

Rep. Gary Ackerman (D-NY)

Mr. Speaker, this bill has teeth, real teeth, great big, nasty sharp teeth that are finally going to force businesses and banks around the world to choose between the American economy and financial system, or business as usual with Iran's theocratic dictatorship.

This bill has real sanctions. Not maybe sanctions, not sort of sanctions, but real sanctions. This bill has real sanctions-investigation requirements, not maybe we will look at it. And not, we will try to get to it when we can, but clear and legal requirements to investigate potential violations.

In short, this is a bill that forces the question, will the world watch passively as Iran crosses the nuclear arms threshold, or will we join together to compel Iran to pull back from the nuclear brink?

We cannot guarantee the success of these measures. Ultimately, the choices lie with the regime in Tehran. But it should be clear that we are doing all that we can to impose on Iran the highest possible costs for its defiance, that we are demonstrating by our actions and by our efforts the depths of our commitment to peacefully ending Iran's illegal nuclear activities.

We are trying diplomacy. We are trying unilateral sanctions. We are trying multilateral sanctions. We are trying our utmost to avoid making conflict inevitable. But there should be no question about the absolute determination of the United States to prevent Iran from acquiring the capability to produce nuclear weapons. Iran's illicit nuclear activities and programs must stop. Above all other considerations, above all other costs, without any doubt or uncertainty, Iran's nuclear program must be stopped. It must be stopped, and we begin that today.

Rep. Rob Andrews (D-NJ)

I would like to thank my friend from California for his leadership and my friend from Florida for hers. This is what bipartisan leadership looks like.

Mr. Speaker, you know, the risk that we are working against today is not simply a missile striking innocent people halfway around the world. It would be a nuclear IED striking people around the corner.

Make no mistake about it. One of the risks that we confront is that a nuclear-weapon Iran that can make highly enriched uranium might well share that highly enriched uranium with a terrorist group, and the next SUV that is parked in Times Square might have a nuclear IED in it. Iran could very well be the source of such an attack. We must stop that, and this legislation today goes in that direction.

To those who say that the Iranians don't fear sanctions, then why did they try to strike this deal with Brazil and Turkey on the eve of the U.N. sanctions?

To people who say that energy sanctions won't work, then why have the Iranians tried to embark on a crash course to replace gasoline with natural gas?

This is the right move at the right time. I thank my chairman for authoring it, and I urge a ``yes" vote.

Rep. Joe Baca (D-CA)

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to address the House for one minute.

I rise to support the passage of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability and Divestment Act.

Since 1995, many U.S. regulations have been enacted to pressure Iran to restrict its nuclear fantasies. Previous to this Act none of those regulations had sufficient bite nor adherence.

The Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran , if allowed on its present course, could be in the possession of a nuclear weapon in less than a year. Severe restrictions must be imposed on foreign financial institutions who enable this regime to pursue its nuclear aspirations.

Nuclear terrorism is one of the greatest threats to American security. Keeping the bomb from Iran is absolutely critical to international peace and stability.

Iran has repeatedly snubbed their nose at International Atomic Energy inspectors. The government's serial deception in declaring their nuclear intentions has gone unchecked for too long. We cannot allow Iranian leaders to gain more time.

In addition to strengthening and expanding the trade embargo this comprehensive, results-oriented legislation provides for strict economic consequences to those who assist in Iran's human rights violations against its own people. It penalizes those who suppress freedom of religion and speech in Iran and the entities that aid them.

This legislation would be in effect until the day our President certifies to Congress that Iran is no longer a designated state-sponsor of terrorism, has ceased gross violations of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, and given up its unrelenting pursuit of ballistic missile, biological and chemical weapon capability.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in unwavering support of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010.

Rep. Shelley Berkley (D-NV)

I wish I had time to praise the chairman. He has done just a remarkable job on this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of this legislation. Iran's nuclear program represents as much of a threat to the United States, to Europe, and to the Arab world as it does to Israel. It is absolutely essential that we stop this terrorist-supporting and -financing, murderous, anti-Semitic, Holocaust-denying regime from reaching its ultimate goal. It seeks to destroy Israel and to dominate the entire Middle East--and to do that by acquiring nuclear weapons.

What this bill does today is it says: Not on our watch. We will not be intimidated. We will not be fooled. We will not allow Iran to acquire nuclear weapons.

If Iran acquires nuclear weapons, it will unleash a dangerous and unprecedented arms race throughout the Middle East the likes of which the world has never seen. Introducing nuclear weapons in the Middle East can only add to the destabilization of an already unstable part of the world. What a frightening thought.

I urge support for this bill.

Rep. Howard Berman (D-NY)

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank all of my colleagues who played a pivotal role.

Particularly, I would like to thank my conference co-chair, Senator Chris Dodd, and his staff Colin McGinnis and Neal Orringer; my ranking member, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen; both Mr. Hoyer and Mr. Cantor; all of the conferees; the staff director for the minority, Yleem Poblete--she drives a hard bargain--and the wonderful staff on our side, led by Rick Kessler, and particularly the efforts of Shanna Winters, Alan Makovsky, Daniel Silverberg, David Fite, Janice Kaguyutan, Ed Rice, and Robert Marcus.

With that, I urge all of my colleagues to support the legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I provide the following Joint Statement by myself and my co-chair Senator Dodd:

The Chairs recognize the importance of the new authority provided to the President to waive sanctions on certain persons from countries closely cooperating with U.S. and international efforts to constrain Iran's ability to develop a nuclear weapon. The Chairs encourage the Administration to use this new authority judiciously for those most deserving of allies and other truly cooperating nations. We trust this will be an important multilateral incentive in inducing compliance with the recently passed Security Council Resolution and with other regional and unilateral measures. The closely cooperating waiver draws upon the existing authority in Section 4(c) but extends the period of time available for the waiver to 12 months. The chairs do not view this authority to be a

wholly preemptive waiver. In fact, we expect a meaningful investigation, as warranted, into the conduct of the alleged violator to be conducted prior to exercising the waiver.

While the joint explanatory statement accompanying the Act indicates that a determination on sanctionability must also be made prior to exercising the 4(c)(1)(B) waiver, there are differing and legitimate views on whether such a determination is required. While divergent from the views in the joint explanatory statement, we accept that this may be a fair reading of the obligations under Section 4(c)(1)(B). In the end, we encourage the Administration to use all of the tools at its disposal in this Act and under existing authorities to achieve the overriding goal of constraining Iran's nuclear weapons ambitions. But we will clearly need to monitor the implementation of this waiver.

Rep. Howard Berman (D-CA)

The conference agreement for H.R. 2194 is by far the most comprehensive Iran sanctions legislation Congress has ever passed. This legislation greatly strengthens our Nation's overall sanctions regime regarding Iran, enhances the prospect that we will be able to dissuade Tehran from pursuing its nuclear ambitions in blatant defiance of the international community as reaffirmed once again this month in U.N. Security Council Resolution 1929.

Like the House bill passed in December, the conference agreement imposes sanctions on foreign entities that sell refined petroleum to Iran or assist Iran with its domestic refining capacity. It also plugs a critical gap in our sanctions regime by imposing sanctions on foreign entities that sell Iran goods or services that help it develop its energy sector.

Some believe that Iran has prepared itself for tougher energy sanctions by reducing its dependence on the import of refined petroleum. To ensure that our sanctions are as effective as possible, we added a potent new financial measure in conference that, if applied effectively by the administration, has the potential to be a game-changer. That provision sanctions foreign banks that deal with Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps or other blacklisted Iranian institutions, including Iranian banks involved with WMD or terrorism. Foreign banks involved in facilitating such activities would be shut out of the U.S. financial system, and U.S. banks would not be allowed to deal with them.

The conference report also requires the executive branch to pursue all credible evidence of sanctionable activity. We have been profoundly unhappy over the years that successive administrations failed to implement the 1996 Iran Sanctions Act. Our bill will also put an end to the absurd practice of the U.S. Government awarding contracts to companies engaged in sanctionable activity. In addition, the legislation imposes penalties on Iran's human rights abusers and sanctions foreign entities that provide Iran with the means to stifle freedom of expression. This portion of the bill will absolutely not terminate until Iran unconditionally releases all political prisoners, ends unlawful detention, torture, and abuse of citizens engaged in peaceful activity, and punishes the abusers.

Finally, the conference agreement will help empower Iran's democratic opposition by exempting from our embargo the transfer of technologies that can help them overcome the regime's apparatus of oppression.

I don't know if sanctions will work in bringing Iran's leadership to its senses. But I do know this: doing nothing certainly won't work. In light of Iran's rapid progress toward achieving a nuclear weapons capability, Tehran's repeated rejection of President Obama's diplomatic overtures, the measures in this conference agreement, if implemented effectively by the administration, are our best and, I believe, only hope for a positive and peaceful resolution of the nuclear issue.

