its threats to the world.

Mr. Speaker, while this House actually votes on the merits of this deal, I know what happened today in the other House of Congress—the Senate.

There, almost all Democrats have joined to block a vote on this deal. One Democrat who wanted to vote was Senator SCHUMER of New York. Senator SCHUMER released a statement last month that showed he understands the serious defects of this deal—from the inadequate inspections to the billions that will flow into Iran's terror enterprise. Because of these defects, Senator SCHUMER concluded, we will be worse off with this agreement than without it.

But there is another choice, Mr. Speaker—a better deal—one negotiated with a clear understanding of the nature of our enemy.

I ask my colleagues to reject this deal, to encourage the President to go back to the negotiating table, and to vote "no" on this resolution.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, it was John Kennedy who negotiated the first nuclear Test Ban Treaty successfully with our archenemy that threatened to bury us—the Soviet Union. He said that we should never negotiate out of fear, but we should never fear to negotiate.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. CAPPs).

Mrs. CAPPs. I thank my colleague for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the P5+1 nuclear agreement with Iran, formally known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. Like my vote against the Iraq war, this decision is one of the most important foreign policy votes I will take during my time in Congress.

The intent of sanctions and negotiations has always been to diplomatically cut off Iran's pathways to a nuclear weapon and to verifiably increase the transparency of their nuclear activities. It is clear to me, as well as to numerous nuclear, diplomatic, and national security experts around the globe, that this agreement achieves these critical goals.

It not only cuts off all pathways to a nuclear weapon, but it also imposes unprecedented and permanent inspections, and it ensures we can automatically reinstate international sanctions if Iran violates the agreement.

In contrast, defeating this deal would allow Iran to resume its nuclear program with no restrictions or oversight, increasing the likelihood of military conflict and a regional nuclear weapons race—precisely the scenario sanctions were designed to prevent.

Another costly war in the Middle East would put American lives at risk and undermine the security of our Nation and our allies, including Israel.

While the risks of a nuclear-armed Iran are unquestionably dire, there is simply no scenario in which these risks are reduced by rejecting this deal.

There are no decisions I take more seriously than those that involve potentially sending American troops into harm's way. This is, undeniably, one of those decisions. Under this agreement, every option is and will remain on the

table, including that of military force; but we have a solemn obligation to ensure that every diplomatic avenue is exhausted before military action is taken. That is why I opposed authorizing the Iraq war and why I support this nuclear deal with Iran.

This deal has certainly not been perfect, but perfect is not and never has been an option. Those who are urging the defeat of this deal have a responsibility to propose a viable alternative, yet no such alternative has been put forward. This agreement before us is the best path available. It has my full support.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DESANTIS), a member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Mr. DESANTIS. Mr. Speaker, in 2012, when the President was running for reelection, he said: Look, with Iran, it is very simple. We will remove the sanctions when they dismantle and give up their nuclear program.

That was a promise he made to the American people, but this deal doesn't even come close to that. Iran is allowed to maintain a vast, vast nuclear infrastructure.

Two years ago in this House, we passed more robust sanctions, which would have further tightened the screws on the Iranian regime. I think, at that time, Iran desperately wanted to get out of the sanctions. If you had asked Iran what they wanted, they would have, obviously, wanted the sanctions relief because they needed the money—the regime needed it to solidify themselves in power—but they also would have wanted to keep their nuclear program. Then, of course, they would have wanted to continue to fund terrorism.

This agreement basically gives Iran everything it wants, so I join my colleagues who have urged that we resoundingly reject this agreement.

I want to point out something that, I think, is very personal to a lot of veterans.

If you look right here, this is an up-armored Humvee in Iraq in, probably, the 2007–2008 time period. It has been ripped to shreds by an EFP device—an explosively formed penetrator. This is something wherein the explosion will cause these pieces of metal to go 3,000 meters per second. It will ravage the individuals who are in the Humvee, and it will even go through the armor. These devices caused the deaths of hundreds of our servicemembers, and they wounded many, many more.

Why do I bring that up?

Because this was perpetrated by this man, Qasem Soleimani, who is the head of the Quds Force—Iran's Revolutionary Guard terrorist outfit. He was orchestrating those attacks on American servicemembers. That is enough, right? We are doing a deal with a country that has a lot of American blood on its hands.

It is even worse than that. This deal relieves the international sanctions on

Qasem Soleimani and the Quds Force. It empowers the very people who harmed our servicemembers in Iraq. I think that that is an insult to the memories of the people who lost their lives on our behalf and an insult to their families.

For that reason, in addition to all of the other great ones that have been mentioned, we need to resoundingly reject this deal.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I would simply point out for the record that Soleimani remains on the list.

I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON).

Mr. ELLISON. I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, in 2012, Prime Minister of Israel Netanyahu went to the U.N. with a graph, much like the one right beside me. It was a picture of a bomb with a red line. The Prime Minister said: "The red line must be drawn on Iran's nuclear enrichment program."

This deal does that.

Today, we can say that Iran cannot produce or stockpile highly enriched uranium, and it has to get rid of 98 percent of its low enriched uranium. To make sure that they don't achieve a nuclear weapon, we have the strictest inspection regimen in the history of nuclear agreements. The impetus for 2 years of negotiation has been achieved.

So what is the problem?

The gears of war are halted when we prove that negotiation and diplomacy are the best methods of achieving peace. This deal is a triumph of diplomacy over military conflict. It is a win for those who reject the misconception that diplomacy is weakness.

In 2003, Vice President Cheney said: "I have been charged by the President with making sure that none of the tyrannies in the world are negotiated with." The ensuing decades of war brought 6,840 U.S. soldiers home in coffins and squandered trillions of hard-earned, American tax dollars.

Yet, we have learned from that.

We have learned our lesson that we must negotiate, that we must talk it out before we begin to shoot it out. The fact that a majority of Americans supported this deal means that people are tired of sacrificing so much for the bankrupt idea that a conversation is capitulation.

This agreement keeps nuclear weapons out of Iran's hands for decades. In 2003, Iran had 164 centrifuges. In 2005, they had 3,000. In 2009, they had 8,000. By 2013, they had 22,000. While we were rattling sabers and making bravado-type comments about what we were going to do to them, they were making centrifuges. When the President got down to the business of negotiation, we had brought that process to a stop.

We will continue to sanction human rights violators wherever they are, including in Iran, and we will also continue to confront people who export terrorism; but the best way to empower reformers within Iran is to engage. Diplomatic victories require

playing the long game. You need patience, and you need unshakable courage in your convictions.

Let me say that I remember the moment in 2007 when then-Senator Obama said he would engage in personal diplomacy with leaders in the Middle East in order to stop bloodshed in the region. That is the moment that I knew I would vote for him, and I am proud to stand here nearly a decade later to congratulate the President for this diplomatic victory.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CURBELO).

Mr. CURBELO of Florida. I thank the chairman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, many of our colleagues have come to the floor today and have stated that this is the most important vote or the most important series of votes that we will take in this Congress. I agree with them because these votes boil down to the fundamental question:

What kind of a world do we want to live in?

What kind of a world do we want for ourselves? for our children? for our grandchildren? for future generations?

Do we want to live in a world where we legitimize the most radical, the most extremist, the most terrorist government in the world—a government that has a long and well-documented history of lying to the world? of holding Americans hostage? of hanging homosexuals from cranes? of executing juveniles?

Do we want to empower that government with an investment of at least \$56 billion, a portion of which will surely go to terrorist activities not just in the Middle East but all over the world?

Do we want to guarantee that whether it is in 10 years or in 13 years or in 15 years or in 20 years that that same government will have the ability to build a nuclear arsenal?

Do we want to afford that same government—the mullahs in Iran—the ability to have intercontinental ballistic missiles? Those aren't for Israel. Those aren't for the Middle East. Those are for us. The only purpose of those missiles is to carry a nuclear warhead.

What kind of a world do we want to live in?

I believe, Mr. Speaker, that, many years from now, my daughters, ages 5 and 3, will look up how their dad voted on this critical issue. I think—and I am very hopeful and I am confident—that they will thank me, because this is a bad deal. This is a deal that not only endangers our allies in the Middle East, it endangers us. This is a deal where we have to ask ourselves who we are, what we stand for, and what kind of a world we want to live in.

For that reason, I am opposing the Iran deal, and I urge my colleagues to do the same.

□ 1930

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, our friend from Florida asks the right

questions. He has just got the wrong answer. I can answer those questions.

I want a world that rolls back the nuclear capability of Iran, not a world based on a false hope that we can make it work somehow without a plan.

That is what puts the world at risk. That is what puts my children and grandchildren at risk. I am not willing to take that risk.

Mr. Speaker, before I recognize Mrs. DAVIS of California, can I inquire how much time is left on both sides?

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FORTENBERRY). The gentleman from Virginia has 4½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from California has 42½ minutes remaining.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Forty-two?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Yes.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Okay. What a lucky man my friend from California is.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. DAVIS).

Mrs. DAVIS of California. Mr. Speaker, after much deliberation and soul searching, I am convinced that the P5+1 Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action creates a viable path to reduce Iran's nuclear weapons capability.

For that reason, I believe this agreement is in the best interest of the United States. Of course, the agreement must also be in the best interest of our friends in the Middle East.

As someone who has lived in Israel and has returned many times since, I understand that, for Israelis and Americans with close ties to Israel, Iran threatening to wipe Israel off the map is not an abstract concern.

It has been less than a hundred years since the Jewish people nearly suffered such a fate. The threat of annihilation is very real to Israelis, and it is very real to me.

I would never take a vote that I thought could leave my grandchildren a world without a strong, safe Israel.

Mr. Speaker, I am under no illusions that this agreement will end Iran's hegemonic ambitions, but I can't allow their destabilizing behavior to have the protection of a nuclear umbrella.

I agree with the former head of the IDF, the Israeli Defense Force, the head of that intelligence agency, Amos Yadlin, that, if we walk away from this agreement, Iran will remain closer to a nuclear bomb in the coming years, and the chances of a collapse of the sanctions regime will increase.

