

performs a vital service for this Nation, one which must be further examined and utilized.

Over the course of any given year, the Civil Air Patrol is responsible for conducting over 90 percent of the Nation's inland search and rescue operations on behalf of the Air Force. In fiscal year 2007 alone, the Civil Air Patrol helped save 103 lives. Beyond that capacity to execute search and rescue missions, the Civil Air Patrol can also provide emergency transport for sensitive medical materials and conducts low-altitude reconnaissance surveys for the Government. Even with the Civil Air Patrol is not in the air but working on the ground, their volunteers have pitched in to assist with disaster response.

This important legislation will require that the GAG examine how the Civil Air Patrol's proficiency in aerial reconnaissance and communications can enhance our border security. It furthermore will assess the Civil Air Patrol's experience in conducting damage assessment and enhancing situational awareness and how that might be utilized to improve our Nation's collective response to an act of terrorism, natural disaster, or other man-made event. The GAG report produced by this legislation will be utilized to paint a clear picture of the cost-effectiveness of using Civil Air Patrol assets for homeland security missions and help this committee to understand whether the current mechanisms for Federal agencies and States to request CAP support are adequate.

In this age of a global war on terror, it is imperative that we utilize all the assets available to us to secure our homeland. The Civil Air Patrol has been an invaluable resource for this Nation and embodies the volunteer service that makes our Nation great. I commend the Civil Air Patrol for their commitment to service and protecting this country, and I support this legislation that seeks to further examine how we might use them for their homeland security capacity.

I wholeheartedly support this legislation and strongly urge all of my colleagues to join me in doing so.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 1333, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title was amended so as to read: "A bill to direct the Comptroller General of the United States to conduct a study on the use of Civil Air Patrol personnel and resources to support homeland security missions, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

NUCLEAR FORENSICS AND ATTRIBUTION ACT

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2631) to strengthen efforts in the Department of Homeland Security to develop nu-

clear forensics capabilities to permit attribution of the source of nuclear material, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2631

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The threat of a nuclear terrorist attack on American interests, both domestic and abroad, is one of the most serious threats to the national security of the United States. In the wake of an attack, attribution of responsibility would be of utmost importance. Because of the destructive power of the weapon, there could be little forensic evidence except the radioactive material in the bomb itself.

(2) Through advanced nuclear forensics, using both existing techniques and those under development, it may be possible to identify the source and pathway of a weapon or material after it is interdicted or detonated. Though identifying intercepted smuggled material is now possible in some cases, pre-detonation forensics is a relatively undeveloped field. The post-detonation nuclear forensics field is also immature, and the challenges are compounded by the pressures and time constraints of performing forensics after a nuclear or radiological attack.

(3) A robust and well-known capability to identify the source of nuclear or radiological material intended for or used in an act of terror could also deter prospective proliferators. Furthermore, the threat of effective attribution could compel improved security at material storage facilities, preventing the unwitting transfer of nuclear or radiological materials.

(4)(A) In order to identify special nuclear material and other radioactive materials confidently, it is necessary to have a robust capability to acquire samples in a timely manner, analyze and characterize samples, and compare samples against known signatures of nuclear and radiological material.

(B) Many of the radioisotopes produced in the detonation of a nuclear device have short half-lives, so the timely acquisition of samples is of the utmost importance. Over the past several decades, the ability of the United States to gather atmospheric samples—often the preferred method of sample acquisition has diminished. This ability must be restored and modern techniques that could complement or replace existing techniques should be pursued.

(C) The discipline of pre-detonation forensics is a relatively undeveloped field. The radiation associated with a nuclear or radiological device may affect traditional forensics techniques in unknown ways. In a post-detonation scenario, radiochemistry may provide the most useful tools for analysis and characterization of samples. The number of radiochemistry programs and radiochemists in United States National Laboratories and universities has dramatically declined over the past several decades. The narrowing pipeline of qualified people into this critical field is a serious impediment to maintaining a robust and credible nuclear forensics program.