Rep. Howard Berman (D-CA)

My friend from California raises, as others have, the issue of waivers. I just want to remind the body this legislation has increased the standard for waivers, tightened the situations when waivers can be given. And, remember, we're talking about a process I hope will be rarely used, and I think we have to push that notion. We're not talking about Ahmadinejad giving the waivers, the Supreme Leader giving the waivers, the violating company giving the waivers. We're talking about a President of the United States, hopefully quite rarely, utilizing the enhanced standard waiver authority, a President who has spent more time diplomatically and in every other way trying to estop Iran from achieving this goal than any other President in the history of this country has ever done.

I'll stand with this legislation, with this authority, with this President as the toughest, most comprehensive sanctions ever on the Iran nuclear weapons program.

Rep. Dan Burton (R-IN)

Mr. Speaker, if I were talking to the President right now, I would remind him that Lord Chamberlain flew to Munich in the late thirties and signed an agreement with Herr Hitler that led to 60 million people being killed in World War II. Sixty million. We were not in the nuclear age at that time, but we still lost 60 million people in this world. We are now in the nuclear age, and that's why this legislation is so important.

There are waivers in this bill, and that really troubles me. I didn't want there to be any waivers in this conference report, but they are there. The President can waive these sanctions. And I would just like to say, if I were talking to the President, Look at history, Mr. President. Look at what happened because of a weak-kneed approach back in the late thirties that led to 60 million people dying in World War II, and don't let that happen now. We need to let Ahmadinejad and the leaders in Iran know that we mean business. And that means don't waive any of the sanctions we are passing here today. You have the authority, but don't do it. They are building a nuclear weapon. Everybody in the world knows it. And if a nuclear weapon is set off, millions will die, and it could lead to a conflagration that would be worldwide in scope.

So I would just like to say there are problems with this bill. I would like to thank the chairman and the ranking member for the hard work they put into it. I wish those waivers weren't there, but they are. And so we are talking now, if I were talking to the President, that's what I would say to him. And I would also like to say, Don't let the Russians get away with continuing to give nuclear technology and other technology to the Iranians.

Rep. Eric Cantor (R-VA)

I thank the gentleman from Florida, and I commend her leadership as well as the gentleman from California in accomplishing this momentous feat of bringing this conference report to the floor, Mr. Speaker. I rise in favor of this conference report.

Mr. Speaker, Winston Churchill famously said "the price of greatness is responsibility." With each passing day, the ruling regime in Iran defiantly moves one step closer to acquiring nuclear weapons, a prospect that everyone knows would have fatal and irreparable consequences across the globe.

As the free world's unparalleled moral, economic, and military power, we have a responsibility to provide strong leadership to head off the Iranian threat. It is time to see the Iranian regime not for what we wish it was, but for how it really is.

Seventeen months of engagement has yielded us just one U.N. resolution, defanged by countries such as Russia and China. But it has yielded Tehran 18 critical months to ramp up uranium enrichment.

Today this House will vote on the most sweeping and biting set of sanctions that Iran has yet to face. By penalizing international companies and banks that enrich the Iranian regime and thus enable its nuclear program, this legislation represents our strongest hope yet to bring peaceful resolution to this crisis.

Mr. Speaker, Congress and the administration must resolve to do all we can to cut off Iran's economic lifeline.

Once this legislation moves past Congress, the ball is in the White House's court. The ability to hold international companies accountable rests with the President. I urge him to sign the bill and immediately implement these tough sanctions.

I urge my colleagues to vote "yes" on this conference report.

The two alternatives to strong sanctions are both horrible and horrifying--either employing the military option or, even worse, accepting the inevitability of Iran as a nuclear power.

The U.S. Congress needs to do everything it can to ensure we avoid both of these miserable results. We have taken some steps in the past, but we can do far more today by voting to pass the enhanced sanctions in H.R. 2194.

Rep. Jim Costa (D-CA)

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman and the ranking member, for your good work on this legislation.

I, too, stand in strong support of the conference report, H.R. 2194, the Iran Sanctions, Accountability and Divestment Act of 2010.

As a conference committee member, I know this piece of legislation represents a monumental step forward in our fight against Iran's nuclear arms quest. These sanctions are a dramatic improvement. These tough new petroleum and financial sanctions will put further restrictions on the ability of the Iranian regime to continue their nuclear aspirations and their oppression of the Iranian people that has been well documented before and since the elections 1 year ago. These sanctions will send a strong signal that our Nation will not stand for the development of this regime's nuclear arms program, especially with such violent threats against our ally, Israel, and others in the region.

This legislation is an important part of the solution, as we keep all our options on the table, to our longstanding concern about the prospect of a nuclear Iran. I encourage my colleagues to support this important piece of legislation.

Rep. Joseph Crowley (D-NY)

Mr. Speaker, I was proud to be a member of the House-Senate conference committee that negotiated the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act, and I will strongly support the passage of this agreement.

This tough set of sanctions makes it clear to the Government of Iran that the United States will not stand idly by while Iran destabilizes the Middle East, threatens its neighbors, and undermines international nonproliferation efforts.

Under this measure, any company or country doing business with Iran will undergo serious scrutiny and could be subject to tough penalties. This sanctions measure will also ensure that we expose those that have committed serious human rights abuses against Iranians who are struggling for democracy and freedom.

Right now, Iran is being led by Ahmadinejad. His authority is not only illegitimate because of how Iran's last elections were conducted, but because of his blatant disregard for the international community. He has vowed to press ahead with the uranium enrichment and boasted that the new sanctions are nothing but, and I quote, "worthless paper." He stands in clear and stark defiance of the U.N. Security Council, the

International Atomic Energy Agency, and indeed the entire world's nuclear nonproliferation efforts.

For the sake of peace and stability, we must act now. We are going to show Ahmadinejad that the U.N. sanctions, and these we are about to pass today, are not "worthless paper." He is about to be proven very, very wrong. The days of the United States turning a blind eye to companies propping up Iran's regime are now officially over.

As long as Ahmadinejad and his cronies remain bent on obtaining nuclear weapons and crushing the Iranian people, this Congress and this Administration are going to take every possible step to thwart his efforts. I am proud to have served on the Conference Committee for this legislation and strongly support its final passage.

Rep. Ted Deutch (D-FL)

I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Today, this body has the opportunity to profoundly advance the security of our nation and our allies. Today, this body can pass crippling new economic sanctions on Iran and at long last deliver the bill to the desk of the President.

The stakes could not be higher. Again and again, Ahmadinejad has called for the destruction of our ally Israel and he has spoken of a world without the United States. This behavior is intolerable and today Congress sends the clear message to Iran that their pursuit of nuclear weapons will not be allowed.

The past 30 days have marked the most serious steps forward in preventing a nuclear Iran. Beginning with the UN Security Council resolution, followed by the actions of the European Union, culminating today with the efforts of this Congress to craft the most comprehensive, results-oriented legislation, Iran will finally feel the burden of crippling economic sanctions.

This legislation is the most important step Congress can take today to thwart the development of an Iranian nuclear power. Now we look to the Administration to hold those violators accountable and ensure the stringent implementation of these crippling sanctions. Now is the time to act to stop Iran's nuclear weapons program. I urge this body to act decisively today by passing this important piece of legislation."

Rep. Elliot Engel (D-NY)

I thank my friend, Chairman Berman, for letting me speak; and I strongly support the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability and Divestment Act. I am a proud cosponsor of the bill. This is a bipartisan bill, as you can hear, and should be passed.

Last fall, the world learned of the secret Iranian nuclear enrichment facility near the city of Qom. If there was ever any doubt that Iran was trying to build nuclear weapons, this

revelation dispelled any shred of that doubt. We need strong sanctions on Iran to halt their development of nuclear weapons. Iran must not be allowed to have a nuclear bomb.

I commend President Obama and Secretary Clinton for achieving a strong fourth round of U.N. sanctions against Iran and for bringing Russia and China on board.

As chairman of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee, I would like to call attention to the fact that Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez at one time agreed to provide 20,000 barrels per day of refined gasoline to Iran and to invest in the Iranian natural gas sector. Iran is an importer of refined gas, and this bill will hit them where it hurts in their energy and financial sectors.

I would like to also express my support for section 110 of the bill which requires a report on other energy imports into Iran. The U.S. and Brazil are the world's largest ethanol producers, and I am glad to hear from Brazil's private ethanol producers that they have no plans to supply ethanol to Iran for blending into gasoline as they prefer to build a global export market, anchored by the large U.S. and European markets. That's why this bill is so important. We must continue to monitor this area as ethanol imports could undermine energy sanctions on Iran.

The U.S., our allies, and the U.N. have recognized that a nuclear-armed Iran would be a danger not only to our ally, Israel, but also to the entire Middle East and the nuclear nonproliferation regime and is unacceptable. When Ahmadinejad says he wants to wipe Israel off the face of the Earth, he means it. When he calls the U.S. the great Satan, he means it. We need this bill to hit them where it hurts, and I urge my colleagues to vote for this bill today.

