

Iran will turn around and use to fund attacks on our interests in the Middle East and beyond.

We are providing our sworn enemy with the means to attack us, and all we get in exchange is a brief delay in their unending quest for a nuclear weapon.

This terrible deal not only affords Iran legitimacy for a partial nuclear program at present, but allows them a full and unfettered program after 15 years.

Mr. Speaker, under this deal, Iran will receive hundreds of billions of dollars in sanctions relief and be allowed access to advanced weaponry and ballistic missiles it can use to threaten its neighbors and the United States.

Iran will be free to use the weapons and money provided by this agreement to fuel its terrorist aspirations around the region, threatening our ally Israel and further inflaming a region already in crisis.

Under this deal, the world's number one sponsor of terrorism will suddenly have access to enormous resources that it can distribute to its allies Hamas, Hezbollah and the Assad regime in Syria.

This is a completely unacceptable outcome for the United States, Israel, and our allies in the Middle East.

Wagering the peace and security of the U.S., Israel and the world on the small chance that a hateful regime will suddenly see the error of its ways is not only wrong, it is dangerous.

Mr. Speaker, the truth is that, no matter how much the President may wish it to be so, Iran's decades long record of terrorism, extremism and hate will not suddenly change simply because this deal has been signed.

Our allies are almost uniformly opposed to this deal. On my recent trip to Israel, I had the honor and privilege of meeting with Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu for over two hours.

We discussed the Iran deal at length, and I came away even more convinced that this deal is not only foolhardy, it is dangerous.

Prime Minister Netanyahu explained to us how the Obama Administration has sold out our Israeli allies to strike a deal with a murderous and untrustworthy Iranian regime.

The President expects Congress to stand idly by and do nothing while he trades the security of the U.S. and its allies for a legacy-burnishing accomplishment.

He expects us to sit on the sidelines while his Administration offers one concession after another to the Iranians, and agrees on a deal that would endanger the stability of the entire Middle East and jeopardize U.S. national security.

But that will not happen. We will not stand idly by while the American people's security is traded for some empty promises.

A nuclear-armed Iran would start a new arms race in the Middle East and pose an intolerable threat to the national security of the United States and our allies, especially Israel.

Mr. Speaker, for the sake of our children, and our children's children, we must face down this threat now before it is too late.

I urge my colleagues to review this agreement with an eye towards history, towards the past, present and future of a region critical to America's national interests.

Iran has a record of deception and hostility towards American interests, no amount of wishful thinking will change their core tendencies.

Congress must use this opportunity to stand up for what is right.

The United States must not capitulate in the face of persistent evil. We must stand together, united against the threat of a nuclear Iran, in order to guarantee a free and peaceful tomorrow.

APPROVAL OF JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF ACTION

SPEECH OF

HON. SUZANNE BONAMICI

OF OREGON

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 10, 2015

Ms. BONAMICI. Mr. Speaker, over the last several weeks I have been carefully considering the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA), the agreement that is intended to prevent Iran from developing a nuclear weapon. There is no question that preventing Iran from ever developing a nuclear weapon is in the best interest of the United States, Israel and the Middle East, and the rest of the world. I favor diplomacy over military action whenever and wherever reasonably possible, and I strongly agree that an engaged and unified international community, led by the United States, is the best option to preserve peace by keeping close watch over a rogue state that seems to respond only when the world's major powers speak in one voice. It is through this lens, and with these goals, that I approached my analysis of the JCPOA and the potential consequences of Congress accepting or rejecting the agreement. I will vote to support the agreement and advocate for vigorous oversight and enforcement.

To reach this decision, I carefully read the agreement, reviewed classified intelligence materials, and participated in both classified and unclassified briefings. I have spoken with President Obama, and I've heard thorough explanations from Secretary of State Kerry and Secretary of Energy Moniz. Knowledgeable critics of this agreement offered compelling arguments, which I considered in my analysis. I asked questions of the Administration and other experts and evaluated their responses. I have discussed the agreement with people from Iran and Israel, and others with deep ties to both nations. Constituents have offered significant input in letters, emails, phone calls, conversations, and at town hall meetings across Northwest Oregon. As I deliberated, I recalled my time visiting Israel, and always kept in mind my knowledge and understanding of how volatile the region is and what it's like to live under constant threat.

Reaching this decision was not easy. The consequences of this agreement will shape the future of the region and the world. The complexity of the agreement, and the questions it raises about the future that cannot be answered irrefutably, contributed to the fervent, well-reasoned, and passionate opinions on all sides. Many people who I know and respect deeply have reached a different conclusion; I acknowledge their concerns but have concluded that rejecting the deal will not diminish the possibility that Iran will obtain a nuclear weapon. In my assessment, if Congress rejects the agreement, it could result in a higher likelihood of Iran developing a nuclear weapon while at the same time diminishing the global leadership of the United States.

Implementing the JCPOA, on the other hand, will preserve the principal role of the United States in dealing with Iran in the future, and it is our best chance to stop Iran from acquiring nuclear weapons. Right now, without the agreement, the "breakout time" for Iran to acquire fissile material for a nuclear weapon is a mere 2–3 months. Under the JCPOA, the breakout time for at least the next decade will be extended to a year, and there will be no sanctions relief until that breakout time has been extended and Iran has taken multiple required steps and completion of those steps has been verified. These steps include reducing Iran's stockpile of enriched uranium by 97 percent, removing the core of the heavy water reactor and filling it with concrete, and submitting to ongoing inspections and continuous, unprecedented monitoring by the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). Iran can only enrich uranium to 3.67 percent, a level far below the 90 percent range that is necessary to build a nuclear weapon. Sanctions "snap back" and can be reinstated if there is a violation. The JCPOA does not affect the existing U.S. bans on weapons sales, and, importantly, no option, including military force, is taken off the table.

Like most negotiated agreements, however, the JCPOA is not perfect. Because of that, some suggest that we should reject the deal and bring the parties back to the table in an effort to make it better. But our negotiating partners agree that this is a deal worth pursuing, and I concur with many experts who say it would be a near impossibility to convince all parties to return to the table. Even then, it is not at all clear that the outcome of future negotiations would be better than the current agreement. Others have argued that the agreement is likely to fail given Iran's history of noncompliance. Yet throughout this process, no one has suggested that the Iranian government can be trusted. This is not a deal built on trust, but rather on verification. The agreement puts in place a comprehensive inspection regime, some of which is permanent, that will supplement the work of intelligence agencies and provide confidence that Iran could not dash for a nuclear weapon without being caught.

Rather than reject the agreement, Congress should come together and commit to vigilance in holding Iran to every aspect of the JCPOA and to the Treaty on the Nonproliferation of Nuclear Weapons, which provides that Iran, as a signatory, is never allowed to develop a nuclear weapon. We should make clear—very clear—that anything short of strict compliance will result in the swift reimposition of sanctions. Working together in Congress and with other world leaders will give us the best chance to make sure that Iran complies with its obligations and the best chance to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran. I support this bill.

APPROVAL OF JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF ACTION

SPEECH OF

HON. MARTHA ROBY

OF ALABAMA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, September 10, 2015

Mrs. ROBY. Mr. Speaker, I've travelled throughout Alabama's 2nd Congressional District the last few weeks and I've listened to the