

helped over 1,500 veterans in New York State battling PTSD and TBI.

With the success that we have had in New York, I know that, if we make this program national, we will ensure that every veteran across America will eventually have access to a peer-to-peer support group.

With the VA reporting that an estimated 22 veterans a day commit suicide, this national effort is long overdue. We must ensure that all veterans across America receive the proper care they need and deserve.

I will be working hard to spread awareness of my bill, gather cosponsors and the support of veteran groups and mental health organizations from all across the country so that we can pass this bill as soon as possible.

WE MUST ACT NOW ON THE ZIKA VIRUS

Mr. ZELDIN. Mr. Speaker, shifting gears, on a completely separate topic, I also rise today to discuss the mosquito-borne Zika virus, which has spread at rapid rates across South America, Central America, and the Caribbean, infecting individuals in more than 25 countries.

Zika has caused widespread alarm across the global community after Brazil reported a rise in the reported cases of microcephaly, a disease that leads tragically to a baby being born with an unusually small head and brain damage.

What is so concerning about the Zika virus is how easily it can spread. The virus is spread not only through a mosquito bite, but also by contact with infected blood or sexual contact.

Furthermore, there is currently no vaccine to prevent or any medicine to treat the virus. All these factors have led the World Health Organization to declare the Zika virus a public health emergency.

Confirmed cases of the Zika virus have been popping up across the U.S., including at least three confirmed cases in my home district of Suffolk County, Long Island.

With the recent outbreaks and the number of Zika cases among travelers visiting or returning to the United States, it is only a matter of time before this becomes a widespread epidemic right here at home. This is why we must act now.

I recently introduced legislation, the Counterterrorism Screening and Assistance Act of 2016, H.R. 4314, which passed the House Committee on Foreign Affairs with bipartisan support.

One key aspect of this legislation is that the bill would put in place a monitoring system that would screen for infectious diseases abroad to contain and prevent any potential outbreaks.

The bill also helps quarantine the virus, authorizing the Secretary of Homeland Security to provide equipment and supplies to mitigate the risk or threat of infectious diseases such as Zika.

This is a measure that is long overdue to protect not only our homeland from terrorism, but also to ensure that

we are prepared to combat the spread of any infectious diseases. With this bill's passage out of committee, it is clear that my colleagues in Congress share my view.

I will continue to push for full passage of my Counterterrorism Screening and Assistance Act in the House and urge my colleagues to bring this bipartisan bill to the House floor for a vote.

COMBATING BDS ACT OF 2016

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DOLD) for 5 minutes.

Mr. DOLD. Mr. Speaker, in recent years, the boycott, divestment, and sanctions movement, more commonly known as the BDS movement, has been employed as a hateful weapon to delegitimize the State of Israel and all those who stand with her.

The BDS movement has neither brought Israelis and Palestinians closer to peace nor advanced the laudable goal of improving dialogue between the supporters of both sides. Instead, it has served as a means to demagogue Israel and inflame tensions in communities and college campuses around our Nation.

Rather than sit back and react to the BDS movement's aggressive efforts to foment hatred for Israel, it is time to take charge and simply say: "Enough." It is time to go on offense against the BDS movement's ongoing economic warfare targeting Israel.

That is why I am proud to announce the Combating BDS Act of 2016, bipartisan legislation that I am introducing with the gentleman from California (Mr. VARGAS), a courageous leader in the anti-BDS movement.

The Combating BDS Act of 2016 affirms on the Federal level the authority of State and local governments to divest public funds or entities that engage in commerce or investment-related boycott, divestment, or sanctions activity targeting Israel.

Here is why this idea is so important. Similar to previous local efforts to divest from companies doing business with Iran, we are now seeing a growing movement in State and local governments throughout the Nation to enact measures to divest public funds from entities participating in anti-Israel BDS.

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The Combating BDS Act of 2016 strengthens these efforts by affirming the legal authority of State and local governments to act on divestment without running afoul of any potential Federal limitations.

This important legislation empowers community leaders and individuals who seek to counter the hateful targeting and delegitimization against Israel, and it sends an unquestionable message about where the United States Congress stands on BDS.

This is not about left versus right. This is about right versus wrong. It

must remain bipartisan. As the author of the Combating BDS Act of 2016, I look forward to working with my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to advance this powerful and important legislation.

IRAN'S HOSTILITY MUST BE COMBATED

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. ROSKAM) for 5 minutes.

Mr. ROSKAM. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to speak about the Islamic Republic of Iran—its past and its future.

February 11 is just an ordinary day for Americans, but in Iran, tomorrow is anything but ordinary. Military parades and massive state-sponsored celebrations fill the streets of Tehran and cities across the Islamic Republic. In just a few hours, it will be Islamic Revolution's Victory Day in Iran. The regime celebrates 37 years since the violent coup that brought the Ayatollah Khomeini to power and transferred Iran into a fundamentalist Islamic theocracy and the world's largest state sponsor of terrorism.

It is a dark period of history, Mr. Speaker. Thousands of innocent people were killed as the revolutionaries consolidated power. The U.S. Embassy was overrun and more than 50 Americans were held hostage for 444 days.

The United States has seen six Presidents since 1979, reflecting a broad range of leadership styles and governing philosophies. The Islamic Republic has been led by two Supreme Leaders, both zealots fanatically committed to the revolutionary ideas they espouse being celebrated on the streets of Tehran on this day. Make no mistake, Mr. Speaker, we are dealing with the same Iran today as we were in 1979.

The only day being celebrated by some Americans at the moment is implementation day, as President Obama's dangerous nuclear deal has now come and gone. The world is much more dangerous because of it.

Iran, the leading patron of global terrorism, just received a \$100 billion check. The mullahs continue to foment violence and chaos across the Middle East, and their nuclear structure remains intact. The Obama administration has long argued that we would only be giving them \$50 billion, but even they have conceded that it is closer to \$100 billion or more.

We were also told that Iran would moderate its behavior as a result of this capitulation. Just in the past few weeks, Iran captured and humiliated American sailors, illegally launched ballistic missiles, fired rockets within 1,500 yards of U.S. ships, and flew a drone over a U.S. aircraft carrier. The list goes on and on.

Iranian Special Forces continue to assist al-Assad in his slaughter of innocents in Syria. Over 200,000 have been killed so far. Iranian-backed militias are likely responsible for kidnapping three American contractors in Iraq.