Rep. Jeff Fortenberry (R-NE)

Mr. Speaker, the time to stop Iran's nuclear drive is running very short. Unless the community of responsible nations takes decisive actions, the world will soon awake to the headline, Iran has a nuclear bomb. A nuclear-armed Iran will pose a very real threat to civilization itself, increasing the dangers of a destabilizing nuclear arms race in the world's most volatile region.

Iran clearly doubts the collective resolve of world powers. It is not difficult to see why. While some European leaders vacillate, European corporations continue to do business with Iran. And Russia and China as well continue to exploit international hesitancy for their own geopolitical and financial gain.

The community of responsible nations must prevail upon Iran to abandon its dangerous nuclear ambitions and forge a new path to security and stability for itself. We all look forward to the day when Iran is governed by leaders who fully respect the rights of their own people and faithfully observe the obligations of international law. Today's Iran sanctions legislation represents an intermediate yet important step in that sustained effort.

We need to do even more.

Rep. Trent Franks (R-AZ)

I rise in strong support as a co-sponsor of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, we live in a moment in history when the terrorist State of Iran is on the brink of developing nuclear weapons. If that occurs, all other issues will be wiped from the table and whatever challenges we have in dealing with Iran today will pale in comparison to dealing with an Iran that has nuclear weapons.

Over the last 16 months, the Obama administration has dithered and pretended to pursue effective U.N. and U.S. sanctions against Iran, yet Mr. Obama has not enforced even one of the sanctions that already exist in the law against even one company doing business with Iran. The question now is: Will the President enforce the new sanctions we are about to pass or will he waive them like he has all of the others?

Mr. Speaker, the last window we will have ever to stop Iran from gaining nuclear weapons is rapidly closing. I pray the Obama administration will wake up in time to prevent Iran from becoming a nuclear-armed nation and from bringing nuclear terrorism to this and future generations.

Rep. Scott Garrett (R-NJ)

For the past year, I have met with Iranian dissidents who continue to protest the presidential elections that occurred a little more than a year ago. Many of them have urged me to ensure that Congress enacts strong sanctions. We are all too well aware of the existential threat that a nuclear-powered Iran would be.

Today we are about to pass a conference report that was supposed to protect Americans and our allies. Yet if that was our goal, I believe we only have partial success.

As a conferee representing the Financial Services Committee, I do admit that the sanctions themselves have been improved. I was pleased to see that the legislation includes financial sanctions that would cut off the connections between the U.S. financial sector and foreign financial institutions that do business with Iran.

Yes, the conference report does add additional types of sanctions, and it extends the range of current sanctions. But I remind my colleagues that these punishments are hardly crippling, they're hardly tough, they're hardly sweeping or even expanded if they are never enforced.

Now, my colleagues on the other side of the aisle claim that this time they'll work. But let me remind them of a little bit of history. In 1996, Congress passed the original Iran sanctions legislation; but in the last 14 years, no President has imposed sanctions, even though he has had the authority from Congress to do so. In fact, only one investigation

was ever initiated. I say that this conference report is really only a half measure, a half bill, because 50 percent of it depends on who? On President Obama's willingness to implement the sanctions and to do it quickly.

This legislation does in fact have seven separate waivers which the President may invoke. In addition, there are three different waiver thresholds. The end result is that the President has the option of enforcing most of the punitive measures outlined in the report.

Now, of course multiple Democrats have attempted to reassure me. They say that they will now pressure the President to implement the sanctions outlined in this legislation. But we've been hearing that for 16 months. We've been told that the President's attempts to engage the U.N. about Iran would produce diplomatic gains. Yet the recently passed U.N. security resolution was hardly that significant of a success. Furthermore, President Obama himself recognized 2 weeks ago that, A, Iran concealed a nuclear enrichment facility; B, Iran further violated its own obligations; C, Iran is enriching uranium up to 20 percent.

Mr. Speaker, for the past year, I have read about and met with Iranian dissidents who continue to protest the presidential elections that occurred a little more than a year ago. Many of them have urged me to work to ensure that Congress enacts strong sanctions. They say that they long to be free from the current regime, especially since they too are afraid of what would happen if Iran obtained a nuclear weapon.

Today, we are about to pass a conference report that was supposed to protect Americans, our allies, and the Iranians who suffer under tyrannical leaders. Yet if this was our goal, I believe we can proclaim only partial success.

As a conferee representing the Financial Services Committee, I do admit that the sanctions themselves have been improved. I was pleased to see that this legislation includes financial sanctions that would cut off the connection between the U.S. financial sector and foreign financial institutions that do business with Iran's Islamic Guard Corps or Iranian banks under sanctions.

In addition, it establishes a legal framework for U.S. states and local governments to divest from foreign businesses that have economic ties to the Iranian energy sector. I am also thankful for the provision that sanctions those who commit egregious human rights violations against the Iranian people.

Yes, the conference report does add additional types of sanctions, and extends the range of current sanctions. But I remind my colleagues that these punishments are hardly "crippling" or "tough" or "sweeping" or even "expanded" if they are never enforced.

My colleagues on the opposite side of the aisle claim that this time sanctions will work. but I would like to remind them of a few historical facts:

1. In 1996, Congress passed the original Iran Sanctions legislation.

2. Yet for the past 14 years, no U.S. President has imposed sanctions--even though he has this authority and mandate from Congress.

3. In fact, only one investigation was ever initiated.

I say that this conference report is really a half measure. It's ``half a bill" because 50% of it depends entirely on President Obama's willingness to implement sanctions, and to do so quickly.

This legislation has at least seven separate waivers which the President may invoke. In addition, there are three different waiver thresholds. The end result is that the President has the option of enforcing most of the punitive measures outlined in the conference report.

Of course, multiple Democrats have attempted to reassure me. They say that they will now pressure the President to implement the sanctions outlined in this legislation.

But I've been hearing the same claim for the past 16 months!

1. We have been told that the President's attempts to engage the U.N. about Iran would produce great diplomatic gains.

2. Yet the recently-passed U.N. security resolution was hardly a significant success.

3. Furthermore, President Obama himself recognized two weeks ago that:

a. ``Iran concealed a nuclear enrichment facility."

b. ``Iran further violated its own obligations under U.N. Security Council resolutions to suspend uranium enrichment."

c. Iran is ``enriching [uranium] up to 20 percent."

d. Iran ``has failed to comply fully with IAEA's requirements."

e. Iran is the only [Non-Proliferation Treaty] signatory in the world--the only one--that cannot convince the IAEA that its nuclear program is intended for peaceful purposes."

How can you justify the 18-month lapse you've already given to President Obama?

If the majority hasn't been pressuring President Obama for the last year and half, why haven't they? After all, the original Iran Sanctions legislation has been in effect since before President Obama took office.

If they have been pressuring the President--without results--why do they think that he will listen to them now? What articulation can they invoke that they failed to give before? Why would the President be more likely to listen to them now?

President Obama seems concerned only about pressuring Iran through diplomatic means; he has begged Congress to delay passage of sanctions--as if the threat of sanctions would be a distraction or roadblock to his negotiating success. And why would he seek broad latitude and carve-outs for nations like Russia if he were serious about imposing sanctions on Iran?

Given the pressure that the State Department put on the conferees, I do wonder if sanctions investigations will ever result in the actual application of sanctions.

And even if they did, the bill doesn't require prompt action. Some of the waivers allow the president to postpone sanctions for up to 12 months if a company falls into certain categories.

For example, this means that the president could choose not to enforce sanctions against BP, since BP is based in a "cooperating country"--one which voted for the U.N. Iran Sanctions resolution. In other cases, the president is given flexibility in issuing a waiver if he determines that a company has achieved a 20-30% reduction in sanctionable activities.

In other words, the president could claim that he is complying the day after he signs the conference report. But a year or even a year and a half could go by with no activity or tangible outcome. Even so, the president would technically be in compliance with this legislation.

Just think about this: we could have a new president (in 2012) before this bill would require the president to actually enforce a single sanction. He could simply continue doing what he is doing now: cite one of the seven waivers.

So how did we come to this point? Why are we now considering a weaker bill than the one that passed the House last December? Why are we faced with the potential for such an ineffective outcome?

I'd like to be able to thank the Democrats for considering this in a bi-partisan and constructive manner. But the process was neither bi-partisan nor constructive.

In fact, one is hard pressed to describe to this conference as a "process" at all. I certainly don't think that one meeting--which involved opening statements only--could ever be defined as a "process."

During that first (and only) meeting, Members pledged to work together to pass tough sanctions. But Chairmen Dodd and Berman never called another meeting. I heard nothing more. Then, my staff received an e-mail at 2:42 p.m. yesterday. The e-mail simply read:

`` Attached please find a final text of the conference report Signature sheet will be available from 3-4 o'clock today."