Nobody in this Chamber, Mr. Speaker, trusts Iran. That is why we need and we must have and take the responsibility to come together after this vote to make sure that the United States is exercising all of its initiative to implement this agreement and to address what we know will come, those inevitable challenges.

Mr. ROYCE. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Nevada (Mr. HECK), a member of the Armed Services and Intelligence Committees.

Mr. HECK of Nevada. Mr. Speaker, when President Obama announced that the P5+1 had reached an agreement on

Iran's nuclear program, he stated that the deal was not built on trust, that it was built on verification.

This was a clear acknowledgement by the administration that the Iran regime is not a trustworthy negotiating partner and that any agreement must contain stringent verification guidelines to ensure that Iran adheres to its obligations.

Unfortunately, the verification procedures in the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action are impotent at best. While the agreement does allow for 24/7 monitoring of declared sites, it includes a provision that gives Iran up to 24 days to grant inspectors access to suspected undeclared facilities.

According to former IAEA officials, this greatly increases the probability that nefarious nuclear activities could escape detection.

While this verification scheme is already embarrassingly weak, it gets worse when one considers the secret side deals that prevent inspection of the Parchin military complex and allow Iran to inspect itself. This is not the "anytime, anywhere" inspections the administration claimed it was pursuing.

The fact is that, in spite of claims of the administration, this agreement is not built on verification. It is built on trust.

It requires us to trust a regime that is the largest exporter of terrorism in the world, that has already violated the interim nuclear agreement and whose Supreme Leader just today stated that Israel will not exist in 25 years.

Mr. Speaker, as the President himself has said, no deal is better than a bad deal. Mr. Speaker, this is a bad deal, and I urge my colleagues to reject it.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. COHEN).

Mr. COHEN. Mr. Speaker, in 1963, President Kennedy, who served in this Chamber, spoke at American University about preventing nuclear war and that to do so it was necessary to deal with our most feared and distrusted enemy at the time, the Soviet Union, as mistrusted and evil in the eyes of Americans then as Iran is today. As you recall, Prime Minister Khrushchev boldly stated, "We will bury you."

President Kennedy understood, though, that in negotiations with an enemy, "We must avert those confrontations which bring an adversary to a choice of either a humiliating retreat or nuclear war."

President Obama, along with the other five nations at the negotiating table in Vienna, confronted the same reality.

When President Reagan engaged in detente with the Soviet Union, he also was negotiating with our most feared and distrusted enemy.

In negotiations with Iran, it has been the same for President Obama as it was for President Kennedy in negotiating with the Soviet Union.

Both President Kennedy and President Obama had the same goals as

America has had for over a half a century, and that is to prevent nuclear war. And to do so, it has been necessary to deal with an untrusted foe.

I have listened to my constituents. I have been privy to many classified briefings. I have spoken personally to President Obama and Secretary Kerry.

I have met with officials in Vienna at the headquarters of the IAEA and with diplomats and officials from Europe and Asia and considered the opinions of renowned physicists and military generals.

Over those past several weeks and months, I have often thought about President Kennedy's eloquent words at American University in August of '63 when he said that, in the final analysis, "We all inhabit the same small planet. We all breathe the same air. We all cherish our children's future. And we are all mortal." The same holds true today.

I support this agreement based upon the information I have gleaned from the aforementioned individuals and groups and with the understanding there is no more important mission than preventing nuclear war.

Mr. Speaker, our people and our planet are in the balance. I am convinced this is the most effective way that Iran will not build a nuclear weapon.

Mr. ROYCE. I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. SMITH), chairman of the Committee on Science, Space, and Technology.

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from California, the chairman of the committee, for yielding me time and for the excellent job he has been doing tonight during the debate on this particular issue.

Mr. Speaker, this week is a somber week for our Nation. September the 11th reminds us of the sacred responsibility we, in Congress, have to protect the American people from those who want to kill us. That is why we must oppose the Iran deal.

This deal only emboldens our enemies at the expense of our friends and our own national security. So it is no surprise that a majority in Congress oppose this deal, as do most Americans, for many reasons.

First, it allows Iran to develop nuclear weapons in the future.

Second, it lists sanctions and frees up as much as \$150 billion in assets for Iran. These funds inevitably will be used by Iran to export terrorism as even the President himself has admitted.

Third, the longstanding arms embargo against Iran will be lifted. This enables Iran to buy long-range surface-to-air missiles from Russia by the end of the year.

Fourth, there is no credible way to conduct inspections of Iran's nuclear weapons-building sites. Under the proposed deal, Iran is given weeks, if not months, of advanced notice of any inspection. This provides ample time for Iran to hide evidence of nuclear weap-

ons activities and violate the agreement.

Secret deals that the administration has hidden from Congress and the American people have now been revealed. One secret deal permits Iran to conduct its own inspections at a military facility suspected of ties to nuclear weapons.

Finally, by increasing the odds of a nuclear Iran, this deal directly threatens the security and future of Israel. The Iran deal destabilizes the Middle East, jeopardizes America's security, and endangers the world. The Iran deal must be opposed now and in the future.

Remember, this is not the law of the land. This deal is a nonbinding executive agreement. Only the Constitution is the law of the land.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I hope our fellow Americans understand what is really at stake here: engagement and the rollback of a nuclear threat or the kinetic option, which is military intervention that takes us down a path that will lead to more terrorism, more violence, and the necessity of troops on the ground. I choose the former, and I believe our fellow Americans will, too.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BISHOP).

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to raise my vehement objection to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action and to call on my colleagues to do the same.

In March, I joined 346 of my bipartisan colleagues in a letter outlining the issues needed to be addressed by Iran in a comprehensive nuclear agreement.

The last sentence of that agreement said: Congress must be convinced that the agreement's terms foreclose any pathway to a bomb, and then and only then will Congress be able to consider permanent sanctions relief.

Mr. Speaker, I have read this entire agreement, and I am profoundly disappointed to say that it falls remarkably short of foreclosing a pathway to a bomb.

To the contrary, this agreement brings Iran to the brink of becoming a nuclear weapons state and 8 short years from now provides them a pathway to acquiring technology to strike Europe and well beyond.

To ease the concerns of my noncommittal colleagues, the President has promised a military option remains on the table.

I am simply awestricken by the fact that my colleagues on the left have fallen for these assurances. It is the same administration that promised the red line in Syria.

It is the same empty rhetoric that has sustained the Syrian civil war, the Libyan civil war, ISIL's control of western Iraq, and, of course, the imperialist Vladimir Putin that has annexed the sovereign territory of the Ukraine.

I therefore urge my colleagues to reject this deal and any deal that enables

a belligerent state sponsor of terror to have access to hundreds of billions of dollars and nuclear weapons that will allow its atrocities to continue in perpetuity, all the while four Americans, one of them a native of the State of Michigan, my home State, Amir Hekmati, is being held hostage.

Mr. Speaker, in no other world, public or private, would this agreement be considered credible.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. FLEISCHMANN). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. ROYCE. I yield an additional 1 minute to the gentleman.

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. I was saying that, in no other world, Mr. Speaker—and to all of you—having served in the public and in the private sector, have I ever seen an agreement where we are negotiating with a party that has no respect for the other party.

In this case, the Supreme Leader of the State of Iran as late as yesterday referred to the United States as the Great Satan and called for us to be wiped off the face of the Earth, not just Israel.

We are the Great Satan. They are Satan, according to the Ayatollah. We are the Great Satan. I object to entering into an agreement with a country that has no respect.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to start by thanking Democratic Leader PELOSI for her tireless and unyielding advocacy for the Iran nuclear deal agreed to between Iran and six major world powers, with the unanimous support of the U.N. Security Council.

□ 1945

I very much share the leader's view that diplomacy and peace must be given every chance in our dealings with Iran before we contemplate the use of any other options.

I also want to acknowledge the fact that, acting with the President's full support, Secretary of State John Kerry has done a masterful job of holding the P5+1 coalition together. It was far from certain that Russia and China, intent as each of them is on reducing America's influence in the world, would continue their participation in the tough multinational effort necessary to get us to this point.

This agreement proves that world leaders, despite being divided on a range of issues, can still work together and reach an agreement with profound implications for international peace and security. This is truly extraordinary.

I support this agreement not because it is perfect, but because it is a deal that stands up extremely well as a barrier against nuclear proliferation for at least 15 years. It also establishes an intrusive inspections regimen to ensure that Iran's program remains heavily monitored and exclusively peaceful for even longer.

One of the most important provisions of this deal allows any permanent member of the U.N. Security Council who can show that Iran has violated the agreement the ability to snap back the tough sanctions that had previously been in place.

Now, I know there are critics who believe that, by rejecting the deal and increasing sanctions on Iran, that the U.S. can somehow coerce the leaders of Iran to completely dismantle its nuclear program. As effective as the current sanctions have been in bringing Iran to the table to negotiate, they have not stopped Iran from becoming a threshold nuclear state.

If Congress rejects this deal, it will not lead to a better one. If the U.S. walks away from this deal, we will have squandered the best chance we have to solve this problem through peaceful means. In fact, U.S. rejection of the deal is more likely to isolate the United States rather than Iran from the rest of the world.

It would reinforce questions around the world about our commitment to multilateralism and American political dysfunction. Furthermore, it would seriously undermine our ability to lead any future diplomatic efforts on terrorism and on a range of other issues important to our national security interests.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution, which is necessary for the success of the nuclear deal, the preservation of the international financial sanctions architecture, and for maintaining the credibility of U.S. diplomatic commitments in the future.

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

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Alabama (Mr. PALMER).

Mr. PALMER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to this ill-conceived agreement between our current administration and the fanatical regime ruling the nation of Iran.

I find it impossible to understand how those who are sworn to protect the security and interests of the American people could enter into such a one-sided deal. This is a deal that expands the lethal potential of a ruthless regime by giving them a path to a nuclear weapon; a regime whose stated objective is the destruction of the United States; a regime committed to the complete and utter destruction of Israel, our most trusted friend and ally in the Middle East; and a regime that almost no one believes will honor this deal.