(5) Once samples have been acquired and characterized, it is necessary to compare the results against samples of known material from reactors, weapons, and enrichment facilities, and from medical, academic, commercial, and other facilities containing such materials, throughout the world. Some of these samples are available to the International Atomic Energy Agency through safeguards agreements, and some countries maintain internal sample databases. Access to samples in many countries is limited by national security concerns.

(6) In order to create a sufficient deterrent, it is necessary to have the capability to positively identify the source of nuclear or radiological material, and potential traffickers in nuclear or radiological material must be aware of that capability. International cooperation may be essential to catalogue all existing sources of nuclear or radiological material.

SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS ON INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS FOR FORENSICS CO-OPERATION.

It is the sense of the Congress that the President should—

(1) pursue bilateral and multilateral international agreements to establish, or seek to establish under the auspices of existing bilateral or multilateral agreements, an international framework for determining the source of any confiscated nuclear or radiological material or weapon, as well as the source of any detonated weapon and the nuclear or radiological material used in such a weapon;

(2) develop protocols for the data exchange and dissemination of sensitive information relating to nuclear or radiological materials and samples of controlled nuclear or radiological materials, to the extent required by the agreements entered into under paragraph (1); and

(3) develop expedited protocols for the data exchange and dissemination of sensitive information needed to publicly identify the source of a nuclear detonation.

SEC. 4. RESPONSIBILITIES OF DOMESTIC NUCLEAR DETECTION OFFICE.

(a) ADDITIONAL RESPONSIBILITIES.—Section 1902 of the Homeland Security Act of 2002 (as redesignated by Public Law 110-53; 6 U.S.C. 592) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (9), by striking "and" after the semicolon;

(B) by redesignating paragraph (10) as paragraph (14); and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (9) the following:

"(10) develop and implement, with the approval of the Secretary and in coordination with the heads of appropriate departments and agencies, methods and capabilities to support the attribution of nuclear or radiological material to its source when such material is intercepted by the United States, foreign governments, or international bodies or is dispersed in the course of a terrorist attack or other nuclear or radiological explosion;

"(11) establish, within the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office, the National Technical Nuclear Forensics Center to provide centralized stewardship, planning, assessment, gap analysis, exercises, improvement, and integration for all Federal nuclear forensics activities to ensure an enduring national technical nuclear forensics capability to strengthen the collective response of the United States to nuclear terrorism or other nuclear attacks;

"(12) establish a National Nuclear Forensics Expertise Development Program which—

"(A) is devoted to developing and maintaining a vibrant and enduring academic pathway from undergraduate to post-doctorate study in nuclear and geochemical science specialties directly relevant to technical nuclear forensics, including radiochemistry, geochemistry, nuclear physics, nuclear engineering, materials science, and analytical chemistry; and

"(B) shall—

"(i) make available for undergraduate study student scholarships, with a duration of up to four years per student, which shall include, whenever possible, at least one summer internship at a national laboratory or appropriate Federal agency in the field of technical nuclear forensics during the course of the student's undergraduate career;

"(ii) make available for graduate study student fellowships, with a duration of up to five years per student, which—

"(I) shall include, whenever possible, at least two summer internships at a national laboratory

or appropriate Federal agency in the field of technical nuclear forensics during the course of the student's graduate career; and

“(II) shall require each recipient to commit to serve for two years in a post-doctoral position in a technical nuclear forensics-related specialty at a national laboratory or appropriate Federal agency after graduation;

“(iii) make available to faculty awards, with a duration of three to five years each, to ensure faculty and their graduate students a sustained funding stream; and

“(iv) place a particular emphasis on reinvigorating technical nuclear forensics programs, while encouraging the participation of undergraduate students, graduate students, and university faculty from historically Black colleges and universities, Hispanic-serving institutions, and Tribal Colleges and Universities;

“(13) provide an annual report to Congress on the activities carried out under paragraphs (10), (11), and (12); and”;

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

“(b) DEFINITIONS.—In this section:

“(1) HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY.—The term ‘historically Black college or university’ has the meaning given the term ‘part B institution’ in section 322(2) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1061(2)).