In the end, we wind up right where we started--with lots of promises from the majority that they will pressure the president to do the right thing.

The numbers tell the exasperating story quite effectively:

We were allowed zero chances to offer amendments.

We were allowed zero up or down votes on any section of the report.

We were given zero chances to revise the draft conference report.

We have zero ability to offer a Motion to Recommit.

We had one official meeting between the conferees.

We had one hour to read the 41-page final conference report before the deadline for signing it had elapsed.

These actions clearly show that the majority never intended to be held accountable for watering down the original legislation. They never wanted to give us an opportunity to oppose the demands of the White House. They never desired transparency and openness so that the American public could examine the true positions of their elected leaders.

What are the Democrats afraid of? If the answer is a veto threat, I think we should remember our oath which includes the words: ``I will support and defend the Constitution of the United States against all enemies, foreign or domestic." Particularly in this case, our principles should have come before our politics.

We all know that the president of Iran has called Zionists, ``the true manifestation of Satan." We also know that he has said that since the U.S. recognizes Israel, it will ``burn in the fire of the Islamic nation's fury."

If we truly agree that sanctions are the best non-violent deterrent and if we agree that Iran is as little as a year away from obtaining nuclear weapon capabilities, why does this legislation grant the president so many waivers and so much time to act? Time, unfortunately, is most decidedly not on our side.

As the Joint Explanatory Statement reads, I hope that we will all now ``urge the President to vigorously impose the sanctions provided for in this act."

Rep. Jane Harman (D-CA)

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the strongest-ever sanctions package.

This sanctions package is not targeted at the Iranian people. Its passage signals that our government is united in Bipartisan opposition to the Iranian government's flagrant disregard of the United Nations and the world community as it recklessly pursues a nuclear weapons program.

Iran and its proxies Hamas and Hezbollah encircle Israel and threaten U.S. troops--as well as Sunni populations--in the Middle East.

Increased economic sanctions pit our strength against Iran's weakness. And this package, which builds on recent U.N. and E.U. actions, bans companies from selling refined petroleum, blocks correspondent banking relationships with Iranian banks, and targets financial activities by the Revolutionary Guard or Iranian human rights abusers.

It also authorizes divestment by state and local governments from companies involved in Iran's energy sector.

Kudos to Chairman Berman, who negotiated a very narrow Presidential waiver, and to the Treasury Department's indomitable Stuart Levey, whose focus and talent over many years have shown lawmakers, literally, how to "follow the money" and have brought us to this point.

Rep. Rush Holt (D-NJ)

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act. The United States does not deny Iran's lawful right to peacefully explore technologies for nuclear power, but the Iranian regime has provided just cause for skepticism about the peaceful nature of its nuclear ambitions. There is an international consensus that Iran should not attain nuclear weapons capability--a circumstance that unquestionably would accelerate a nuclear arms race in the Middle East, threatening both regional stability and the security of the United States.

For over a year and a half, the United States and the international community have worked diligently to achieve a diplomatic resolution to the Iranian regime's reckless pursuit of nuclear weapons. Yet the Iranian leadership remains defiant and shows no signs of substantive cooperation. Their actions have left us little choice but to pursue additional measures to persuade the regime that it must live up to its obligations to the international community by suspending its uranium enrichment program and verifiably ending any pursuit of nuclear weapons.

Recently, the United Nations imposed new sanctions on the Government of Iran . The United States joined the European Union and others in taking immediate steps to implement these measures in a way that is consistent with existing law. Now Congress will provide the Administration with new tools that will allow the United States to augment these multilateral efforts.

This legislation will broaden the list of sanctionable activities and provide new mechanisms for the U.S. to sanction responsible entities. Any banks, companies, or other institutions that support Iran's refined petroleum sector or engage in transactions with Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) or other blacklisted Iranian institutions will face stiff penalties and be prevented from doing business in the United States. State and local governments will have clear authorization to divest from entities that engage in business with Iran, and private asset managers will be able to undertake similar divestment without fear of breaching their fiduciary responsibilities. The Director of National Intelligence will be required to prepare a list of governments that allow re-export, trans-shipment, transfer, re-transfer, or diversion to Iran of goods or services that could be used for terrorism or the production of weapons of mass destruction. The U.S. will work with these governments to strengthen their export control systems, and the President will be required to impose new restrictions on those that fail to improve their actions.

While I believe it is necessary for the U.S. to enact these tough new measures as quickly as possible, it is important to remember that by themselves, they will not be effective. Sanctions are blunt instruments. They rarely change the behavior of intransigent regimes, but they often harm innocent citizens. I am pleased that this legislation was crafted carefully to target the IRGC and the leadership of Iran, rather than the Iranian people.

The United States continues to stand with those in Iran who oppose human rights abuses and fight for a government that is truly representative of the peoples' will. That is why this legislation explicitly exempts software and services for personal communication and internet access from the general prohibition against exports to Iran. In addition, Iranians who perpetrated or were complicit in human rights abuses against other Iranians on or after June 12, 2009 will be subject to strict new visa, property, and financial sanctions.

It is equally important to note that this legislation makes clear that the United States stands ready to lift the new sanctions and engage Iran in a productive dialogue if the regime stops threatening its neighbors and verifiably abandons its pursuit of weapons of mass destruction. Until that day comes, the United States will continue to take action to convince the Iranian leadership that this is the only viable choice. Achieving that goal is the central purpose of this legislation.

Majority Leader Steny Hoyer (D-MD)

I want to thank the chairman for yielding.

I want to thank Ms. Ros-Lehtinen, my good friend, for the leadership she continues to show on a repeated basis on this issue and so many other issues. I want to thank Mr. Berman. I very much wanted to get this to the floor to move this week. He has done that. I want to thank Senator Dodd as well for his work. And I want to thank all the members of the subcommittee. I also want to thank Rob Andrews of New Jersey, who was so vital to the central idea of how we could put appropriate pressure on this.

I want to say to my Republican friends who have been talking about the Obama administration, frankly, the Bush administration and the Obama administration have both been working towards trying to resolve this issue with Iran. Frankly, the Obama administration has, for the first time, gotten a strong resolution through the Security Council. We had the opportunity of just meeting with the President of Russia, Ranking Member Ros-Lehtinen, the Speaker and I, and others, and Mr. Berman. He said it was a tough thing to do, but he worked very closely with President Obama and they were able to get it done. So this is not a time for pointing fingers. We're united on this. This is not a difference, but this is a unity, a unity of purpose and commitment.

Every one of us understands the deep danger of a nuclear Iran. That danger includes a new nuclear arms race as Iran's regional rivals scramble to build competing arsenals, plunging the world into a new era of proliferation. No one wants that. The danger includes as well a nuclear umbrella for terrorist groups like Hamas and Hezbollah to stage more brazen and deadly attacks, especially on our ally Israel, but not exclusively. There are 250,000 Americans in harm's way from Iran as we speak.

And the danger includes, on a more basic level, a new era of fear for all of those in range of Iran's missiles. All of those consequences will be felt even if Iran's missiles remain on the launch pad or if its nuclear weapons remain buried. Could we imagine those weapons being used? We would be foolish not to, as long as those weapons are in the hands of a regime whose President denies the Holocaust, stokes hatred, and openly threatens Iran's neighbors.

Even so, our administration has pursued a dual-track strategy with respect to Iran.

On the one side is the administration's policy of engagement. I support that policy. John Kennedy said that we should never fear to negotiate, but we ought never to negotiate out of fear. I think he was correct. Jim Baker, in the days before we went into Kuwait, was talking to Saddam Hussein to see if the matter could be resolved.

On the one side, as I said, is that policy of engagement. This engagement reversed years of diplomatic silence during which Iran's nuclear program grew. It showed the world our patience; it tested Iran's willingness to negotiate in good faith, and it built international support for sanctions.

Sadly, the time limit for engagement has come and gone. It is time to pursue the second prong of the dual-track strategy--pressure. The International Atomic Energy Agency tells us that Iran has now enough low-enriched uranium for two bombs; Iran has attempted to hide nuclear facilities, and has refused to cooperate with the demands of the IAEA and the U.N. Security Council to suspend enrichment.

Let's be clear: Iran is blatantly defying the will of the international community. This is unacceptable. That is not a partisan position. It is almost a unanimous position of the administration and of this Congress. That is why this is the right time to bring strong economic pressure to bear on the Iranian regime.

I rise in strong support of this resolution. I urge its support.

I, again, thank Mr. Berman and Ms. Ros-Lehtinen for their leadership in bringing this critical resolution to the floor.

I join my colleagues as well in saying that enforcement of the resolutions that Iran has adopted, that our European colleagues have adopted, and this resolution will be critical, and the understanding that it is to be enforced needs to be understood by Iran.