It is incomprehensible that we would so blindly ignore the warnings of the world's most aggressive supporter of terrorism by allowing them access to \$150 billion in assets and allowing them to use those assets to project their war against our Nation and our allies.

If the rantings of this regime are not enough to cause us to reject this deal, then we should let history instruct us. This regime has been responsible for

the deaths of hundreds of American soldiers. This regime has been responsible for the deaths of innocent civilians in Israel and other nations. In 2009, this regime murdered their own citizens who courageously advocated for the freedom of the Iranian people. The actions of the Iranian regime speak for themselves.

Mr. Speaker, history is a great teacher, and I believe the past mistakes of world leaders who failed to recognize the lethal danger posed by ruthless and ambitious regimes have been written in the pages of history with the blood of millions upon millions of people.

We must not allow our Nation to take rank with those nations and leaders who chose appeasement over courage, who chose to take what appeared to them to be the easy path, instead of bearing the responsibility of making the harder decision because it was the right decision.

If the administration is correct that allowing the ruling regime in Iran to become armed with nuclear weapons will pose no threat to America and Israel, then no one will remember how the Members of this Congress voted; but if this administration and the supporters of this agreement are wrong and we suffer a catastrophic loss of lives, no one will ever forget what we did here. We will bear the burden of this vote for the rest of our lives.

America's foreign policy is at a crossroads. I am reminded how a great President described how we should deal with dangerous nations. President Theodore Roosevelt said we should speak softly and carry a big stick. He described this approach as the exercise of intelligent forethought and of decisive action sufficiently far in advance of any likely crisis. This deal does not meet that standard.

Mr. Speaker, this is the time when the burden of leadership that has been entrusted to every Member of Congress falls most heavily upon us. The American people look to us to do our duty and bear this responsibility without regard to party or politics, to put their safety and security first and foremost. I urge all the Members of this House to put aside the politics and partisanship that otherwise divide us and stand together in opposition to this deal.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Michigan.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, the goal of the negotiations between world powers and Iran has always been to prevent them from developing a nuclear weapon. I think we have to be realistic about this.

This agreement, as opposed to rejecting the agreement, takes us very far toward that goal; and I think accomplishes that goal in a way that we should all be able to live with and accept. The alternative is just too treacherous, I think, for us to even imagine.

I have been involved in this issue for as long as I have been here, this last 2½ years that I have been in Congress. I,

as many Members, have had countless hours of briefings. I have read the documents; I have read the classified reports, and I am confident that this agreement, simply put, makes the world a safer place, both for the U.S. and our allies.

What this agreement does not do, however—and I think it is important to keep in context—this agreement does not make Iran a good actor on the world stage. It is intended to tamp down their nuclear aspirations.

It doesn't mean that Iran can be trusted. In fact, the very nature of the agreement is that it will rely on inspections; it will rely on the eyes of the world to be on Iran to ensure that the agreement is adhered to with robust inspections.

Like any negotiated agreement, it is not perfect. If Iran cheats, we will know it through inspections. If Iran violates the agreement, our allies and the United States will be able to put back in place those sanctions that were so important to get them to the negotiating table in the first place. In fact, even if our allies don't agree, we would have the ability to unilaterally take steps to reinstate those important sanctions.

Finally, I think, importantly, under this question, the U.S. will be in a much stronger position than we are today if, in fact, military intervention ultimately is required because we will have allowed the diplomatic process to work, I believe, and I think most Americans believe, it strengthens our hand, it strengthens our standing in the world if, in fact, the necessity of military action does come upon us. The fact that we gave diplomacy a chance, I think, is a really important point.

Now, I have heard, from friends on both sides of the aisle, concern about the Americans that are being held, and this is a subject that I know something about. I represent the family of Amir Hekmati, and I appreciate the efforts of Members on both sides to call upon Iran to release the Americans that they hold.

I personally thank Chairman ROYCE for his effort through his leadership on the Committee on Foreign Affairs to assist me in developing a resolution that allowed this House to speak with one voice on that question.

It would be a mistake, as some have suggested, to have included the freedom of innocent Americans as one of the provisions of an agreement because, by the very nature of an agreement through negotiation, in order to secure a concession, in order to secure the release of those Americans in exchange for something else that was negotiated at the bargaining table, we would have had to exchange something that makes the world a less safe place.

Don't take my word for it. Listen to the position taken by that young, brave man that I represent, that young marine, Amir Hekmati, who himself has said that the onus is on Iran to unilaterally release him and not to in-

clude him as part of a transaction that deals with Iran's nuclear capabilities.

That is the position that I take because I think it is the right position, but I think it is important to note that that is also the position that this brave young man, who for 4 years has been sitting in an Iranian jail cell, also takes.

Finally, we have to be honest with ourselves about the question that is before us. Now, if I were to have written this agreement by myself, it would be a different agreement, and I am sure that is true of virtually everybody in this House.

The fact of the matter is, when evaluating our position on this question, we have to first search our own conscience, but we have to measure the effect of this agreement and the consequences of adhering to it and enacting this agreement with the consequences of walking away from a multilateral negotiated agreement with no prospect.

Listen to the voices of the other nations involved, with no prospect of being able to come back to the negotiating table.

The conclusion, I think, that I have come to in examining my conscience is that we are in a far better position as a world and we are far more secure through this agreement than we would be with the uncertainty of walking away from the diplomatic process and allowing Iran to pursue a nuclear weapon in the next months.

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

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield an additional 30 seconds to the gentleman.

Mr. KILDEE. Mr. Speaker, this is the conclusion that I have come to, but this is also the conclusion that experts on both sides of the political spectrum have come to.

Ambassadors from across the world—former Secretary of State Madeleine Albright thinks this is the right path forward; former Secretary of State Colin Powell thinks this is the right path forward.

I understand that individuals in this House may come to different conclusions after examining the facts. The only thing I ask and encourage my colleagues to do is to vote your heart. Vote what you think is right.

Examine the documents and do what you think is in the best interests of this country and of the world, and the conclusion that I have come to is that supporting this agreement is the right thing.

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

I would also point out, though, that we have heard from many experts. We have heard from many generals, admirals, and there are over 200 generals and flag officers, admirals who have come to the opposite conclusion, who have come to the conclusion that this makes the country less safe, and throughout the course of the afternoon

and evening here, supporters of this agreement have argued that we will be aggressive against Iran, aggressive against Iran on its regional aggression, aggressive against Iran on its human rights violations.

□ 2000

I will just bring up some concerns I have for the consideration of the body here.

I don't see it. This administration was silent during Iran's Green revolution, when the Iranian people were in the streets revolting against the regime at the time of the stolen election there in Iran. They needed U.S. leadership the most at that time.

And since the administration began its negotiations with Iran, we have had a grand total of three human rights abuse designations from the administration—three designations against the backdrop of a record number of executions under the so-called moderate Rouhani, more executions this year than under alternative leadership in the past.

So if you are seeing unparalleled levels of repression and executions and we don't see that being countered forcefully, I come to a certain conclusion. I see the same thing with the administration not confronting Assad's mass murders. Assad is Iranian-backed.

From my standpoint, if the administration is locked into an agreement, I will tell you how I think. I presume the administration will defend that agreement, and I presume that that will mean ignoring Iran's abuses at home and probably ignoring Iran's aggression abroad. The negotiations were a constraint on the administration taking action and protesting, and I presume that the new agreement is going to be a constraint on the administration's taking action against Iran.

I am just pointing out my view of this, based upon what I have observed going back to the Green revolution and this desire for a rapprochement with Iran. I wish that the administration would take on a new life in confronting Iran. I don't see it. And we will have a really bad deal to contend with.

The other part about the deal, and other points were made here tonight, but sanctions relief provided to Iran under this agreement will enable them to increase the size and scope of their ballistic missiles.

So the other observation I would make is the medium-and long-term threat of an Iranian ballistic missile that can reach the United States is very real. That is what we have heard from so many retired officers and what we have heard from the Pentagon, and yet the administration has been reluctant to ensure that the United States has adequate protective measures to guard the homeland against the Iranian ballistic missile threat.

The missile defense program has suffered greatly under President Obama. One of his first major decisions was to cut funding for the Missile Defense

Agency. Then there was the unilateral abrogation of signed missile defense agreements with our allies Poland and the Czech Republic in terms of the interceptor program that was supposed to defend Europe and the United States against any future Iranian potential launch.

And contrary to the representation provided to Congress as part of the New START, the President canceled phase 4 of the European missile defense plan, which was specifically designed to increase protection of the U.S. homeland.

So now that this agreement will pump resources and technology advancements into the ballistic missile threat to the U.S. by Iran, my other hope is that this institution will have uniform opposition to the administration's record of cutting missile defense and support proactive measures to protect the U.S. homeland. Because I will remind everyone here, Iran claims today that they are not bound in this agreement on the issue of ballistic missiles. They do not recognize the U.N. sanctions on their ballistic missiles, and they are claiming we did not put it specifically into the agreement. So as far as they are concerned, they are moving forward. They are moving forward with their ballistic missile program.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. COFFMAN).

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the Iran agreement.

In 2009, I was able to visit Israel and was in separate meetings with Prime Minister Netanyahu, then-President Peres, and the Israeli Chief of Staff of the IDF, or Israeli Defense Forces. I asked the same question: What would it take to stop Iran from gaining a nuclear weapon? And they all gave me the same answer. They said: You have to impose economic sanctions that are tough enough that the Government of Iran fears a collapse of the economy and a resulting loss of power. And that is the only thing short of war that will cause them to give up their quest for a nuclear weapon.

The Obama administration, merely to bring them to the negotiating table, threw them a lifeline and relaxed economic sanctions. And then, even before going to the Congress of the United States, they went to the United Nations to unravel economic sanctions on Iran.

Michael Oren, Ambassador to the United States from Israel, said that, even though the President has tried to box the Congress in—the United States has a \$17 trillion economy, and that by the United States imposing economic sanctions on Iran, that in fact other countries will be forced to follow in order to be able to do business with the United States.

This is really the hope and change applied to American national security. The hope and change is that the conduct of Iran will change over time; that the ruling mullahs will in fact somehow become enlightened. And that

when they say “death to America,” it is more of a cultural expression.