“(2) HISPANIC-SERVING INSTITUTION.—The term ‘Hispanic-serving institution’ has the meaning given that term in section 502 of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1101a).

“(3) TRIBAL COLLEGE OR UNIVERSITY.—The term ‘Tribal College or University’ has the meaning given that term in section 316(b) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1059c(b)).”.

(b) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—There is authorized to be appropriated the sum of \$30,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2009, 2010, and 2011 to carry out paragraphs (10) through (13) of section 1902(a) of the Homeland Security Act of 2002, as added by subsection (a) of this section.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. McCAUL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Mississippi.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Mississippi?

There was no objection.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bill and yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 2631, the Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act, was introduced last year by the gentleman from California, Congressman SCHIFF. It was marked up and adopted unanimously by the Subcommittee on Emerging Threats, Cybersecurity, and Science and Technology in October 2007. The full committee approved it unanimously on May 20 of this year.

I would like to congratulate Congressman SCHIFF and thank Subcommittee Chairman LANGEVIN and Ranking Member McCAUL for their work in getting the bill to the floor today.

Like the other homeland security measures we are considering today, I strongly believe that H.R. 2631 ties in with the DHS authorization legislation that the House approved last spring, H.R. 1684, and is still pending before the Senate.

We know that our enemies, both terrorists and rogue nations, are interested in developing and using nuclear and radiological weapons. In the case of an attempted or, heaven forbid, a successful nuclear or radiological attack, rapid attribution is critical. Our government must have the capability to quickly determine the source of nuclear material so that the key decision-makers have information needed to respond.

Certainly, if the terrorists know that we have a nuclear forensic capability that can pinpoint their role in creating a bomb, they're bound to have second thoughts. The deterrent effect of a robust nuclear forensic capability is enormous.

Unfortunately, today the U.S. must rely on expertise and technology developed during the Cold War to address the emerging threats of a nuclear “dirty” bomb. The nuclear weapons work force is aging, just as its mission has shifted from traditional deterrence policy to the more complicated challenge of containing the threats posed by terrorists and rogue nations. Our Nation's capability in the scientific fields of radiochemistry and geochemistry must be fostered to meet this new threat. This is the purpose of this bill.

H.R. 2631 expresses the sense of Congress that the President should pursue international agreements and develop protocols to share sensitive information needed to identify the source of a nuclear detonation.

It also tasks the Secretary of Homeland Security with the mission of developing methods to attribute nuclear and radiological material, both within the Department's Domestic Nuclear Detection Office, and in partnership with other Federal agencies.

The legislation, as amended in committee, emphasizes that development of a robust nuclear forensics capability depends chiefly on an expertly trained work force in this area, and provides support for educational programs relevant to nuclear forensics.

H.R. 2631 also authorizes the National Technical Nuclear Forensic Center, which will be responsible for providing centralized planning, assessment and integration of all Federal nuclear forensic activities; requires the Secretary to report annually to Congress on the Federal Government's efforts to enhance its nuclear forensic capability, including the status of work force development programs, and authorizes \$30 million per year for the next 3 fiscal years for this effort.

H.R. 2631 continues this committee's practices of authorizing programs and offices within DHS that are of value to the agency's mission, so as to assure

that the work can continue and progress can be achieved in the years to come.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, COMMITTEE ON SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY,

Washington, DC, May 27, 2008.

Hon. BENNIE G. THOMPSON,
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security,
Ford House Office Building, Washington,
DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN, I am writing to you concerning the jurisdictional interest of the Committee on Science and Technology in H.R. 2631, the Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act, H.R. 2631 was introduced by Congressman Adam B. Schiff on June 7, 2007, and the bill was subsequently marked up by the Committee on Homeland Security on May 20, 2008.