Rep. Sheila Jackson-Lee (D-TX)

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2194, to avoid the nuclear attack that Iran represents to the world and to Israel. I rise to give strong support to H.R. 2194, and I ask my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation provides another tool for the President to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons by allowing the administration to sanction foreign firms who attempt to supply refined gasoline to Iran or provide them with the materials to enhance their oil refineries. These sanctions would further restrict the government of Iran's ability to procure refined petroleum. Currently, the availability of petroleum products is stagnant in Iran. Private firms have decided that the government of Iran's refusal to cooperate with the multilateral community on nuclear proliferation generates a significant risk to doing business with Iran.

I would like to thank Chairman Berman for incorporating my concerns about the human rights situation in Iran into the findings of this legislation. It is important that we acknowledge that, throughout 2009, the government of Iran has persistently violated the rights of its citizens. The government of Iran's most overt display of disregard for human rights happened in the presidential elections on June 12, 2009. As I said on June 19, 2009, "we must condemn Iran for the absence of fair and free Presidential elections and urge Iran to provide its people with the opportunity to engage in a Democratic election process." The repression and murder, arbitrary arrests, and show trials of peaceful dissidents in the wake of the elections were a sad reminder of the government of Iran's long history of human rights violations. The latest violations were the most recent iteration of the government of Iran's wanton suppression of the freedom of expression.

It is important that we are clear that our concerns are with the government of Iran and not its people. The State Department's Human Rights Report on Iran provides a bleak picture of life in Iran. The government of Iran, through its denial of the democratic process and repression of dissent, has prevented the people from determining their own future. Moreover, it is the government of Iran that persecutes its ethnic minorities and denies the free expression of religion. As we proceed with consideration of this legislation, we should all remember that the sole target of these sanctions is the Iranian government.

Mr. Speaker, the government of Iran has repeatedly shown its disdain for the international community by disregarding international nonproliferation agreements. Iran's flagrant violation of nonproliferation agreements was evidenced most recently in the discovery of the secret enrichment facility at Qom. The government of Iran's continued threats against Israel, opposition to the Middle East peace process, and support of international terrorist organizations further demonstrates the necessity for action. Iran with nuclear weapons and a mindset to destroy Israel cannot be tolerated by the world community.

We must stop Iran's determination to become a nuclear power. Iran's recent actions towards the international community reflect a very small measure of progress. Iran's decision to allow International Atomic Energy Agency, IAEA, inspectors to visit this facility was a positive sign, but not a sufficient indication of their willingness to comply with international agreements. The recent announcement that Iran will accept a nuclear fuel deal is also indicative of their willingness to engage in dialogue, though it remains to be seen what amendments they will seek to the deal. While these actions indicate a small degree of improvement in Iran's position, the legislation before us today demonstrates that only continued dialogue and positive actions will soften the international community's stance towards Iran.

I would also like to emphasize that the legislation before us provides only one tool for achieving Iran's compliance with international nonproliferation agreements. I continue to support the administration's policy of engagement with Iran and use of diplomatic talks. I believe that diplomacy and multilateralism are the most valuable tools we have to create change in Iran. After those tools fail, I believe that the sanctions are an appropriate recourse.

Rep. Lynn Jenkins (R-KS)

Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt Iran is working right now to acquire nuclear weapons. We must stop them.

The underlying bill if passed and strongly enforced by our President would impose smart crippling sanctions on Iran's nuclear program and would make it drastically more difficult for Iran to continue its illegal nuclear dealings.

Make no mistake Iran's development of nuclear weapons threatens not only our friend Israel and the Middle East it threatens the entire world.

I urge my colleagues to support the underlying bill to impose sanctions and to stand for the safety and security of freedom loving nations around the world.

Rep. Mark Kirk (R-IL)

I also want to thank my colleague, Rob Andrews, because we wrote the first version of this legislation in 2005. It has been 5 years of work. I want to commend the chairman for bringing it to the floor. I have a prepared statement I will insert in the Record with one simple statement: Mr. President, sign this bill and then seal off Iran's gas. That is the best way to empower diplomacy. The gasoline sanction is the only sanction which has a chance of working. This legislation has overwhelming bipartisan consensus, already supported by 512 Members of Congress to back this. And I want to really thank my original partner on this, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. Andrews).

Mr. Speaker, as the Iranians accelerate their nuclear program, what are our options?

We know Iran's greatest weakness: its dependence on foreign gasoline. Despite being a leading OPEC oil exporter, Iran has grossly mishandled its economy since 1979 and is now forced to import the bulk of its domestic supply.

Realizing this crucial vulnerability, I wrote the first gasoline sanctions resolution with my colleague Congressman ROB ANDREWS in 2005. Over time, my colleagues and I built a bipartisan, bicameral congressional coalition with Congressman SHERMAN, Senator KYL and Senator LIEBERMAN behind a policy of ending Iranian gasoline sales.

After 5 years, Congress finally considers our gasoline restriction legislation today. It comes not a moment too soon. According to experts, Iran has managed to reduce its dependence on foreign gasoline over the last 4 years. As the Washington Post reports today, Iran spent more than \$10 billion since 2008 to boost its strategic reserves.

In going down the failed path of diplomacy without crippling sanction, we are losing critical leverage to halt Iranian progress toward a nuclear bomb.

For the bill before us to be effective, it must be vigorously enforced. No administration has ever enforced the Iran Sanctions Act, passed more than a decade ago. According to the Congressional Research Service, at least 20 companies are currently violating the 1996 law.

I thank Chairman BERMAN and Ranking Member ROS-LEHTINEN for their leadership on this issue. Now it's time for all of us to join together in a clear bipartisan call: Mr. President, sign it and seal it. Sign this bill and seal off Iran's gasoline.

Rep. Ron Klein (D-FL)

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to strongly support the Iran sanctions conference report, including robust sanctions on refined petroleum in Iran .

I am proud that the final bill includes my amendment requiring companies that are applying for contracts with the United States Government to affirmatively certify that they do not conduct business with Iran .

This legislation gives companies a simple choice: Do business with the United States or do business with Iran . We cannot allow Iran to continue its pursuit of nuclear weapons-- not on our watch and certainly not on our dime.

As a conferee, I am proud that the final bill also takes into account any developments that have arisen in recent months. Iran is attempting to circumvent global sanctions, and this bill seeks to cut off their strategies, such as Iranian investments with companies like BP and joint ventures outside of Iran .

I would also like to thank Chairman Berman and Ranking Member Ros-Lehtinen for their leadership.

I urge my colleagues to support the conference agreement.

Rep. Barbara Lee (D-CA)

Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues today in acknowledging the real and serious threat posed by a nuclear Iran to the United States, our allies in the Middle East, and the global nuclear nonproliferation regime that is vital to securing a safer and more prosperous world.

I would also like to acknowledge the Obama Administration, which has rightly pursued and kept open a dual-track approach of concerted diplomatic engagement and pressure with Iran .

The President's resolve proved successful in securing a coordinated and forceful international response, and I am pleased to see that this Conference agreement provides the Administration improved flexibility to ensure we do not undermine the very international partnerships that are necessary to prevent Iran from pursuing a nuclear weapons capability.

As this package of unilateral U.S. sanctions moves forward for the President's signature, let us not lose sight of our ultimate goal--a long-term diplomatic solution to bring Iran into compliance with international nonproliferation standards and commitments.

Mr. Speaker, although I support this Conference agreement, I must reiterate my deeply held belief that sanctions should never be viewed as a checkmark on the path to war.

I remain deeply concerned by counterproductive rhetoric with regard to Iran that echoes the drumbeat to war we heard in Iraq.

The prospect of a military strike in Iran carries devastating and unacceptable consequences for United States foreign policy and security interests in the region that cannot be ignored.

Further, I believe our words and resources are better served in support of the Iranian people, their resilient civil society and determination to seek the protection of basic human rights and meaningful democratic reform despite the intransigence of the ruling regime.

We must closely scrutinize the implementation of these sanctions, which I believe could be better targeted, in order to avoid punishing the Iranian people at the expense of moderate voices and to the benefit of hardliner elements within Iran .

With that in mind, I urge my colleagues to invest as much energy in support of a coordinated and cooperative diplomatic process in Iran as they have in finalizing these punitive measures aimed at bringing them to the table.

It is this course of action that will be necessary to erase once and for all our fears of a nuclear-armed Iran and the destabilizing impact this might have in an already volatile region.

Lastly, Mr. Speaker, as a passionate advocate throughout my career for the cause of nuclear non-proliferation, I hope we can also take this opportunity to recognize and act upon our own commitments as a nuclear power to take meaningful steps toward nuclear disarmament and the realization of world free from the threat of nuclear weapons.

Rep. Sander Levin (D-MI)

I want to congratulate Mr. Berman and the ranking member that this indeed is a critical achievement not only because it sends a clear and unambiguous message that Iran must end its pursuit of nuclear weapons, but because it provides the President with powerful tools to achieve this crucial objective.