In 1983, 241 marines died from an Iranian-backed Hezbollah guerilla in a truck bomb.

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

Mr. ROYCE. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. COFFMAN. In 1996, 19 airmen died in the Khobar Towers by an Iranian-backed attack.

When they say “death to Americans,” they mean death to Americans.

In 2005, I was in Iraq with the United States Marine Corps, and we were losing soldiers and marines on the ground due to IEDs, but we up-armored our vehicles and we did better route reconnaissance and security. Iran introduced what was called an EFP—a shape charge, or an explosive force penetrator—that was designed to penetrate the thickest hulls of our vehicles and killed hundreds of soldiers and marines on the ground. When the Iranians say “death to Americans,” they mean it.

This deal will threaten the stability of the region, the security of the United States and of Israel, and I would urge my colleagues to vote “no.”

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. LYNCH).

Mr. LYNCH. I want to thank the gentlewoman from California for leading this debate on our behalf, and I want to thank her for the great work she has been doing on all of this.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3461, legislation to approve the Iran nuclear agreement. While I will admit this deal is not absolutely perfect, I believe it does offer the best chance of preventing Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon.

Mr. Speaker, the Iran nuclear agreement is an opportunity, the likes of which we could not even imagine a few years ago: a chance to stop Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon, and to do so without engaging in another costly and bloody war.

Now, I did not reach this conclusion lightly. I did so only after closely examining the deal and the classified and unclassified supplementary documents. I also spoke to experts and numerous officials who were closely involved in the talks, including one of the IAEA inspectors, and carefully weighed the arguments from both sides.

While I still have some concerns, I simply do not see an alternative that will constrain Iran's nuclear program and maintain the global cooperation needed to enforce these limits.

Mr. Speaker, the plain language of this agreement explicitly states that “under no circumstances will Iran ever seek, develop, or acquire any nuclear weapons.” There is no waiver, no exception, no qualifier or sunset. Iran may never have a nuclear weapon, period. That is what the agreement says.

Now, of course, nobody believes a simple affirmation alone is enough, especially with Iran's history, which is

why this deal imposes tough limitations on Iran and includes safeguards to better ensure that if Iran cheats, we will know and can respond by reimposing economic sanctions, or, as the President has indicated, the military option remains on the table.

I want to note some of the limitations that are in the agreement.

Iran must cut its low enriched uranium stockpile by 96 percent. It currently has 7,500 kilograms of low enriched uranium. It has to cut that to 300 kilograms—from 7,500 to 300.

Iran must cut its centrifuge capacity by over 66 percent—from 19,000 centrifuges to 6,104; and of the 5,000 it may run, all must be the lower efficiency, first generation centrifuges.

The reactor core in the heavy water plant at Arak must be removed and filled with concrete, making it unusable for nuclear weapons, and it must be redesigned for nuclear energy purposes only.

Mr. Speaker, we all know that this deal is not based on trust. In fact, it assumes Iran will try to cheat. That is why the inspections regime is so intrusive. In addition, IAEA inspectors will have full access to all declared sites and use of the most advanced technology available.

It also subjects Iran's entire nuclear fuel cycle to inspections, from uranium mining to waste disposal and every stage in between. No other member of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty is subject to that scrutiny, nor would we be inspecting Iran's whole fuel cycle if we trusted them.

Mr. Speaker, let's be clear about something. The United States did not negotiate this agreement alone. This was a joint effort with the UK, Germany, France, China, Russia, and the EU. Those countries are in a more vulnerable position than the United States if Iran should violate this agreement.

Now, any observer of foreign affairs will tell you that in recent years it has been next to impossible to get this mix of countries to agree on anything, much less a deal with such significance as this. Yet that is what we have here—an agreement that major global powers back and are ready to enforce the agreement. And if we sabotage it now, if we are the only country to say “no” to diplomacy and “yes” to military action, we may very well do so alone.

Mr. Speaker, as I stated earlier, this agreement is not perfect. However, no one got everything they wanted in this agreement. For every critic who says the P5+1 gave away too much, there is one in Iran who says the Iranians did the same.

This deal has vast potential, but its success will ultimately hinge on its implementation. It would be better use of our energies to focus on ensuring that this deal succeeds and that the IAEA has what is necessary to carry out its mandate.

One final point, if some of the critics are right and we eventually have to resort to a military option with or without our international neighbors, I

think it would be much better for us to have had hundreds of inspectors on the ground inspecting nuclear and non-nuclear facilities.

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

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. LYNCH. It would be far better for us and our international allies to have had international inspectors—hundreds—on the ground in Iran, so that if we do have to take military action, we have that information, we have that intelligence, so that any military action that eventually is necessary will be much more effective.

But I agree that this agreement is our best chance, this opportunity for diplomacy, and I ask my colleagues to support it.

□ 2015

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. WESTERMAN).

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise tonight in strong disagreement with the President's deal.

Tonight is the eve of the 14th anniversary of attacks on America by radical Islamic terrorists. These were direct, premeditated attacks on our soil that targeted and murdered thousands of Americans, just because they were Americans.

It was a dirty, cowardly act that reflects the lack of civility and values of all terrorists, those who finance terror, those who plan terror attacks, and those who carry them out.

Who would have thought we would be here at this time debating whether to approve an agreement with the number one state sponsor of terrorism in the world, a deal with a country that chants "death to America" while holding four American hostages, a deal that removes sanctions and allows billions of dollars to flow into a regime that wants to annihilate us and our allies, a deal that allows thousands of centrifuges to continue spinning and enriching nuclear fuel that can and most likely will be used in nuclear weapons.

There is a better way to deal with this regime, by not making any concessions until Iran ends their support of terrorism and demonstrates they can be civilized and trusted. They must earn our trust.

Mr. Speaker, America's \$18 trillion to \$19 trillion economy dwarfs Iran's \$400 billion economy, and some sell America short to say that the world would stand with Iran over us if we kept our sanctions and showed resolve.

Mr. Speaker, I never thought I would see the day when America negotiated with terrorists, and I certainly never thought I would see the day when those who swore to protect her would agree to a deal shrouded in secrecy—not Congress' deal, not the American people's deal, the President's and the minority that supports its deal that jeopardizes so much of our safety and security and gains so little.

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

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman another 30 seconds.

Mr. WESTERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I encourage a strong "no" vote on this deal. I encourage this Chamber, the Senate, and the administration to do the right thing by rejecting this deal in its entirety; and I pray that God would intervene and help us.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. FOSTER).

Mr. FOSTER. Mr. Speaker, as the only Ph.D. physicist in Congress—in fact, the only Ph.D. scientist of any kind—I have taken very seriously my responsibility to review the technical aspects of the proposed agreement.

After over a dozen briefings, many of them individual classified briefings by the technical experts who have supported our negotiators, I have come to support this deal not based on trust of Iran, but based on science.

I would like to take a moment to make four technical points that underpin my support of this deal.

First, in regards to the claim that "Iran gets to be in charge of inspecting itself" in investigations of its past weaponization activities, this is simply not true. The investigations will be carried out by a team of IAEA inspectors, using equipment and sampling kits prepared by the IAEA, with samples being sent to the international Network of Analytical Laboratories, of which a number of U.S. laboratories are members.

I urge my colleagues who harbor doubts about this inspection regime to avail themselves of classified briefings on the details. What I can say publicly is that our technical experts have full confidence in the technical inspection capability of the IAEA.

Secondly, in regards to the 24-day inspection delay, which has been a source of concern for many, including myself, under the proposed agreement, Iran's declared nuclear facilities will be available for anytime, anywhere inspection.

However, for undeclared facilities, including military facilities, Iran has the opportunity to contest what is normally a 24-hour inspection regime under the nonproliferation treaty and additional protocol for a period of up to 24 days. This is clearly not ideal. It is a negotiated number.

However, when I look closely at the many steps that must be taken to produce and to test a nuclear weapon, the ability to detect activities in a window of 24 days versus 24 hours has limited operational significance.

This is because, while many steps toward weaponization can unfortunately be hidden from even a 24-hour inspection, things like design and testing of nonnuclear components, but the moment that Iran touches nuclear materials, it will be subject to detection by the IAEA, even months after any attempted scrubbing of the facility.

Thirdly, I support the administration's estimate of a 1-year minimum

breakout time. This is the reaction time that the world community will have for a diplomatic, economic, and military response if Iran decides to resume its nuclear weapons program.

Because of the importance of this issue, I have spent a great deal of time and effort personally vetting this estimate. The breakout time calculation is complex because there are many possible paths to obtain the fissile material for a first weapon, and each of these must be examined.

After many hours of study and detailed questioning of our experts, I have concluded that the 1-year estimate for the minimum breakout time is accurate.

Fourth, in regards to the weaponization timeline, this is the time needed by Iran from the point that it possesses a sufficient quantity of nuclear material for a first weapon, to the time that it will take them to assemble and to test that first nuclear weapon.

Unfortunately, Iran has made significant progress toward weaponization, including such items as the multipoint initiation system for implosion devices that is referenced in the IAEA report of 2011.

Moreover, if Iran breaks out of this agreement, it will resume the weaponization activities during the same year that it takes to accumulate fissile materials for a first weapon.

Therefore, I concur with the assessment that, in the context of a 1-year breakout effort, the additional time for weaponization may be small. However, at the end of this agreement, when the breakout time to obtain fissile material is shortened, the weaponization activities become the dominant factor in the time line.

This underscores the importance of maintaining maximum visibility into all aspects of the Iranian nuclear capability, a position that is surely strengthened by the adoption of this agreement and, also, of significantly strengthening the nonproliferation treaty for Iran and for all other nuclear threshold countries.

This must be the work of the coming decade, so that by the end of the main terms of this agreement, Iran and its neighbors in the Middle East and around the world will be bound by a much stronger and more verifiable nonproliferation treaty.

As was emphasized by former Senators Dick Lugar and Sam Nunn, two gentlemen who have actually reduced the threat of nuclear war, instead of just talking about it, that this is not a perfect deal, but it is the best path forward and our best chance to achieve our goal of preventing Iran from developing nuclear weapons.

