

IRAN COUNTER-PROLIFERATION
ACT OF 2007

SPEECH OF
HON. GWEN MOORE

OF WISCONSIN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, September 25, 2007

Ms. MOORE of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I join my colleagues in expressing grave concerns about Iran's irresponsible violations both of its commitments under the Nuclear Non-proliferation Treaty, NPT, and its agreements which it signed with the International Atomic Energy Agency, IAEA.

In the last year, I have joined my colleagues on a number of occasions to express the concerns of this body about these activities. Last February, I supported passage of a resolution that would condemn Iran for violating its international nuclear nonproliferation obligations while commending diplomatic efforts being taken by France, Germany, and the U.K. (EU-3) to suspend Iran's activities.

I have also voted to condemn Iranian President Ahmadinejad's persistent denials of the Holocaust and his assertions that Israel should be "wiped off the map." I have also supported legislation just this year authorizing State and local government pension plans to divest themselves of all non-U.S. companies investing more than \$20 million in Iran's energy sector.

It is clear that the threat posed by Iran acquiring nuclear weapons is real. Therefore, it is all the more important that this Congress support efforts that will help provide, and not restrict, the diplomatic, economic, and political tools available to address it. Just 10 months ago, Congress recognized that when it reauthorized the Iran Freedom Support Act to enhance U.S. tools for using financial means to address Iran's activities.

As the House considers H.R. 1400, there are provisions of this bill that are commendable and which are worthwhile and which I support. In fact, in July, I voted for some of these provisions such as those expanding the law's scope to add financial institutions, insurers, underwriters, guarantors, and any other business organizations, including foreign subsidiaries, to the list of entities already barred from investing in Iran which were included in H.R. 957 which passed the House by a vote of 415-11.

However, I could not support H.R. 1400 as currently written because I am concerned that its provision striking the ability of the President—this President or any future one—to waive sanctions in situations where it serves the U.S. national interest. I am concerned that removing this ability will hinder, not help, our diplomatic or national security interests.

Some have warned that the approach taken by this legislation would not only limit diplomatic options with Iran, but also create a rift with our allies in Europe and possibly strengthen support for President Ahmadinejad's regime in Iran. I think we ought to take those concerns seriously. At a time when the U.S. and the world should be in lock step in trying to deal with the Iranian threat, Congress should not put one more obstacle in the way.

The reason Congress has been careful to add waiver authority to a number of sanctions provisions over the years—and I must confess

to my own frustration with the use of the waiver authority at times—is that there are situations when it is in the United States' best national security interest to do so. If there are concerns about the President's use of the waiver, there are other options that Congress can pursue. In fact, on some sanctions that are currently on the books, Congress has given itself the power to negate a presidential waiver by enacting a joint resolution stating its disapproval.

If this legislation were enacted, companies headquartered in a nation that have committed to work with us at the U.N. or within the E.U. to pressure Iran would be treated no differently from one headquartered in a nation that was actively supporting investment in Iran's energy sector. It makes no sense to argue that we are "enhancing diplomacy" by taking away the ability, on a case-by-case basis, to waive sanctions as an incentive for those countries taking responsible actions to address U.S. concerns and Iran's activities.

Everyone agrees that working cooperatively and diplomatically with the U.N., E.U., and others to curb Iran's nuclear program and limit its nuclear activities is the best way to proceed. It is clear that a coherent strategy that has the support of our allies and the international community stands a far better chance of ending Iran's nuclear activities.

However, if this diplomacy is to succeed, those who we charge with carrying out those efforts should be able to go to the bargaining table without one hand being tied behind their backs. While H.R. 1400 declares that the U.S. should use diplomatic and economic means to resolve the Iranian nuclear problem, I am concerned that the bill itself would undermine the very thing it is trying to promote at a time when that unity of effort is the most crucial.

Just 10 months ago, Congress rejected the waiver provision contained in this bill when it last considered how to best enhance the tools available to the administration to deal with Iran's activities. I hope that as this legislation moves forward in the legislative process, further changes will be made to strengthen this bill in a way that will truly enhance, and not hobble, strong diplomatic efforts.

TRIBUTE TO THE NATIONAL FOUNDATION FOR WOMEN LEGISLATORS

HON. DIANE E. WATSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 26, 2007

Ms. WATSON. I would like to congratulate the National Foundation for Women Legislators for working to distribute thousands of backpacks filled with school supplies in every U.S. State and Puerto Rico.

These backpacks have been donated by Office Depot and are being distributed to at-risk and disadvantaged youth. As lawmakers we introduce and pass legislation every year that affects our Nation's youth. We talk about statistics and reading performance and free lunch programs, but we do not talk enough about ensuring that all students have the school supplies they need to perform both inside and out of the classroom.

Office Depot's National Backpack Program, now in its seventh year, is designed to make

a difference in communities across the country and put backpacks in the hands of underprivileged and "at-risk" children so they have the tools they need to start the school year. Beginning in 2001 with 80,000 backpacks donated nationwide, the program has expanded to deliver 100,000 backpacks in 2002 and in 2003 and 2004, the program was increased to 200,000 backpacks containing school supplies. In 2005, the program grew to 300,000 backpacks with school supplies and finally, in 2006, 300,000 backpacks were again donated by Office Depot across North America and in Puerto Rico, totaling more than 1 million backpacks in the hands of children since the inception of the program.

Sadly, there are hundreds of thousands of children who can not afford the basic supplies they need for school. This backpack initiative not only alleviates some of the financial burden from the many single-family households that are stretching their budget and have enough to worry about paying for food and bills, but it also allows their children to have the pride of being able to start the school year the right way.

I am proud to say that 1,000 backpacks will be delivered to the Bradley Elementary School in my home district. I ask all of my colleagues in this United States Congress to join me in recognizing the National Foundation for Women Legislators and their partnership with Office Depot, whose efforts to empower our children and provide them the tools they need to be successful in school and in life are to be commended.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. GINNY BROWN-WAITE

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 26, 2007

Ms. GINNY BROWN-WAITE of Florida. Madam Speaker, on Monday, September 24, 2007, while returning from a Homeland Security field hearing in New York City my train was delayed, and I missed the following votes. Had I been present, I would have voted in favor of:

Rollcall 891, H. Con. Res. 193, recognizing all hunters throughout the United States for their commitment to safety.

Rollcall 892, H. Res. 668, recognizing the 50th anniversary of the September 25, 1957 desegregation of Little Rock Central High School by the Little Rock Nine.

Rollcall 893, H.R. 1199, to extend the grant program for drug-endangered children.

Rollcall 894, H. Res. 340, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives of the importance of providing a voice for the many victims (and families of victims) involved in missing persons cases and unidentified human remains cases.

PERSONAL EXPLANATION

HON. TED POE

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 26, 2007

Mr. POE. Madam Speaker, due to the fact that I have been appointed by the President of