It will reinforce and enhance the administration's efforts regarding Iran. It provides the administration with a renewed mandate and substantial leverage to employ against the regime of Iran toward the goal of stopping its development of weapons of mass destruction and support of terrorism. What could be more important?

It is also not only fundamentally in the national interest but in the interests of the international community. A nuclearized Iran that supports terrorism is simply unacceptable. And it's encouraging that the U.S. is not acting alone. The international community has spoken. Thanks to the administration's leadership, supported by this Congress and the support of key allies, the U.N. Security Council adopted expansive and severe sanctions on Iran. And this legislation builds off of the Security Council sanctions.

Diplomacy and strong multilateral sanctions have been a critical part of this process. The more countries that participate in this mission, the more effective it will be. And this bill, thanks to the leadership here, has built on this essential premise.

I look forward to the passage of this legislation, and I thank the administration for its leadership on this issue, and you, Mr. Chairman, for your tremendous work on moving

Rep. Carolyn Maloney (D-NY)

Mr. Speaker, I rise to express my strong support for H.R. 2194, a powerful package of sanctions against Iran . These new measures increase pressure on Iran to do the right thing and put an end to its sponsorship of terrorism and its efforts to acquire nuclear weapons. I am pleased that the United States has worked with the United Nations to secure multilateral sanctions, but the United States should also be increasing pressure on Iran by implementing the sensible, targeted sanctions contained in this bill.

This conference report contains a package of sanctions that ups the ante on Iran's trading partners, making it clear that doing business with Iran has a price. It targets Iran's energy and banking sectors, and imposes sanctions on foreign companies that are supplying energy and know-how to Iran . It allows the government to restrict access to America for the purposes of banking, foreign exchange and property investment. It requires companies seeking procurement contracts to certify that they are not engaging in sanctionable conduct. The executive branch will have to report sanctionable activity and must either implement sanctions or waive them. Our sanctions will no longer be tough on paper and weak in implementation. Iran can secure an end to them at any time by ending its sponsorship of terrorism and by ending its quest to develop or acquire nuclear, biological, and chemical weapons and ballistic missiles and ballistic-missile launch technology.

Iran has shown, time and time again, that it is determined to acquire nuclear weapons. Earlier this week, Reuters reported that Iran has enriched 17 kilograms of uranium to 20 percent purity, and that this is a significant step toward the 90 percent enrichment required for weapons-grade uranium. In April, Iran unveiled a third generation of centrifuges and has indicated that the testing phase is nearly complete and that its scientists are working on a fourth generation. It is clear that Iran is racing toward its goal of becoming a nuclear nation.

Iran has also been one of the chief state sponsors of terrorism, sending funding, weapons and know-how to terrorist organizations like Hamas and Hezbollah. These organizations specifically target civilian populations and have no compunctions against lobbing missiles at homes, schools, hospitals and nursing homes. There are reports that Iran has backed militants in Somalia, Iraq, Afghanistan and elsewhere. Iran's leaders have also targeted their own people, viciously putting down the fledgling democratic movement last year and working to restrict communication among its own people. I am pleased that these sanctions specifically ban procurement contracts to any foreign company that exports to Iran technology used to restrict the free flow of information or to disrupt, monitor, or otherwise restrict freedom of speech. We must do everything we can to persuade Iran to change its reckless course.

A nuclear Iran will be dangerous for the entire world. Iran has been most outspoken in its threats against Israel, but Israel is not the only Middle Eastern nation with reason to fear a nuclear Iran . There is longstanding tension between Shi'ite Iran and its Sunni neighbors. Some argue--because Iran's President has threatened to wipe Israel off the map and Iran has provided weapons and resources to terrorist organizations that are actively trying to accomplish that aim--that America is acting solely to help Israel. And indeed, when Iran threatens to annihilate Israel, I think we should take it at its word, and should assume that it intends to use its nuclear weapons to turn its threat into a reality. But, these sanctions are also necessary because a nuclear Iran threatens all of its neighbors and it has been exporting terrorism to a wide range of nations around the globe.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting the conference report for H.R. 2194, and in voting to increase pressure on Iran to turn from this dangerous path. These sanctions are a reasonable and necessary augmentation of existing restrictions and an additional means to put pressure on a state that seems intent on exporting terror and death throughout the world.

Rep. Mike McMahon (D-NY)

I am proud that with this conference report, our country will be at the forefront of protecting Israel and the entire international community against the growing threat of nuclear terrorism and an arms race in the Middle East.

This sanctions package takes a firm stand against an active state sponsor of terror, Iran, by broadening the categories of the Islamic Republic's sanctionable activities well beyond the realm of refined petroleum.

Furthermore, without increased global cooperation on the sanctions effort and measures to isolate Ahmadinejad's thugs from raping, murdering and censoring their own people, these sanctions would not be complete.

For this reason, I applaud the inclusion of both the McMahon reporting requirement on global energy sector trade with Iran and my bill, H.R. 4647, the Iran Human Rights Sanctions Act, into this bill.

I know that Americans will rest much more comfortably knowing that the criminals of Ahmadinejad's regime now cannot set foot on U.S. soil. This bill is necessary to the security of our ally Israel, to our Nation, and to the world.

I therefore urge all of my colleagues to vote for it.

Rep. Jerry Moran (R-KS)

Mr. Speaker, today we have before us the toughest, most comprehensive Iran sanctions ever considered by Congress, and I pray that we're not too late.

Iran is the world's leading state sponsor of terrorism, funding and arming terrorist groups like Hezbollah and Hamas. It has already produced enough low enriched uranium to produce two nuclear weapons. And since February, Iran has been converting its low enriched uranium to a level of 20 percent, which represents 85 percent of the work necessary to produce weapons-grade fuel.

This legislation imposes critical energy and financial sanctions that, if implemented, will make Iran think twice--at least we hope and pray will they will think twice--about continuing their illegal nuclear program.

There is a key to all of this: These sanctions must be implemented. For too long, our efforts to stop Iran have been half-hearted. Our determination to stop Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons capability must exceed Iran's determination to get a bomb. President Obama must immediately enforce these sanctions. We cannot and must not allow Iran to have nuclear weapons capability.

Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-CA)

I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I thank him for his great leadership in bringing this very important legislation to the floor.

And I want to commend Leader Hoyer and Whip Cantor for the bipartisan spirit with which this bill was brought to the floor. The leadership of the committee, Mr. Berman, Ranking Member Ros-Lehtinen, thank you to both of you for your leadership in bringing us together around this very important issue.

I am proud to rise in strong support of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act, which will provide the President with more tools to address the looming nuclear threat from Iran.

All Members of Congress, regardless of party, agree: A nuclear Iran is simply unacceptable. It is a threat to the region, to the United States, and to our allies across the globe.

The Iranian regime has demonstrated time and again its refusal to work in good faith to eliminate the threat of nuclear weapons in the Middle East and around the world. In the last year, Iran has concealed major nuclear facilities, repeatedly blocked U.N. nuclear inspectors from doing their job, and openly threatened to, as the Iranian President said, "wipe Israel off the face of the map." These actions reflect a clear record of defiance. Now Iran must take steps to demonstrate its willingness to live as a peaceful partner in the international community, and we must use all of the tools at our disposal to stop Iran's march toward nuclear capability.

This month, under President Obama's leadership, the U.N. Security Council passed its most far-reaching set of sanctions yet, targeting Iran's nuclear program and financial system. Today, with the passage of this legislation and when it goes to the President's

desk to be signed, we will give the President new tools to impose sanctions against companies that sell Iran technology, services, know-how, and materials for its energy and petroleum sector. And we offer foreign banks a choice, they can deal with institutions that support weapons of mass destruction and terrorist activities or they can do business with the United States. This is the strongest Iran sanctions legislation ever passed by the Congress.

My colleagues, no discussion of Iran at this time is possible without condemning the actions of the Iranian regime of 1 year ago when they responded to public protests with deadly force.

The American people stand for peace and security for the people of Iran. We look forward to a relationship with them. We look forward to a day when Iran is a productive partner for us, for its neighbors, and the world. Until that day, we must ensure that Iran is prevented from obtaining the nuclear weapons that would threaten global and regional security.

Again, I thank our distinguished chairman, Mr. Berman, Ranking Member Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, Mr. Hoyer, and Mr. Cantor for giving us this opportunity, in a strong bipartisan way, to support the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act, and hope that we can have a unanimous vote today.

Rep. Mike Pence (R-IN)

Mr. Speaker, I thank the distinguished gentleman for yielding and for her leadership on this important legislation.

I also want to commend Chairman Berman, who worked in good faith on this legislation as well. It was an honor to serve on the conference committee, and I rise in support of the Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act.