I urge my colleagues to support the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action as the best opportunity to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran. Remember, we did not negotiate this deal alone, but if we walk away, we walk away alone.

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

We did not negotiate this deal alone. Also negotiating this deal was Iran and was Russia and was China—true enough—but when it comes to the question of inspections, I do not have the document that indicates how these inspections will be done; but what I do know is what is reported to be the procedure and what is asserted also by the Iranians to be the procedure.

As reported, it is Iran, not international inspectors, who will provide the agencies the photos of the locations. It is Iran that will provide the Agency videos of the locations. It is Iran, not international inspectors, who will provide the Agency the environmental samples. It is Iran that will use Iran's authenticated equipment, not the equipment of the international inspectors.

The point I make, again, is that one of the reasons we wanted to have the agreements, the side agreements, the two side agreements, including the one addressing the 12 questions that have never been answered about the thousand pages of bomb work that the IAEA had in its possession, that Iran supposedly conducted at Parchin, was to get Iran to answer these questions. To this day, to my knowledge, scientists in Iran are not available to answer these questions.

Now, perhaps if we obtain these documents, these two side agreements, we will have the details that assure us that, finally, these 12 questions have been answered, but I can tell you, during the interim agreement, we only got half of the first question answered, and after that, Iran shut it down. There was to be no more discussion about their past bomb work.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. KELLY).

(Mr. KELLY of Mississippi asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. KELLY of Mississippi. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to voice my opposition to the Iran nuclear agreement.

On the eve of September 11, I remember the American lives lost to terrorism and the unfortunate reality that people want to do America harm.

Based on my review of the agreement, combined with my personal experience of being deployed in the Army in Iraq in 2005 and, again, in 2009 and 2010 and seeing firsthand the Iranian influence there, I have no reason to believe that Iran will act in good faith in this agreement.

It is not just my concerns that I have regarding this deal, but it is also my concerns I have consistently heard throughout the August work month from my constituents, regardless of party affiliation, that did not support this agreement with Iran.

Lifting economic sanctions that Congress has imposed for more than two decades only gives Iran, a recognized state sponsor of terrorism since 1984, access to billions of dollars to finance terrorism activities in the region and

to get closer to their ultimate goal of building a nuclear weapon.

I oppose with all my heart and soul the Iran nuclear agreement because I do not believe the agreement negotiated by the administration is in the best interest of our national security, nor is it in the best interest of our allies in the Middle East, nor is it in the best interest of America.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to voice my opposition to the administration's Iran nuclear agreement.

On the Eve of September 11, we remember the lives lost and unfortunate reality that people want to do America harm.

Based on my review of the agreement combined with my personal experience of being deployed to Iraq in 2005 and again in 2009–2010 and seeing firsthand the Iranian influence there, I have no reason to believe Iran will act in good faith.

It is not just concerns I have regarding the deal, but concerns I consistently heard from constituents, regardless of party affiliation, during the August work period.

Just this week, Iran's Supreme Leader said America remains the "Great Satan" and reiterated his desire to wipe Israel off the map. Common sense would prevail that the goal of Iran's nuclear program is not to promote peace but exactly the opposite.

Lifting economic sanctions that Congress has imposed for more than two decades only gives Iran—a recognized state sponsor of terrorism since 1984—access to billions of dollars to finance terrorist activities in the region and get closer to their ultimate goal of building a nuclear weapon.

Increased access to wealth coupled with a lack of "anytime, anywhere" inspections will only allow Iran to increase their support of terrorism in the region to groups like Hamas and Hezbollah and is not nearly sufficient in stopping their pursuit of a nuclear weapon.

I oppose the Iran nuclear agreement because I do not believe that the agreement negotiated by the administration is in the best interest of our national security nor is it in the best interest of our allies in the Middle East.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. TONKO).

Mr. TONKO. Mr. Speaker, this agreement is the best option available to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon. The alternatives are simply too risky and too costly, which is why the deal's opponents have failed to articulate a realistic alternative.

During my time in Congress, I have voted for every bill that imposed crippling sanctions on Iran, which brought the regime to the negotiating table and united the world to stop Iran's pursuit of a nuclear weapon.

Sanctions were meant to be a tool to ensure negotiations; that is exactly what they have done, but as we have learned from the past decade, sanctions alone are not enough to stop Iran from expanding its nuclear program.

Before negotiations began, Iran greatly increased its enrichment stockpile and centrifuge capacity, despite sanctions. That is why a verifiable agreement that will cut off Iran's ability to build a nuclear weapon is necessary.

The International Atomic Energy Agency will have nearly continuous access to Iran's declared nuclear facilities and can gain unprecedented access to other suspicious, undeclared sites in as little as 24 hours.

Under this agreement, Iran will dismantle two-thirds of its installed centrifuges, remove over 97 percent of its uranium stockpile, and make changes to its Arak plutonium reactor before it receives sanctions relief.

United States Department of Energy Secretary and nuclear physicist Ernest Moniz has confirmed that the agreement increases Iran's breakout time significantly for well over a decade, from 2 to 3 months today to at least 12 months moving forward. This additional time will give us ample opportunity to catch and stop Iran should it choose to pursue a nuclear weapon.

Some have suggested that we need to reject this deal in order to get a better one, but I have found no evidence to believe that a better deal is possible.

It is clear that some of our negotiating partners and other allies do not want more sanctions. If we reject this deal, the robust international sanctions regime would certainly erode, if not unravel entirely.

In the meantime, Iran could move forward with its enrichment program without inspections; limitations on manufacturing, installation, research, and development of new centrifuges; and constraints on its enriched uranium stockpile. Simply put, no deal would mean no inspections and no constraints on Iran's nuclear ambitions.

Some have suggested that we cannot make an agreement with a country that we do not trust, but we must remember that this deal is not based on trust, but rather the most intrusive inspections regime upon which we have ever agreed.

We did not trust the Soviet Union, especially when we negotiated an arms reduction treaty with them as we fought in devastating proxy wars around the world.

□ 2030

Today we are not debating whether to trust Iran. We are debating whether and how we should enhance monitoring of its nuclear program.

I remain committed to working with the administration and my colleagues here in Congress to contain Iran's conventional capabilities that threaten stability in the region and throughout the world, but know that this deal is the best option to take the nuclear issue out of the equation.

I urge my colleagues to approve this agreement.

Again, I thank the gentlewoman from California for yielding.

Mr. ROYCE. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, in terms of viewing this as the most intrusive regime, I remember South Africa. We put the kinds of sanctions on South Africa that we tried to get the administration to put on Iran.

We had legislation here by a vote of 400-20 to do that, and the administration blocked that legislation in the Senate. That would have given us real leverage.

Why do I think so? Because in South Africa, when we put those sanctions on, it actually gave the regime a choice between compromise on its nuclear program and dropping apartheid and changing its system or economic collapse.

The choice was made in South Africa to turn over their nuclear bomb to the international inspectors. Now, I would consider that an intrusive regime. I wouldn't consider this one.

In the case of Libya, they turned over their weapons programs to international inspectors, allowed them in, allowed them to take them out.

I don't know why we say this is the most intrusive regime. It seems to me that, clearly, in cases where we actually forced the issue, where we actually in South Africa put the totality of sanctions in place, that Congress both in the House and the Senate in a bipartisan way felt were mandatory to force the South African hand.

In that case, yes, we got them to give up their nuclear capabilities and their right to enrich and all of that. I don't see that here.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. GARRETT).

Mr. GARRETT. Mr. Speaker, for months now, the President has made promises that we have heard that would prohibit Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons through strict oversight.

Unfortunately, we see now that this deal does not do that at all. The Iranian regime has done nothing to earn the trust of the international community, yet this agreement rewards Iran with sanctions relief.

I was a member of the Iran Sanctions Conference Committee, and I support tough, strict sanctions against this regime.

You see, the Iran sanctions were designed to force a peaceful resolution to this ongoing situation. It was clear to many that the sanctions were working.

Iran had an inflation rate of 35 percent, the value of its currency was falling, and its monetary reserves were dwindling.

Iran had no choice but to come to the negotiation table. So the U.S. was in a position of power to negotiate a good deal.

Instead, we have a deal which allows Iran to continue to use centrifuges, a deal that allows them to continue to enrich uranium, a deal where, after 15 years, it will be unclear what, if any, access the inspectors will have to their facilities, and a deal where Iran can dispute inspections and delay for 24 days.

This is not, by the way, "anytime, anywhere" inspections that the administration also promised us.

The President may claim that this deal is built on verifications. That is simply not true. We now know that

Congress hasn't even received all the details related to the deal. There are side deals as well.

So what makes us believe that Iran will abide by the agreement that we see, let alone by the side deals that we have not seen?

This deal asks us to trust a country that holds American hostages, that tortures its own people, and that has called for the destruction of the United States and its allies. It is not a surprise that Iran and its allies are celebrating.

However, it is obvious that this deal does little to advance U.S. security. We can still reject this severely flawed deal. There are still alternatives. The U.S. can use sanctions, sanctions that have worked to negotiate a good deal.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LOUDERMILK). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. ROYCE. I yield the gentleman an additional 10 seconds.

Mr. GARRETT. We can use those sanctions, those sanctions from the very committee that I was on, to negotiate a good deal.

I urge my colleagues to join me in protecting the security of the United States and protecting the security of our allies as well by rejecting this misguided deal.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time I have left?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California has 6½ minutes remaining.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT).

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, first I would like to thank Chairman ROYCE. He has actually dealt with this and done this very honorably.

It has been powerful to watch. There has been amazing testimony given to us. There have been great speakers here. But I fear something very important has not gotten enough understanding and enough focus.

Who in this body is going to take responsibility when the Iranian regime is flush with cash and the death and destruction that is coming with that?

Who here is going to take responsibility for the displaced people around the region?

Who here is going to take responsibility for what some of the experts have told us, the potential financing of a Sunni-Shia war in the region, the amount of death, whether it be the \$59 billion the administration talks about or the \$150 billion that sits in accounts around the world that is about to be handed back to the regime?

