

Take a Stand Against Iranian Bullying: Co-Sponsor H. Con. Res. 362

May 28, 2008

Dear Colleague:

We write to encourage you to join us as sponsors of H.Con.Res.362, a resolution expressing the sense of Congress regarding the threat posed to international peace, stability in the Middle East, and the vital national security interests of the United States by Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons and regional hegemony.

As the Chairman and Ranking Minority Member of the House Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia, we have been monitoring with growing concern Iran's manifest efforts to destabilize and reshape the Middle East, to block efforts to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict and, worst of all, to acquire the means to produce enriched uranium, the key to producing nuclear weapons.

Iran is backing and arming militias and terrorists fighting the United States and our allies in both Iraq and Afghanistan; it is the proud patron of both the Hamas take-over in Gaza and the Hezbollah insurrection against the Lebanese government; it is the major funding source for numerous terrorist groups and, increasingly, its fellow state-sponsor of terrorism, Syria; it is supporting Islamist sectarian groups in places like Kuwait, Bahrain and Yemen; and, it is radically reorienting regional security calculations (e.g., the sudden interest among Sunni Arabs in commercial nuclear power).

In various public statements, Iranian leaders proudly take ownership of these policies and promise more of the same. Meeting the threat posed by Iran is an urgent requirement for the United States, and a challenge that will require us to work closely with the international community, and especially with partners in the Middle East. Though the stakes are high and time is short, the resolution is explicit in stating that meeting the challenge from Iran must be done using all appropriate political, diplomatic and economic levers, and that "nothing in this resolution shall be construed as an authorization of the use of force against Iran."

The threat from Iran is real and growing, and Congress needs to sound the alarm to ensure that today's efforts by Iran at subversion and proliferation do not, tomorrow, become the seeds of new and more terrible conflict in the Middle East. Please contact Dalis Blumenfeld (dalis.blumenfeld@mail.house.gov) at the House Subcommittee on the Middle East and South Asia at 202-225-3345 if you'd like to be added as a sponsor.

Sincerely,

s/ Gary L. Ackerman
Chairman
House Subcommittee on the
Middle East & South Asia

s/ Mike Pence
Ranking Minority Member
House Subcommittee on the
Middle East & South Asia

110TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

H. CON. RES. 362

Expressing the sense of Congress regarding the threat posed to international peace, stability in the Middle East, and the vital national security interests of the United States by Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons and regional hegemony, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 22, 2008

Mr. ACKERMAN (for himself and Mr. PENCE) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of Congress regarding the threat posed to international peace, stability in the Middle East, and the vital national security interests of the United States by Iran's pursuit of nuclear weapons and regional hegemony, and for other purposes.

Whereas Iran is a party to the Treaty on the Non-Proliferation of Nuclear Weapons (NPT), has foresworn the acquisition of nuclear weapons by ratification of the NPT, and is legally bound to declare and place all its nuclear activity under constant monitoring by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA);

Whereas for nearly 20 years, in clear contravention of its explicit obligations under the NPT, Iran operated a covert

nuclear program until it was revealed by an Iranian opposition group in 2002;

Whereas the IAEA has confirmed such illicit covert nuclear activities as the importation of uranium hexafluoride, construction of a uranium enrichment facility, experimentation with plutonium, importation of centrifuge technology, construction of centrifuges, and importation of designs to convert highly enriched uranium gas into metal and shape it into the core of a nuclear weapon;

Whereas Iran continues to expand the number of centrifuges at its enrichment facility, as made evident by its announced intention to begin installation of 6,000 advanced centrifuges to enrich uranium, in defiance of binding United Nations Security Council resolutions demanding Iran suspend enrichment activities;

Whereas the November 2007 National Intelligence Estimate reported that Iran was secretly working on the design and manufacture of a nuclear warhead until at least 2003, but that Iran could have enough highly enriched uranium for a nuclear weapon as soon as late 2009;

Whereas an Iranian nuclear weapons capability would pose a grave threat to international peace and security by fundamentally altering and destabilizing the strategic balance in the Middle East, and severely undermining the global nonproliferation regime;