I believe this legislation is urgent, and it represents measurable and meaningful progress in the United States effort to economically and diplomatically isolate Iran in the midst of its headlong rush to obtain a usable nuclear weapon. It is important not only that we adopt the Iran sanctions bill today; it is important that this administration forcefully implement this legislation. We know the nature of the threat. Iran has made no secret of its intent to use nuclear weapons to threaten the United States and our allies.

President Ahmadinejad said in 2005, humankind "shall soon experience a world without the United States and without Zionism." Led by this anti-American, anti-Israel president, Iran has long associated with terrorist organizations, and this is the central point. Not only would this rogue regime come into possession of usable nuclear weapons should sanctions fail, but it would only be a matter of time before terrorist organizations around the world would have access to this technology. And that is unacceptable.

But as we adopt these important sanctions, a word of caution. As has been noted, these sanctions include a number of waivers demanded by the Obama administration. It is essential that the Obama administration carry out the clear congressional intent of passing crippling sanctions on the energy and financial sectors in Iran. As the joint explanatory statement provides, ``The effectiveness of this act will depend on its forceful implementation."`

Iran could be merely months away from acquiring nuclear weapons. They continue to test vehicles that could deliver it. Now is the moment for decisive action by the Congress and decisive implementation. If we act and this administration forcefully implements these sanctions, we may yet see a future of security and peace in the Middle East. But if we fail to act, or if these sanctions are not forcefully implemented, history may well judge this Congress and this government in the harsh aftermath of a flash of light, a rush of wind, and a second historic tragedy. Let that not be the case. Let us act in concert today. Let us adopt these Iran sanctions. And, Mr. President, do not waive these sanctions.

Rep. Ted Poe (R-TX)

Our quarrel, Mr. Speaker, is not with the people of Iran; our quarrel is with the Government of Iran and its consistent philosophy to annihilate the State of Israel, and also to the violations of human rights that it commits against its own people.

The people of Iran have spoken out against their illegitimate government, and because of that they have been brutalized, they have been jailed, they have been shot, and they have been imprisoned for a long time all because of freedom of speech.

The sanctions in this resolution go against those in the Government of Iran who deny human rights to their own people. That is one aspect of this resolution that is very important to make sure that the people of Iran, the good folks in Iran who want to replace their government have human rights, and especially that ability of freedom to speak out against their illegitimate government that seeks to destroy not only the State of Israel, but the entire West.

Rep. Jared Polis (D-CO)

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions Act to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons.

Mr. Speaker, a nuclear-armed Iran would pose a threat to regional stability, to Israel, and to our national security, and above all, to the world. Passing strong sanctions against the Iranian regime is a critical step that we must immediately take in order to protect the world against this threat. Ahmadinejad is not a rational actor.

Congress must do all in its power to deter Iran from getting nuclear weapons and persuade the regime to halt their nuclear program--as the international community has repeatedly demanded. Iran has rejected the Administration's attempts to engage

diplomatically; if we wish to avoid either military action or accepting a nuclear-armed Iran, we must incapacitate the regime's ability to pursue these weapons through tough sanctions.

The United States and our allies are at a critical juncture in our efforts to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons. Iran continues to reject international proposals that would provide their regime with the resources to have a safe and secure civilian nuclear power program, but limit the Nation's ability to build the world's most destructive weapons. Iran now has enough low-enriched uranium that, when further enriched, could be used to fuel two nuclear weapons.

This is why Congress has acted swiftly to counter this threat and why the President also supports enacting new sanctions. While Congress has taken the lead on crafting this bill, preventing Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons has been one of the Obama Administration's top priorities.

Under the President's leadership, the U.N. Security Council recently passed a new round of strong sanctions that will help to cripple Iran's nuclear weapon program. As proof that the administration's commitment to diplomacy is working, the U.N. resolution included support from China and Russia, who before had hesitated to press Iran to stop its nuclear program. In addition to the U.N. sanctions, the European Union is also currently in the process of instituting its own sanctions.

This powerful package of new sanctions that was developed by House and Senate Democrats would substantially augment these ongoing multilateral efforts by the U.N. Security Council, the European Union, and others.

Therefore, I urge my colleagues to support this bill. This bipartisan legislation will provide us the necessary tools to stop the spread of nuclear weapons to Iran, a nation that continues to sponsor terror, endanger our allies, and threaten our troops in the region. The sanctions are tough, focused, and results-oriented. This important step is critical to countering the threat of a nuclear Iran.

Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL)

Throughout history, there have been many examples of states that were openly targeted by rising enemies but which failed to take effective action to prevent a potential threat from becoming a mortal one. This is at the crux of today's debate. The Congress will be sending to the President a long list of sanctions for him to implement. If all are implemented vigorously, this legislation could constitute decisive action to compel the Iranian regime to end its nuclear weapons pursuit, to end its chemical and biological weapons and missile programs, to end its state sponsorship of global jihadists; and in doing so, cease being a significant threat to our Nation, to our interests, and to our important critical allies, such as the democratic Jewish State of Israel.

If, as successive U.S. administrations have done, the sanctions are ignored, then we will have failed the American people. The Iranian regime has been constructing the means to make nuclear weapons, along with the missiles with which to strike other countries, for decades. Fifteen years ago, the U.S. took the lead to stop Iran. The U.S. demonstrated its commitment by withdrawing from commercial activities involving this rogue state. Congress then enacted the Iran Sanctions Act, hoping to use it as leverage for cooperation from our allies in preventing the Iranian threat from escalating.

The 1996 law sought consultations first, but called for the imposition of sanctions unless allied governments had "taken specific and effective actions, including, as appropriate, the imposition of penalties to terminate the involvement" of their nationals in the sanctionable activity.

But as the Iranian threat has grown, our allies have taken very limited steps regarding Iran. The international community has merely supported tepid U.N. Security Council resolutions that impose modest sanctions on the regime while restating the willingness to engage in negotiations and offer concessions to Tehran. Some countries have actively opposed placing any punitive measures on the Iranian regime despite the fact that its violations of its international obligations have been repeatedly demonstrated by the International Atomic Energy Agency. Russia and China, in particular, have acted as surrogates for Iran and have watered down every proposed Security Council resolution. The regime in Tehran has reason to be grateful for their efforts and their tireless work on their behalf. How sad.

Now the U.S. has chosen to reward the likes of Russia by removing sanctions on entities assisting the Iranian nuclear and missile programs and offering the Russian Federation a nuclear cooperation agreement on the same day that the Russian president offered the same nuclear deal to the Syrian regime.

We are at a defining moment, Mr. Speaker. The opportunity we have before us in the form of this conference report may well prove to be one of our last best hopes to force Iran to end its nuclear weapons program and its policies that threaten our security.

When appointed as a conferee for this bill, my goal was for the final product to have a comprehensive crippling sanction policy targeting the Iranian regime. In principle, this conference report is a step forward. It expands the types of sanctions and the range of actors and activities to be sanctioned in an effort to strike at the Iranian regime's key vulnerabilities, especially its dependence on refined petroleum. The most important are a set of financial measures that, if implemented, would force foreign financial institutions to choose between doing business with Iran or with us in the United States. It also increases penalties on violators.

Unfortunately, this act also contains a key element that could significantly undercut its effectiveness, multiple exceptions and waivers for the President and executive branch officials.

That means by a stroke of a pen, substantive provisions can be transformed into mere recommendations or options. We must not allow this to happen.

Rep. Ileana Ros-Lehtinen (R-FL)

Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, it may surprise some to learn that the penalties in the Iran Sanctions Act of 1996 have never been imposed on a single individual or a company. Only once has a company even been found to be in violation of its provisions, but sanctions were immediately waived by the Clinton administration due to the protests by the Russian, French, and Malaysian Governments, which did not want their companies penalized for doing business with Iran. It should be noted that the same companies--Russia's Gazprom, France's Total, and Malaysia's Petronas--are still providing the Iranian regime a vital economic lifeline through energy-related investments.

I and other members of the conference committee had hoped that this bill before us would avoid repeating past mistakes--that is, avoid undermining its effectiveness by giving the President an option of doing nothing. This was not to be.

The result is that the President is authorized to waive not only the imposition of sanctions for refined petroleum transactions, investments in Iran's energy sector, and aid to Iran's programs on weapons of mass destruction, missile, and advanced conventional weapons, but even on basic investigations and determinations of some sanctionable activities.

With respect to the inclusion of financial sanctions and a visa ban against those committing serious human rights abuses against the Iranian people, not only can the President waive the sanctions, but he can waive the requirement to name and shame these human rights abusers by listing them publicly.

Some will argue that this bill goes further than any before in forcing the President to act. However, it is disingenuous to make such a claim given that the President could have issued an Executive order to implement a wide array of additional Iran sanctions, but he didn't.

The version passed by the House prohibited the entry into force of a nuclear cooperation agreement with any country assisting Iranian proliferation. Its purpose was to prevent a country that is undermining U.S. efforts to stop Iran's nuclear weapons program from being rewarded with a lucrative nuclear cooperation agreement.