I hold up this board next to me so you can see this is more. This is so much more than just the neighbors around Iran.

The bad acts have been happening all over the world. Tell me why there is Iranian Revolutionary Guard money,

Quds Force money showing up in our hemisphere.

Earlier this year I was at a series of meetings in Panama. We had parliamentarians from the region speaking to us, telling us that they are actually seeing Iranian money moving through their banks, financing bad actors in their region, creating death and destruction, trying to finance the overthrows of their governments. That is in our own hemisphere.

Are we prepared as a body, particularly those who will vote for this, to step up and take responsibility for the lives that are about to be lost, for the governments that are going to be overthrown and the destruction and displaced people, the refugees, the cascades that are going to come from that?

We are about to hand billions and billions of dollars to a regime that is committed to destroying our way of life, but also to destroying their own neighbors.

That is what is on the line right now. We are about to execute a vote here that is going to kill, maim, destabilize not only the region; the world.

Those who are about to vote for this, I expect you to step up and be responsible for what you have done.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

We have heard a lot in these debates that have gone on today. I would like to take this opportunity to try to reinforce the tremendous support that we have for this deal.

I would like to also debunk the idea that somehow this administration is not concerned enough about the security of this country.

Let me just share with you the tremendous support that this deal has. I will do that by reading some excerpts from and insert into the RECORD an open letter signed by 36 retired U.S. generals and admirals who make the case that addressing the risk of a nuclear conflict with Iran diplomatically is far superior than trying to do it militarily.

In their letter, these retired military leaders say about the nuclear agreement with Iran, "There is no better option to prevent an Iranian nuclear weapon," "If the Iranians cheat, our advanced technology, intelligence and the inspections will reveal it, and U.S. military options remain on the table. And if the deal is rejected by America, the Iranians could have a nuclear weapon within a year. The choice is that stark."

Recognizing the importance of strong multilateral coordination and action, the retired military leaders go on to say, "If at some point it becomes necessary to consider military action against Iran, gathering sufficient international support for such an effort would only be possible if we have first given the diplomatic path a chance. We must exhaust diplomatic options before moving to military ones."

Mr. Speaker and Members, while I have great respect for all of the Members of this House, for the most part, I do not accept the notion that Members who have not served in the way that these generals and admirals have served this country would know better about our security.

So I would like to insert that letter into the RECORD.

THE IRAN DEAL BENEFITS U.S. NATIONAL SECURITY—AN OPEN LETTER FROM RETIRED GENERALS AND ADMIRALS

On July 14, 2015, after two years of intense international negotiations, an agreement was announced by the United States, the United Kingdom, France, Germany, China and Russia to contain Iran's nuclear program. We, the undersigned retired military officers, support the agreement as the most effective means currently available to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons.

The international deal blocks the potential pathways to a nuclear bomb, provides for intrusive verification, and strengthens American national security. America and our allies, in the Middle East and around the world, will be safer when this agreement is fully implemented. It is not based on trust; the deal requires verification and tough sanctions for failure to comply.

There is no better option to prevent an Iranian nuclear weapon. Military action would be less effective than the deal, assuming it is fully implemented. If the Iranian's cheat, our advanced technology, intelligence and the inspections will reveal it, and U.S. military options remain on the table. And if the deal is rejected by America, the Iranians could have a nuclear weapon within a year. The choice is that stark.

We agree with the Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Martin Dempsey, who said on July 29, 2015, "[r]elieving the risk of a nuclear conflict with Iran diplomatically is superior than trying to do that militarily."

If at some point it becomes necessary to consider military action against Iran, gathering sufficient international support for such an effort would only be possible if we have first given the diplomatic path a chance. We must exhaust diplomatic options before moving to military ones.

For these reasons, for the security of our Nation, we call upon Congress and the American people to support this agreement.

GEN James "Hoss" Cartwright, U.S. Marine Corps;

GEN Joseph P. Hoar, U.S. Marine Corps;
GEN Merrill "Tony" McPeak, U.S. Air Force;

GEN Lloyd W. "Fig" Newton, U.S. Air Force;

LGEN Robert G. Gard, Jr., U.S. Army;
LGEN Arlen D. Jameson, U.S. Air Force;
LGEN Frank Kearney, U.S. Army;

LGEN Claudia J. Kennedy, U.S. Army;
LGEN Donald L. Kerrick, U.S. Army;
LGEN Charles P. Otstott, U.S. Army;

LGEN Norman R. Seip, U.S. Air Force;
LGEN James M. Thompson, U.S. Army;
VADM Kevin P. Green, U.S. Navy;

VADM Lee F. Gunn, U.S. Navy;
MGEN George Buskirk, U.S. Army;
MGEN Paul D. Eaton, U.S. Army;
MGEN Marcelite J. Harris, U.S. Air Force;

MGEN Frederick H. Lawson, U.S. Army;
MGEN William L. Nash, U.S. Army;
MGEN Tony Taguba, U.S. Army;

RADM John Hutson, U.S. Navy;
RADM Malcolm MacKinnon III, U.S. Navy;

RADM Edward "Sonny" Masso, U.S. Navy;

RADM Joseph Sestak, U.S. Navy;
RADM Garland "Gar" P. Wright, U.S. Navy;

BGEN John Adams, U.S. Air Force;
BGEN Stephen A. Cheney, U.S. Marine Corps;

BGEN Patricia "Pat" Foote, U.S. Army;
BGEN Lawrence E. Gillespie, U.S. Army;
BGEN John Johns, U.S. Army;

BGEN David McGinnis, U.S. Army;
BGEN Stephen Xenakis, U.S. Army;
RDML James Arden "Jamie" Barnett, Jr., U.S. Navy;

RDML Jay A. DeLoach, U.S. Navy;
RDML Harold L. Robinson, U.S. Navy;
RDML Alan Steinman, U.S. Coast Guard.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. And, further, I would like to share with you something from someone that I came to know very well. It is a Washington Post article that I am going to quote from.

The quotes will be from Republican and former Treasury Secretary Paulson. He will not only make very strong statements about his support for this deal, he slams the naysayers of this Iranian deal.

Let me read from the Washington Post article from August 14 in which former Treasury Secretary Hank Paulson was asked what he thought about the viability of maintaining multilateral nuclear sanctions against Iran if the United States decided to walk away from the nuclear deal that has just been agreed to between Iran and the international community.

It is important to note that former Secretary Paulson, a Republican, was in charge of administering the administration's sanctions under President George W. Bush during the period when the international community was just beginning to enact the current regime of punitive sanctions over Iran's nuclear ambitions.

This was his response, "It's somewhere in between naive and unrealistic to assume that after we, the United States of America, has negotiated something like this, with the five other parties, and with the whole world community watching, that we could back away from that—and that the others would go with us, or even that our allies would go with us."

Paulson also viewed as far-fetched the idea that the United States could force other nations into lockstep on a more hard-line approach to Iran by threatening them with secondary sanctions.

Again, Mr. Paulson said:

"I think it's totally unrealistic to believe that if we backed out of this deal, that the multilateral sanctions would stay in place," Paulson said. "I'm just trying to envision us sanctioning European banks or enforcing them, or Japanese banks, or big Chinese banks."

□ 2045

In fact, the former Treasury Secretary could barely hide his disdain for those who think they could strike a path to a better deal than one that has been reached.

Further, he said: "I had a seat in Washington when we dealt with a big,

intractable, messy problem, where there weren't any neat, beautiful, elegant solutions."

He said: "You were deciding between doing something that objectionable or doing nothing at all, which could even be more objectionable. So I don't particularly like it when people criticize something that's big and important that's been done if they don't have a better idea."

[From the Washington Post, Aug. 14, 2015]

REPUBLICAN AND FORMER TREASURY SECRETARY PAULSON SLAMS NAYSAYER OF IRAN DEAL

(By Karoun Demirjian)

Not many high-profile Republicans have anything nice to say about the Iran deal.

But former Treasury secretary Hank Paulson—the guy who was in charge of the government's sanctions operation under President George W. Bush, when the international community was just setting up this regime of punitive measures over Iran's nuclear ambitions—thinks at this point, it would be pretty ill-advised to back away.

"It's somewhere in between naive and unrealistic to assume that after we've, the United States of America, has negotiated something like this with the five other, you know, parties and with the whole world community watching, that we could back away from that—and that the others would go with us, or even that our allies would go with us," Paulson said during a forum sponsored by the Aspen Institute on Thursday night to discuss his new book on China.

"And unilateral sanctions don't work, okay?" Paulson continued. "They really have to be multilateral."

Paulson was responding to a question from the moderator of the event, who had asked what Paulson thought about the viability of maintaining sanctions against Iran, should the United States walk away from the agreement struck in Vienna last month. Congress will vote on that very question next month, but naysayers need a veto-proof, two-thirds majority in both houses to kill the deal—a formidable hurdle to clear.

In Congress and on the campaign trail, the critics of the deal—many, though not all of them Republicans—have been advocating ripping up the agreement and either leaving the U.S. sanctions in place or stepping them up to make the point to Iran and the international community that the United States means business. Some lawmakers, including Sen. Charles E. Schumer (D-N.Y.), and candidates have even suggested that the United States could force other nations into lockstep on a more hardline approach to Iran by threatening them with secondary sanctions.

Paulson thinks that idea is farfetched.

"I think it's totally unrealistic to believe that if we backed out of this deal that the multilateral sanctions would stay in place," Paulson said. "I'm just trying to envision us sanctioning European banks or enforcing them, or Japanese banks, or big Chinese banks."

Sanctions against Iran have become far more extensive since Paulson left office. And Paulson's comments, delivered in a resort city in Colorado, may not carry that much weight among his GOP colleagues in Washington.

The former Goldman Sachs chief executive came to the Treasury Department in 2006 on the eve of a colossal financial crash and left as a controversial figure for the policies he spearheaded. Since leaving that post, he has broken from the mainstream GOP party line to advocate for more attention to issues like climate change.

Even others in the Bush administration probably wouldn't agree with Paulson: His former boss, George W., advised against lifting Iran sanctions this spring.