Whereas Iran's overt sponsorship of several terrorist groups, including Hamas and Hezbollah, and its close ties to Syria raise the possibility that Iran would share its nuclear materials and technology with others;

Whereas Iran continues to develop ballistic missile technology and is pursuing the capability to field intercontinental

ballistic missiles, a delivery system suited almost exclusively to nuclear weapons payloads;

Whereas Iranian leaders have repeatedly called for the destruction of Israel, a major non-North Atlantic Treaty Organization ally, and a member of the United Nations;

Whereas the United States, Russia, China, France, the United Kingdom, and Germany have offered, and continue to offer, to negotiate a significant package of economic, diplomatic, and security incentives if Iran complies with the United Nations Security Council's resolutions demanding that Iran suspend uranium enrichment;

Whereas Iran has consistently refused such offers;

Whereas as a result of Iran's failure to comply with the mandates of the United Nations Security Council, taken under Chapter VII of the United Nations' Charter, the international community has imposed limited sanctions over the past 2 years that have begun to have an impact on the Iranian economy;

Whereas Iran's rapid development of its nuclear capabilities is outpacing the slow ratcheting up of economic and diplomatic sanctions;

Whereas Iran has used its banking system, including the Central Bank of Iran, to support its proliferation efforts and its assistance to terrorist groups, leading the Department of Treasury to designate 4 large Iranian banks proliferators and supporters of terrorism;

Whereas Iran's support for Hezbollah has enabled that group to wage war against the Government and people of Lebanon, leading to its political domination of that country;

Whereas Iran's support for Hamas has enabled it to illegally seize control of Gaza from the Palestinian Authority, and

to continuously bombard Israeli civilians with rockets and mortars;

Whereas Iran continues to provide training, weapons, and financial assistance to Shi'a militants inside of Iraq and antigovernment warlords in Afghanistan;

Whereas those Shi'a militant groups and Afghan warlords use Iranian training, weapons, and financing to attack American and allied forces trying to support the legitimate Governments of Iraq and Afghanistan;

Whereas Iran is further destabilizing the Middle East by underwriting a massive rearmament campaign by Syria;

Whereas through these efforts, Iran seeks to establish regional hegemony, threatens longstanding friends and allies of the United States in the Middle East, and endangers vital American national security interests; and

Whereas nothing in this resolution shall be construed as an authorization of the use of force against Iran: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring), That Congress—*

3 (1) declares that preventing Iran from acquir-
4 ing a nuclear weapons capability, through all appro-
5 priate economic, political, and diplomatic means, is
6 vital to the national security interests of the United
7 States and must be dealt with urgently;

8 (2) urges the President, in the strongest of
9 terms, to immediately use his existing authority to
10 impose sanctions on—

1 (A) the Central Bank of Iran and any
2 other Iranian bank engaged in proliferation ac-
3 tivities or the support of terrorist groups;

4 (B) international banks which continue to
5 conduct financial transactions with proscribed
6 Iranian banks;

7 (C) energy companies that have invested
8 \$20,000,000 or more in the Iranian petroleum
9 or natural gas sector in any given year since
10 the enactment of the Iran Sanctions Act of
11 1996; and

12 (D) all companies which continue to do
13 business with Iran's Islamic Revolutionary
14 Guard Corps;

15 (3) demands that the President initiate an
16 international effort to immediately and dramatically
17 increase the economic, political, and diplomatic pres-
18 sure on Iran to verifiably suspend its nuclear enrich-
19 ment activities by, inter alia, prohibiting the export
20 to Iran of all refined petroleum products; imposing
21 stringent inspection requirements on all persons, ve-
22 hicles, ships, planes, trains, and cargo entering or
23 departing Iran; and prohibiting the international
24 movement of all Iranian officials not involved in ne-

1 gotiating the suspension of Iran’s nuclear program;
2 and

3 (4) urges the President to lead a sustained, se-
4 rious, and forceful effort at regional diplomacy to
5 support the legitimate governments in the region
6 against Iranian efforts to destabilize them, to reas-
7 sure our friends and allies that the United States
8 supports them in their resistance to Iranian efforts
9 at hegemony, and to make clear to the Government
10 of Iran that the United States will protect America’s
11 vital national security interests in the Middle East.

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