H.R. 2631 implicates the Committee on Science and Technology's jurisdiction under rule X(1)(o) of the House Rules. The Committee on Science and Technology acknowledges the importance of H.R. 2631 and the need for the legislation to move expeditiously. Therefore, while we have a valid claim to jurisdiction over this bill, I agree not to request a sequential referral. This, of course, is conditional on our mutual understanding that nothing in this legislation or my decision to forgo a sequential referral waives, reduces, or otherwise affects the jurisdiction of the Committee on Science and Technology, and that a copy of this letter and of your response will be included in the legislative report for this bill and the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD when the bill is considered on the House Floor.

The Committee on Science and Technology also expects that you will support our request to be conferees during any House-Senate conference on H.R. 2631 or similar legislation.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

Sincerely,

BART GORDON,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
Washington, DC, June 11, 2008.

Hon. HOWARD L. BERMAN,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Rayburn House Office Building, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 2631, the Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act, introduced on June 7, 2007, by Congressman Adam B. Schiff.

I appreciate your willingness to work cooperatively on this legislation. I acknowledge that H.R. 2631 contains provisions that fall under the jurisdictional interests of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. I appreciate your agreement to forgo any further consideration or action on this legislation, and that your decision to do so does not affect the jurisdiction of the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

Further, I recognize that your Committee reserves the right to seek appointment of conferees on the bill for the portions of the bill that are within your jurisdiction, and I agree to support such a request.

I will ensure that this exchange of letters is included in the Committee's report on H.R. 2631 and in the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD during floor consideration of H.R. 2631. I look forward to working with you on this legislation and other matters of great importance to this nation.

Sincerely,

BENNIE G. THOMPSON,
Chairman.

CONGRESS OF THE UNITED STATES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
Washington, DC, June 11, 2008.

Hon. BENNIE G. THOMPSON,
Chairman, Committee on Homeland Security,
Ford House Office Building, Washington,
DC.

Dear Mr. Chairman: I am writing to you regarding H.R. 2631, the Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act, introduced on June 7, 2007, by Congressman Adam B. Schiff. This legislation was initially referred to the Committee on Homeland Security and, in addition, to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

In the interest of permitting your Committee to proceed expeditiously to floor consideration of this important legislation, I am willing to waive further consideration of H.R. 2631. I do so with the understanding that by waiving consideration of the bill, the Committee on Foreign Affairs does not waive any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matters contained in the resolution which fall within its Rule X jurisdiction.

Further, I request your support for the appointment of Foreign Affairs Committee conferees during any House-Senate conference convened on this legislation. I also ask that a copy of this letter and your response be placed in the committee report for H.R. 2631 and in the Congressional Record during consideration of this bill.

I look forward to working with you as we move this important measure through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

HOWARD L. BERMAN,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,
Washington, DC, May 28, 2008.

Hon. BART GORDON,
Chairman, Committee on Science and Technology,
Rayburn Building, Washington,
DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter regarding H.R. 2631, the Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act, introduced on June 7, 2007, by Congressman Adam B. Schiff.

I appreciate your willingness to work cooperatively on this important legislation. I acknowledge that H.R. 2631 contains amendments to provisions of law related to matters that fall under the jurisdictional interest of the Committee on Science and Technology. I appreciate your agreement to not seek a sequential referral of this legislation and acknowledge that your decision to forgo a sequential referral on this bill does not waive, alter, or otherwise affect the jurisdiction of the Committee on Science and Technology.

Further, I recognize that your committee reserves the right to seek appointment of conferees on the bill for the portions of the bill that are within your jurisdiction, and I agree to support such a request.

I will ensure that this exchange of letters is included in the Committee's report on H.R. 2631 and in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of H.R. 2631. I look forward to working with you on this legislation and other matters of great importance to this nation.

Sincerely,

BENNIE G. THOMPSON,
Chairman.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. McCAUL of Texas. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I'm proud today to cosponsor and to support this bill and extend my gratitude for the bipartisan cooperation

that went into drafting this important legislation—Congressman SCHIFF, Chairman THOMPSON, Chairman LANGEVIN.

The detonation of a nuclear device in an urban area of this country would be catastrophic to say the least. And with nuclear proliferation worldwide with such apparatuses as the A.Q. Kahn network reaching the Islamic jihad world, countries like Iran, North Korea, Venezuela, the threat of a nuclear explosion and the threat of nuclear devices coming into this country is very real. This bill will help prevent that.