But Iran sanctions are Paulson's wheelhouse, and while he didn't direct any darts toward specific politicians or give his own point-by-point assessment of the merits of the deal, Paulson's disdain for those who think they can strike a path to a better solution than the one reached in Vienna was apparent.

"I had a seat in Washington when we dealt with a big, intractable, messy problem, where there weren't any neat, beautiful, elegant solutions," Paulson said. "You were deciding between doing something that was objectionable or doing nothing at all, which could even be more objectionable.

"So I don't particularly like it when people criticize something that's big and important that's been done if they don't have a better idea," Paulson said.

Ms. MAXINE WATERS of California. Mr. Speaker, having said that, I would like to discuss a point that I do not think has been given enough attention yet in this debate. Iran could move in any direction over the next 15 years and the postagreement dynamics in Iran would play out in a number of ways. We are aware of the less benign scenarios.

There is also the scenario in which the agreement helps to amplify the voices of those in Iran who want peace in regional and international accommodation. I have hope with respect to this latter possibility, and I will tell you why.

It is because more than half the population of Iran today—almost 55 percent—is under 30 years old, and the youth unemployment rate is somewhere between 27 and 40 percent. I hope that these young people, given the opportunity to work, to achieve prosperity, and to live peacefully, will, in fact, help animate the kind of change in Iran that will, indeed, move it to become a responsible member of the world community.

This is a possibility that I urge Members to keep in mind when they vote on the resolution before us today.

I have no more time, but I would just urge my colleagues to support this important deal and agreement, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, to begin with, I would like to also submit later for the RECORD a letter by 200 retired generals and flag officers and admirals in terms of why they are opposed to this deal and why they feel it would make the national security challenges for the United States more problematic.

The second point I would make is that Nasrallah, who is the head of Hezbollah, says this about this deal:

Iran will become richer and wealthier and will also become more influential under the deal reached this week. This will also reinforce the position of its allies. A stronger and wealthier Iran in the coming phase will be able to stand by its allies and especially the Palestinian resistance more than at any other time in history.

What does that mean? I can tell you what it means because, in 2006, when I

chaired the Terrorism Subcommittee, we were in Haifa when Nasrallah was firing off the Iranian-made rockets with 90,000 ball bearings in the warheads into the town of Haifa; there were 600 victims inside the trauma hospitals, and now, Iran has transferred over 80,000 missiles.

What is it Nasrallah wants that he doesn't have currently? He wants guidance systems so that those missiles will hit targets, such as individual buildings in Tel Aviv, the airport, Jerusalem. That is what he needs. That is what Iran is telling Nasrallah it will provide.

It needs the hard currency and with this agreement will come the hard currency. It is also committed to restock the inventory that Hamas used when it fired off its rockets into Israel from Gaza and to rebuild the tunnels; all of this is what the Iranians seek to fund, but to do that, they need the sanctions lifted.

When they lift those sanctions, who is going to be the primary beneficiary? It is going to be people such as the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps that will be strengthened.

Look, Mr. Speaker, if this agreement goes through, Iran gets a cash bonanza. It gets a boost to its international standing. It gets a lighted path toward nuclear weapons. With sweeping sanctions relief, we have lessened our ability to challenge Iran's conduct across the board. As Iran grows stronger, we will be weaker to respond.

The question before us today is whether temporary constraints on Iran's nuclear program are worth the price of permanent sanctions relief. When I say the Revolutionary Guard is going to be the beneficiary, I say that because they are the ones that have taken over so many of the major companies in Iran and they are working to destabilize the entire Middle East.

That organization fuels the Assad regime in Syria today. Those rockets are being launched by the Quds Force into Israel. They are going to provide them with more weapons and more military personnel. That organization backs the Houthi rebels. There were 200 Quds Forces that were on the vanguard when they overthrew our ally in Yemen, and they overran that country.

It is responsible for the deaths of hundreds of American troops in Iraq. The IRGC exports terrorism throughout that region. It holds sway over Iran's nuclear program. It brutally, brutally represses internal dissent, and as part of the Iranian agreement, the IRGC is going to be bolstered in a big way, and I will explain how else. It is going to have the funds to build up its tanks, its fighter jets, and the intercontinental ballistic missiles.

The European sanctions on the elite Quds Forces—this is the group that does the political assassinations, assassinations outside Iran, and does the terrorist work outside of Iran—that is going to be lifted on the European side.

The administration signed off on these concessions. The deal will allow

sales of aircraft and parts to Iranian airlines, which the Quds Force uses to move its people and weapons throughout the region. The IRGC controls key parts, as I said, of the Iranian economy—the largest construction companies, the telecom sector, shipping.

Ninety current and former IRGC officials and companies will be taken off the sanctions list as a result of this deal. Even sanctions on the head of Iran's elite Quds Force, General Soleimani, will be coming off. Soleimani had been involved in the plot to assassinate the Saudi Ambassador here in Washington, D.C.

While still under a UN travel ban, Soleimani traveled to Moscow on July 24, 10 days after the Iran nuclear agreement was announced, and he held meetings with the Russian Defense Minister and with President Vladimir Putin. Believe me, those meetings are about weapon systems, which the Russians want to sell to the Quds Force, to the Iranians.

The IRGC is the biggest sponsor of terror throughout the Middle East and even tried to carry out a terrorist attack here. Under the nuclear agreement, as Iran is reconnected to the global economy, the IRGC is going to be the biggest winner.

The agreement helps legitimize Soleimani and gives additional resources to the mastermind behind the world's foremost state sponsor of terrorism and eyeing future weapon sales.

It was Russia that teamed up with Iran in the eleventh hour, after we thought this deal was done, to insist on one more thing, the lifting of the arms embargo. I just ask you: If they did that, whose side do you think Moscow is going to take when Iran tests this agreement?

Now, we talked a little bit about the younger generation in Iran. Yes, yes, 55 percent is under 30, but it is not those 55 percent under 30 that are going to be empowered. The ones holding the strings now—because of the way the Iranian economy works—are the generals, are the clerics. They are the ones that have taken over the companies.

When you have got \$60 billion to \$100 billion, depending upon whose figure you use, and you lift the escrow on that and that money goes back to Iran, it is their accounts that it is going to go into, and they are going to control the contracts going forward.

How is that going to liberalize the economy or work to the benefit of the next generation in Iran? No, it makes it more certain that the tyranny that this theocracy imposes is going to be strengthened.

We reverse decades of bipartisan U.S. policy; we remove the Security Council resolutions against Iran's illicit nuclear program, and we okay Iran as a nuclear threshold state. That is what has been done here.

You and I know that, once that process is underway, Iran is going to produce nuclear weapons on an industrial scale when they are at the end of

that process, unless they cheat before they get to the end of the process.

Secretary Kerry had previously said we do not recognize Iran's right to enrich and that there is no right to enrich in the NPT. However, this agreement legitimizes Iran's vast nuclear program, including its right to enriched uranium, which can be used to produce a nuclear warhead.

I guarantee you that everybody in the region is going to be looking at that and saying: We want the same agreement Iran had. We want that same exemption to the NPT.

After the agreement's temporary limits expire, Iran's nuclear program will be treated in the same manner as that of any other nonnuclear weapon state party to the NPT. Okay, so we are going to treat Iran like it is Holland, but it is not Holland. It has been caught cheating. That is why we are here. It has been caught cheating in the past, over and over, on their agreements.

Iran can have a peaceful nuclear program without the ability to enrich uranium. This is something we all understand. Many countries have this. It is this key bomb-making technology that is so objectionable.

We had no problem with the idea of letting them have a peaceful nuclear program; but why give up the right to enrich? Preventing the spread of this dangerous technology has been the foundation of our nonproliferation policy for decades.

As a result, over 20 countries have peaceful nuclear energy programs without a domestic enrichment program. In fact, buying fuel for nuclear power plants abroad from countries like Russia is much more cost effective than producing it domestically.

You have to ask: Why do they want to produce it domestically? If this agreement is allowed to go forward, the United States will recognize the ability of Iran, the world's largest state sponsor of terrorism, to enrich uranium.

Despite claims to the contrary, this will set a dangerous precedent; it will greatly undermine longstanding U.S. efforts to restrict the spread of this key bomb-making technology. How can we tell our allies they can't have it if we do this?

If fully implemented, this agreement will destroy the Iran sanctions regime, which this Congress has built up over decades, despite opposition from several administrations. We did that in Congress. We pushed this. The billions in sanctions relief that Iran will get will support its terrorist activity, and those billions are just a downpayment.

Under this agreement, European sanctions on the Iranian Revolutionary Guard and the leader of its elite Quds Force—Soleimani, again—are removed, and their job is to export the revolution. That means their job is to export terrorism.

General Dempsey—I will close with this—testified that Iranian militias, such as those trained and equipped by

Soleimani, killed 500 U.S. soldiers in Iraq. Removing sanctions on Soleimani and the IRGC is so shocking that, when the deal was first announced, many thought that it was a mistake, thought that that was not the case.

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

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, like my vote against the Iraq War, consideration of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) is one of the most consequential foreign policy votes I will take during my time in Congress. After careful consideration I have decided to support the JCPOA because it is the best way forward to prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon and advance the national security interests of the United States and our allies.

The intent of sanctions and these negotiations has always been to diplomatically cut off Iran's pathways to a nuclear weapon and to verifiably increase transparency of their nuclear activities. After reviewing the agreement and its classified documents, participating in classified briefings with Secretaries Kerry, Moniz, and Lew, and listening to the insights of experts on all sides, it is clear that this deal achieves these goals.

The JCPOA will ensure that Iran will not have the materials or capability to build a nuclear weapon and extends the breakout time for building a nuclear bomb from two or three months as it currently stands to at least a year. And if Iran violates the agreement, unprecedented international inspections will ensure we know about it and can automatically reinstate international sanctions.

In contrast, blocking this deal would allow Iran to resume its nuclear program with no restrictions or oversight, increasing the likelihood of military conflict and a regional nuclear weapons race—precisely the scenario sanctions were designed to prevent. Another costly war in the Middle East would put American lives at risk and undermine the security of our nation and our allies, including Israel.