That prohibition is not included in the conference report. The text before us does include the prohibition in the House-passed bill on transfers of U.S. nuclear technology to a country that has jurisdiction over entities that have assisted Iran's proliferation programs. However, it provides the President with what amounts to a waiver to approve such transfers on a case-by-case basis, and if the President deems it to be in vital national security interest. It also wipes the slate clean regarding any proliferation violations that

took place before the date that this bill is enacted. Some of us view this to be a carve-out for Russia.

Mr. Speaker, at long last, the time has come for us to act. The time is now. We should support the conference report and ensure that the sanctions are vigorously enforced.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Rep. Peter Roskam (R-IL)

History is incredibly instructive and helpful for us at a time like this. August 13, 1961, Nikita Khrushchev gave an order and that was to move forward and put up the Berlin Wall. At first, it was just barbed wire that morning. And then over a period of time, as we know, it moved from barbed wire to concrete and ultimately to the wall and really the edifice that was the symbol of an impressive regime. I think we are wise to be measured and sobered by those instructions of history.

This legislation is a step toward dealing with the incrementalist vision that Ahmadinejad and the mullahs in Iran have. Now, it has been said that there are some weaknesses in the bill and the weaknesses are putting a lot of trust, frankly, in an administration that has sort of underperformed in this area. But my hope is and my expectation is that the administration will use this tool, recognize the serious threat, and recognize the type of tool that they're able to use to go after this regime. This is an important piece of legislation, and I am pleased to support it.

Rep. Ed Royce (R-CA)

In response to the previous speaker, I will remind my colleagues that sanctions did work in South Africa, and that South Africa gave up its atomic weapons program.

The threat, my friends, in Iran is crystal clear, and its regime closes in on a nuclear weapon. So a crystal clear response by us is urgent.

While I support this bill, much of this legislation, unfortunately, is a muddle. Good sanctions, good sanctions in this bill are weakened by delays and by the possibility of waiver after waiver.

For this, the Obama administration gets the main blame. From the beginning, it has insisted on excessive leeway to implement new sanctions. It doesn't want to be forced into dramatic action. So, yes, we do provide the tools with this bill. They're in there. But there is little guarantee that those tools will be used.

For example, the House-passed bill aimed to target Iran's energy sector. Yet with this conference report, a foreign oil company assisting Iran's petroleum sector could avoid even the investigation required to sanction it for at least 1 year. And the many companies

from China and elsewhere rapidly building Iran's energy facilities today will be surely exempted from these sanctions.

This report's aggressive financial sanctions rightly aim at Iran's Revolutionary Guard Corps. While important, they too can be waived. The so-called "mandatory financial sanctions" aren't even mandatory. This report does require a barrage of reports, certifications and other executive branch paper. Meanwhile, in the real world, Iran marches on.

I would be less critical if the Obama administration, or if previous administrations, had applied a single sanction using existing Iran sanctions legislation. Instead, the Obama administration has naively given Iran time with its "engagement policy."

I'll be supporting this bill because it does give the administration the tools should it wish to use those tools. More likely, it will have to be pressured into action.

Mr. Speaker, even robust sanctions might not deter Iran from nuclear weapons. We need to give the intelligence community what it needs, strengthen our missile defense, target Iran's human rights abusers, and bolster its opposition movement. The clock is ticking.

Rep. Allyson Schwartz (D-PA)

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the Iran Sanctions Act. This legislation makes clear to the Government of Iran that we will not tolerate their continued illicit pursuit of nuclear weapons or their support for terrorism. Supported by the ongoing multilateral efforts of the United Nations Security Council and the European Union, these tough sanctions are intended to put greater pressure on Iran to change their behavior.

President Obama will now have a range of new options to deal with the threats posed by Iran. Expanding upon previous sanctions, this legislation imposes a wide array of tough new economic, energy and financial sanctions. These sanctions target businesses involved in refined petroleum sales and those that support Iran's domestic refining efforts, as well as international banking institutions involved with the Iranian Revolutionary Guard, nuclear program or support terrorism.

Preventing Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons is one of our paramount national security priorities. Nor can we allow their flagrant support of international terrorism continue unabated. Strong sanctions and enforcement of those sanctions make it clear that Iran must change its conduct now.

Rep. David Scott (D-GA)

Thank you very much, Chairman Berman. I want to commend you for the excellent leadership you have provided on this extraordinarily critical issue.

Ladies and gentlemen of the Congress, on the bleached bones of many great past civilizations are written those pathetic words, "Too late." They moved too late. Let us hope and let us pray that we are not moving too late here on this measure.

This is a critical piece of legislation. The Iranian regime, without any question, is after securing a nuclear weapon. The Iranian regime has already declared that they want to wipe Israel off the face of the Earth. This, quite honestly, is our last best chance to avoid the only other way we will be able to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon, and that is through the use of military action.

The only necessity for the triumph of evil is for good people to do nothing. Well, we are here today as good people, and we are doing something very important by passing this strong sanctions bill.

Rep. Ike Skelton (D-MO)

I rise in strong support of this bill. This bill is a good bill, and I urge my colleagues to support it. In my capacity as chairman of the House Armed Services Committee, I am very familiar with the potential threat posed by the Iranian nuclear weapons program to the United States and to our allies.

An Iran armed with nuclear weapons and the missiles to deliver them, governed by fanatics, would pose a grave threat to the United States, our troops in the region, and our allies, particularly Israel. That is why it is so important we pass this bill.

This administration has taken significant steps to dissuade Iran from heading down the path of developing nuclear weapons. President Obama pushed sanctions through the United Nations Security Council and developed a new missile defense program in Europe to show the Iranian government that their weapon programs cannot harm us, only themselves.

The administration has made significant strides, but Congress can help those efforts, and this bill would sanction those companies that sell technology, services, or know-how to help Iran develop its energy sector. It would lock out of the United States market any bank that deals with the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps, the nuclear program, or terrorism. And it imposes penalties on those foreign entities which provide Iran with the ability to stifle freedom of speech.

Mr. Speaker, these are real sanctions, targeted in the right way to hopefully head off a real threat. Sanctions are our best hope of dissuading Iran from developing nuclear weapons. We have reached out to them and tried to deal with them diplomatically, but they refused to deal openly and honestly. Sanctions are the right step to take at this time. I encourage my colleagues to vote in favor of this bill.

Rep. Chris Van Hollen (D-MD)

Mr. Speaker, I stand in support of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions Accountability and Divestment Act of 2010.

As a cosponsor of the Iran Sanctions Act, I congratulate the conferees for building on the best features of that bill, and the Senate version, to produce bipartisan legislation that moves beyond our initial focus on restricting refined oil supplies and creates sweeping and strong new sanctions on banks doing business with Iran .

If Iran continues with its illegal nuclear enrichment activities, it will threaten the stability of the Middle East, threaten the security of its neighbors, including Israel, and jeopardize the international counter-proliferation regime. This bill directs the President to take additional measures to stop those efforts.

The measure codifies longstanding executive orders that limit the goods exempted under the American trade embargo against Iran and includes new provisions that hold U.S. and foreign banks accountable for their actions and for the actions of their subsidiaries.

Some highlights of the bill include provisions that impose sanctions on foreign insurance, financing and shipping companies that sell energy related goods and services to Iran ; new prohibitions on American banks doing business with any foreign bank that facilitates Iran's illicit nuclear program; three new sanctions that prohibit Iranian access to foreign exchange in the U.S.; new prohibitions on access to the U.S. banking system; and a prohibition on property transactions in the U.S. The bill even touches on the U.S. government procurement sector by requiring a certification from a company bidding on a U.S. government contract that it is not engaged in sanctionable conduct.

These new sanctions compliment efforts by the European Union, the United Nations and the Obama Administration, to create a web of restrictions designed to cut Iran off from the international financial community if it does not abandon its illicit enrichment activities. The European Union passed a sanctions package that places restrictions on Iran's trade, banking and insurance sectors in addition to instituting new prohibitions on key sectors of Iran's gas and oil industry. The United Nations Security Council passed its fourth round of sanctions against military purchases, trade and financial transactions carried out by the Revolutionary Guard, which controls the nuclear program and has taken a more central role in running the country and the economy.

The Obama Administration recently placed dozens of Iranian companies and senior Iranian officials on a U.S. financial industry blacklist, appointed as a special adviser on nonproliferation and arms control Robert Einhorn, a man the Chinese government calls "the dentist" for the way he extracts painful concessions during negotiations, and the administration is working with the Israeli government to ensure that Iranians who are key to Iran's nuclear program and who may want to leave Iran , are able to do so.

Iran's refusal to heed repeated warnings about its illegal enrichment activities must be met with resolve. All options must remain on the table. When combined with the efforts of the Obama Administration and our allies, this bill helps ensure that the president has at

his disposal a full range of tools to deal with Iran . I encourage my colleagues to join me in support of this bill.