Reducing the risk of nuclear or radiological terrorism requires a layered system of defenses that involves deterring, detecting, disrupting and recovering from terrorist attacks.

We've spent a great deal of time in this Congress discussing the efforts of the Department of Homeland Security's Domestic and Nuclear Detection Office, or DNDO, to deploy radiation portal monitors at our Nation's ports of entry. These monitors, staffed by Customs and Border Protection officers, are the Nation's first line of defense against illicit trafficking of nuclear and radiological material.

I'd like to take this opportunity to commend the DNDO on their achievements in this area. But even with the best possible detection systems, the possibility remains that terrorists could beat the system and sneak something past one of our detectors and through a non-official port of entry. That is why defense against terrorism, especially nuclear terrorism, requires a multi-layered approach.

This bill will improve a critical layer in our Nation's system defenses against the risk of nuclear and radiological terrorism by codifying the role of the National Technical Nuclear Forensic Center, which already exists within the DNDO. By enhancing our nuclear forensic capabilities, we will be able to more easily identify the source of nuclear materials. And while getting the whole picture also requires good intelligence and law-enforcement style investigations, a credible attribution program could even serve as a deterrent against nuclear terrorism.

A main concern I have had is the decreasing number of qualified people into the fields associated with nuclear forensics. In recent years, the number of young people entering scientific fields has declined. The nuclear fields, in particular, are suffering, especially in fields relevant to nuclear forensics, which may have no commercial counterpart. I'm pleased that this legislation includes language designed to strengthen the pipeline of talented new scientists into this important field, especially from minority-serving institutions, so as to take full advantage of all the talent present in our universities.

This bill instructs the Department to establish a National Nuclear Forensics Expertise Development Program which is devoted to developing and maintain-

ing a vibrant and enduring pipeline of technical professionals. This program will grant scholarships and fellowships from the undergraduate through the postdoctorate level of study in nuclear and geochemical science specialties, directly relevant to technical nuclear forensic.

This legislation is the first step in the right direction of reinvigorating the work force in an area critical to continued defense against nuclear and radiological terrorism.

I urge my colleagues to support this bill and its goals to improve the state of nuclear forensics in this country.

With that, Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, at this time I yield 4 minutes to the chairman of the subcommittee handling the legislation, the gentleman from Rhode Island (Mr. LANGEVIN).

(Mr. LANGEVIN asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

□ 1300

Mr. LANGEVIN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act, H.R. 2631, introduced by my friend and colleague, Congressman ADAM SCHIFF. Through my work on both the Homeland Security Committee and the House Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence, I have become convinced that the nuclear terrorist threat is real requiring the full and urgent attention of our government.

Now, last weekend, we received a stark reminder of just how real this threat is. According to media reports, A.Q. Khan's network provided nations, possibly Iran and North Korea, with blueprints for a sophisticated nuclear device small enough to fit on a ballistic missile.

Now, I take this threat very seriously, and as chairman of the Homeland Security Subcommittee on Emerging Threats, Cybersecurity and Science and Technology, I focus much of my attention on addressing our nuclear vulnerability. And I have always said that the core of our efforts must focus on a three-prong strategy: an approach of prevention, detection, and response.

Now, by strengthening our detection capabilities, we've certainly made it more difficult for those who wish us harm to smuggle in nuclear weapons or weapons of nuclear material across our border. In fact, we are currently screening 100 percent of all incoming cargo on the southern border, 98 percent on the Nation's seaports, and 91 percent on the northern border. And Director Vayl Oxford of the Domestic Nuclear Detection Office assures me we will be screening 100 percent along our northern border by next year.

Now, I firmly believe that the surest way to prevent a nuclear terrorist attack from occurring is to prevent terrorists from obtaining nuclear weapons

or weapons-grade nuclear material in the first place, but all those who have these materials should be also put on notice that all nuclear material contains a unique signature that could be traced back to them.