There are no decisions I take more seriously than those that involve potentially sending Americans into harm's way. This is undeniably one of those decisions.

Under the JCPOA, every option is—and will remain—on the table, including military force. But as a Member of Congress I have a solemn obligation to ensure every diplomatic avenue is exhausted before military action is taken. That is why I opposed authorizing the Iraq War and why I support the JCPOA.

This is a pivotal moment. We must certainly remain vigilant in the years and decades to come to ensure the deal is strictly enforced and that Iran upholds its end of the bargain, but the terms of this agreement are strong, verifiable, and long-lasting.

The JCPOA is certainly not perfect, but perfect is not an option. Those who are urging the defeat of this deal have a responsibility to propose a viable alternative—yet no such alternative has been put forward.

While the risks of a nuclear armed Iran are unquestionably dire, there is simply no scenario in which these risks are reduced by rejecting this deal. This agreement is the best option available and it has my full support.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I am in strong opposition to House Resolution 3461, the to Approve the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, signed at Vienna

on July 14, 2015, relating to the nuclear program of Iran.

The President's failed legacy to execute a strategy of peace through strength has resulted in mass murders throughout the Middle East. We have seen his failure to take action after Syria violated the President's declared "red line" and used chemical weapons against its citizens. We have seen it in his failure to recognize ISIL/DAESH as a significant threat to Americans, not as the "JV" team. When it comes to Middle East policy, the President has been dangerously inaccurate, putting American families at risk.

In South Carolina's Second District, I hosted three town hall meetings on the deal, and the response from my constituents was overwhelming—the American people know this deal is dangerous in the tradition of Neville Chamberlain.

This week's vote on the Iranian nuclear deal is of historic proportions. If allowed, this deal would economically and militarily reenergize a regime bent on the destruction of democracy all over the world. It will put the young people of Iran who seek change at risk. We must act immediately to stop this deal and vote against the Resolution of Approval.

IRAN NUCLEAR DEAL

Mr. CALVERT. Mr. Speaker, I'd like to begin with a couple quotes from the President about the agreement:

"There is nothing more important to our security and to the world's stability than preventing the spread of nuclear weapons and ballistic missiles.

"It does not rely on trust. Compliance will be certified by the International Atomic Energy Agency."

Mr. Speaker, you would be forgiven if you thought I was quoting President Obama. However, I was quoting President Bill Clinton lauding his nuclear agreement with North Korea in 1994. Additionally he stated, "This agreement will help to achieve a longstanding and vital American objective: an end to the threat of nuclear proliferation on the Korean Peninsula."

Mr. Speaker, we now know that reality turned out to be very different. Despite assurances from President Clinton, the North Koreans violated the deal, began a clandestine program to enrich uranium and in 2006 conducted its first underground test of a nuclear weapon.

Once again we are told by a Democrat President that an agreement will prevent an adversarial country from acquiring a nuclear weapon. We would be fools to believe that they will not violate the Obama agreement just as North Korea violated the Clinton agreement. The stakes here are even higher. Iran is a regime that will not hesitate to use nuclear weapons to achieve its long-stated goals: the destruction of both Israel and America.

The Iran Nuclear Deal that was agreed to by President Obama is wholly inadequate and unacceptable. The deal gives up-front, permanent sanctions relief to the Iranian mullahs and allows Iran to have an internationally recognized nuclear program after 15 years that could quickly produce a nuclear weapon.

Most laughable are the "anytime, anywhere" inspections. In fact, the agreement grants the Iranians 24 days to allow the IAEA access to undeclared nuclear facilities. This gives Iran ample opportunity to cheat and continue its march toward a nuclear weapon. We have

also learned that the Iranians will be able to provide their own samples from their military base at Parchin to international inspectors. This is essentially asking the fox to guard the henhouse.

I also have great concerns about what happens once sanctions are lifted and billions of dollars are flowing back into Iran. While the UN Security Council resolutions allegedly prevent Iran from shipping arms to terrorist organizations such as Hamas and Hezbollah, and to Assad in Syria, nothing prevents them from sending money. In an incredibly dangerous concession, the U.S. even agreed to shorten the length of the arms embargo against Iran. There is no question that this will negatively impact regional stability as well as the U.S. Navy's access to the Persian Gulf. An article in the Washington Post pointed out that the funds available to Iran immediately upon implementation of this deal would equate to approximately 10% of its GDP. That would be equivalent to a \$1.7 trillion injection into our economy.

Mr. Speaker, I do not believe this agreement will prevent Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. I believe it will do just the opposite. In no way should a country that vows to wipe Israel off the map and chants "Death to America" be allowed nuclear capabilities. Today marks a turning point for the future of one of our greatest allies, Israel. If this deal goes through, President Obama and Democrats in Congress will own the consequences of allowing the Iranian regime to become a nuclear power.

We can and must have a better deal. A deal that truly allows for anytime/anywhere inspections. A deal that would keep restrictions on Iran's nuclear program for decades. A deal that forces Iran to end its missile development program. A deal that allows Iran truly limited enrichment capability. A deal that releases U.S. hostages in Iran. It is a catastrophic failure that President Obama did not insist on these provisions in the nuclear deal. We should be embarrassed that as the leader of the free world and the most powerful country on earth, this is the best deal President Obama could negotiate.

We have been presented with a false choice of accepting this deal or going to war. We should reject this deal and return to work, not to war. We cannot allow the sanctions to be lifted, we must reject approval of the deal and we must have all the information—including side agreements—before the clock can begin on the deal. I urge my colleagues to stand with our ally Israel and with the American people. The consequences of these votes are truly life and death.

Ms. VELAZQUEZ. Mr. Speaker, an Iran with a nuclear weapon would present an existential threat to Israel, destabilize the region and undermine U.S. security interests. This agreement is our best option for avoiding such a scenario. If Congress rejects this agreement, there is a high probability Iran will continue developing weapons grade plutonium and uranium.

That could result in American military action—something I believe we should avoid—and that the American people oppose. A U.S. strike would be costly, causing loss of life on both sides—and could lead to attacks on Israel. Yet, it would only postpone Iran's nuclear weapons development by a few years.

Clearly, a strong, enforceable diplomatic solution is superior. Let's be clear—this agree-

ment is enforceable. The monitoring and inspection provisions are more intrusive than any previous agreement. Most importantly, they will prevent Iran from producing fissionable material without the international community knowing.

There are some who suggest that even with this agreement Iran might still acquire nuclear weapons in the long term. While some provisions of this agreement are indeed time limited and the world will need to revisit this issue, this agreement remains our best chance of thwarting the immediate threat. Many estimates suggest Iran is two to three months away from acquiring a nuclear weapon—and this agreement addresses that very imminent threat.

Mr. Speaker, I have heard from constituents on all sides of the issue. I respect the opinions of those who do not support it. However, I believe this agreement is our best option.

Support the agreement. Vote yes.

Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise after careful consideration and review of the Joint-Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) and would like to extend my full support of the deal negotiated between Iran and the P5+1 countries. This historical agreement between the United States, China, France, Russia, the United Kingdom, plus Germany, is in the best interest of our country, our major ally in the Middle East, and the global community.

The agreement, which will face Congressional scrutiny, has won endorsement by more than one hundred former American diplomats. The group that contains Republicans and Democrats described the deal, negotiated by Secretary of State John Kerry and Secretary of Energy Dr. Ernest J. Moniz as a "landmark agreement." It would make no sense to reject this diplomatic movement towards stability and peace in the region.

Twenty-nine top American scientists have also endorsed the deal, noting that it will "advance the cause of peace and security in the Middle East, and can serve as a guidepost for future nonproliferation agreements." The group of scientists includes six Noble Laureates. In a letter to President Barack Obama, they pointed out that Iran was only "a few weeks away" from having fuel for nearby weapons. The agreement would stop Iran's nuclear program, the scientists wrote.

In the JCPOA, Iran agrees that it will not develop or acquire a nuclear weapon. The deal also includes a permanent ban on Iran's development of key nuclear weapon components and is based on four clear objectives; blocking the highly enriched uranium route, allowing no path to plutonium, intensive monitoring, and incentives for compliance.

Without the agreement, there will be no restraints on Iran's nuclear program. There will more than likely be an arms race to acquire and develop nuclear weapons by various nations in the Middle East. Such a climate would not be in the best interest of our country, and certainly not in the best interests of our ally, Israel, and the global community.

It is my firm belief that if this deal is not implemented due to a Congressional blockade, we risk devastating military conflict. I am hopeful that we can continue on this trajectory of peace and diplomacy as opposed to an unavoidable nuclear arms race and armed conflict in the region. As we move to the next phase and allow Congress to study and de-

bate this agreement, we must listen to the non-proliferation experts who have worked tirelessly to move the deal forward. I urge my Congressional colleagues to support the deal. It would be negligent to walk away from a nuclear deal at this point.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 412, the previous question is ordered on the bill.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. ROYCE. 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 question will be postponed.

□ 2100

IN MEMORY OF ELANOR BENSON

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 6, 2015, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. SCHWEIKERT) is recognized as the designee of the majority leader for half of the time remaining before 10 p.m., approximately 30 minutes.

Mr. SCHWEIKERT. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. CARTER), my good friend.

IRAN NUCLEAR AGREEMENT

Mr. CARTER of Texas. I thank my friend from Arizona for recognizing me.

Mr. Speaker, we have been having a really great conversation here, and I hope that everyone who has the responsibility of casting a vote on this so-called deal that the President has brought us has been listening very closely.

Mr. Speaker, the President wants Congress to approve what I would call an absurd deal that eases the path for an avowed enemy of the United States of America's and our allies to unleash a nightmare on the world.

I want us to take a look—and I ask the supporters of this deal to take a look—at what Iran has done to merit our trust.

We first saw these guys way back in the Carter administration when they stormed our American Embassy and took our people hostage and held those people for, I believe it was, 42 days. They abused them in every way they could think of. Quite honestly, they finally released them after pressure was placed on them. Since that time, I cannot think of a single instance where dealing with Iran has been a positive thing. In fact, let's look at the public face they put on.