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AIPAC LAUDS SENATE ACTION URGING U.S. TO ADD IRANIAN GUARD TO TERROR LISTS

AIPAC commends the Senate for calling on the president to officially designate Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) as a foreign terrorist organization and include it on the list of Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGT). The IRGC is an Iranian military organization that has armed, funded and trained terrorist groups around the world.

Estimates peg the Revolutionary Guard's share of the nation's economy at roughly 40 percent, with much of their work concentrated within Iran's oil and gas industry. The SDTG designation would deal a significant blow to Iran's nuclear ambitions, cutting off significant business contact with the IRGC. More importantly, it would give the U.S. the ability to sever access to the U.S. economy to any company doing business with the Revolutionary Guard and provide those entities with a dramatic incentive to end their work with the IRGC.

By choking off IRGC financial pipelines, Congress and the Administration have an opportunity to limit the Guard's ability to harm U.S. allies and interests in the Middle East and pressure the Iranian government to drop its radical agenda.

The IRGC has used its investments to not only bankroll Iran's nuclear program, but to fund terrorist activities around the world. The Guard has been implicated in the 1994 bombing of an Argentina Jewish Center, the 1996 Khobar Towers bombing in Saudi Arabia, and, most recently, the capture of British sailors in the Persian Gulf.

A special branch of the IRGC, the al-Quds (Jerusalem) Force, is providing funds, weapons, training and technology to terrorist groups such as Hamas, Hizballah and the Taliban. In Iraq, U.S. military spokesman Brig. Gen. Kevin J. Bergner said the Quds force has trained Iraqi insurgents in camps outside Tehran where they were schooled in the use of mortars, rockets, improvised explosive devices and other lethal tools.

The Senate action came on the overwhelming passage of an amendment, sponsored by Sens. Jon Kyl (R-AZ) and Joseph Lieberman (I-CT), that was included as part of the larger Defense Authorization bill and approved by a vote of 76-22