Now, the Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act is a critical mechanism for enhancing this capability. Nuclear forensics allows experts to study the mix of isotopes and other features of nuclear material that give it a particular signature, or fingerprint. Once a nuclear signature has been promptly identified, we can oftentimes trace the material back to a particular source. Now, this is perhaps one of the best proactive measures we can take to deter terrorists from acquiring and detonating a nuclear weapon. It's also a wake-up call for all nations that already have nuclear weapons or weapons-grade nuclear material to better secure it.

If nations around the world know they can be identified as the source of material used in a nuclear attack, they may think twice about proliferating knowing that they would be the target of any retaliatory efforts.

In short, Madam Speaker, when people think of tracing where a nuclear attack would come from, they think of the missile being launched from a particular location and then detonated at a target, and they would obviously know and would be able to trace that missile back to where it was originally launched from. And if anybody were to smuggle a nuclear device into the country and detonate it, they would get off scot-free. Well, nuclear forensics clearly shows that is not the case.

Any time that a nuclear weapon would be detonated or weapons-grade nuclear material would be used, it does come with a return address, and we would be able to trace it back.

I'm proud to be a cosponsor of this measure, and I'm also pleased that we're taking yet another step to protect Americans against a nuclear threat.

Again, I would like to thank Congressman SCHIFF for his leadership on this issue. I would like to thank my Ranking Member Mr. McCAUL on the subcommittee for helping to bring this to the floor. And most especially I want to thank the chairman of the full Committee on Homeland Security, Chairman THOMPSON, for his leadership on securing the Nation against potential nuclear threats and for all of his great leadership on homeland security issues and for bringing this issue to the floor today.

Mr. McCAUL of Texas. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I do have one more speaker, the author of the bill.

Mr. McCAUL of Texas. Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers and am prepared to close.

I reserve my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. I would like to recognize the gentleman

from California (Mr. SCHIFF) for 4 minutes, the author of this legislation and a persistent pursuer making sure that we get it to the floor.

Mr. SCHIFF. I thank the chairman of the full committee for his leadership on this issue and for his indulgence of my perseverance. I'm very grateful that the bill moved so quickly and for his support of it. I also want to thank the chairman of the Subcommittee on Emerging Threats, Cybersecurity, Science and Technology, JIM LANGEVIN, for his leadership, and also thank the Ranking Member Mr. McCAUL. I really appreciate all of your help. It's been a bipartisan effort from the very beginning, and that's the way it should be.

Through this legislation, we're taking an important step to prevent nuclear terrorism, and I appreciate, again, all of the work of the committee and staff.

Nuclear terrorism is the preeminent threat of our time. Many countries around the world now have access to technology that was once the realm of only a few. Just last week it was reported that an advanced nuclear weapon design was found on a computer connected to one nuclear smuggling ring, and that was the one mentioned by my colleague, Mr. LANGEVIN. Illicit nuclear material has been intercepted in transit many times since the Cold War, and the material we catch is probably just a small fraction of the total amount trafficked.

The President and Congress have recognized that a nuclear attack on the United States is the most important national security threat facing our country. In the ongoing effort to strengthen our border, this Congress has made it more difficult to smuggle a nuclear weapon into the United States. But with thousands of miles of borders to secure against weapons just a few feet in size, we cannot simply play defense at the border. We must also prevent the weapons and materials that lie in storage around the world from falling into the wrong hands.

During the Cold War, we deterred the Soviet Union with the threat of nuclear retaliation. Unfortunately, the decentralized flexible terror networks that we face today are not as easily deterred. Osama bin Laden has termed the acquisition of mass destruction a religious duty. And there is no question that using such a weapon against America is consistent with the group's contempt for human life.

The Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act is designed to help shut down trade in nuclear material by deterring those parts of the trafficking network susceptible to deterrence. If we identify the source of nuclear material, then when we intercept it in transit, we can hold responsible those who created it and shared it with terrorists or rogue nations. In the aftermath of an attack, God forbid, this capability would also help determine the identity of those responsible. Nations, companies, and individuals could be dissuaded

from proliferating knowing that their malfeasance could be traced back to them.

The first part of this bill expands our ability to determine the source of nuclear material by strengthening our nuclear forensics capability. Nuclear forensics is the study of the chemistry and physical properties of nuclear material that give it a particular signature. Scientists and engineers skilled in the field can also use information from the packaging and accompanying materials to pinpoint a source.

But acquiring, analyzing, characterizing, and attributing samples is a complicated process. Though we have the capability to perform each step, our expertise is split between the Departments of Energy, Defense, Homeland Security, and State.

This bill authorizes a national technical nuclear forensics center in the Department of Homeland Security. The center will coordinate the various agencies and ensure that a sufficient combined response is present whenever nuclear material is intercepted or used in a weapon. It will also advance the science of nuclear forensics bringing in new radiochemists and physicists into a rapidly aging workforce and funding research on new methods to identify materials from around the world.

But this bill also has another purpose. As with fingerprints or DNA, the strength of nuclear forensics depends on the strength of our database. Nuclear material can come from many nations, some friendly and some unfriendly.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I yield the gentleman 2 additional minutes.

Mr. SCHIFF. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman. That will be the last of my perseverance, Mr. Chairman.

The strength of nuclear forensics depends on the strength of our database. That material can come from many nations, some friendly, some unfriendly, and the individual recipes are closely-held secrets. However, little of the information needed for nuclear forensics is of direct use to our adversaries, and in the case of our allies, the risk of not sharing the data and failing to discover a security breach is much greater than sharing the information.

Thus, the bill asked the President to negotiate agreements with other nations to share information on the make-up of their nuclear materials. We can come to bilateral agreements with our allies or sign multi-lateral treaties through the IAEA. We can even begin the database with just civilian reactor materials where information security is less of an issue. But we must get started now.

The National Technical Nuclear Forensics Center should play a key role in the negotiations since in the end, the data we obtain must be the data that the experts need. Nuclear terrorism is a threat of paramount danger

and uncertain probability. As communications and transportation bring us ever closer to our friends, they bring our enemies closer as well. This modest but effective bill will help keep us safe as we navigate the years ahead.

Again, I want to thank Chairman THOMPSON for his leadership and the chairman and ranking member of the subcommittee for their assistance and sponsorship, and I urge my colleagues to support the bill.

Mr. MCCAUL of Texas. Madam Speaker, I continue to reserve.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I am prepared to close at this point and wonder if the gentleman from California is also.

Mr. MCCAUL of Texas. Madam Speaker, I have no further speakers. I am prepared to close.

The threat of nuclear terrorism is real as we've heard. The intent, motivation from al Qaeda and the radical Islamic world is very real. They want to acquire this capability, and we know that with the proliferation of this technology with nuclear capability, through the A.Q. Khan network to many other countries, we know that this threat is literally on the doorstep. I believe this bill will go a long ways to protecting Americans which, after all, is our first and foremost obligation as Members of Congress to protect the American people as the Constitution requires.

And that is why I'm so proud that this was presented in a bipartisan fashion. This is not a Democrat or Republican issue. This is an American issue. It is about protecting the lives of the American people. And I urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi. Madam Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I urge passage of H.R. 2631, the Nuclear Forensics and Attribution Act. I would like to pay tribute to Congressman ADAM SCHIFF, Subcommittee Chairman LANGEVIN, and Ranking Member MCCAUL for the thoughtful approach taken on this critical Homeland Security concern.

The risk, vulnerability, and consequences of a nuclear bomb are significantly different than what we think of as a dirty bomb. While a nuclear bomb is most assuredly a weapon of mass destruction, a dirty bomb is at best a weapon of mass disruption. A dirty bomb may include some radioactive material, but if detonated, few people, if any, would die shortly after exposure.

In contrast, tens of thousands of people could potentially die from an explosion of a nuclear bomb.

We need a new Manhattan Project, one where we build a nuclear forensics capability and workforce that can address the myriad of nuclear threats that we face today. H.R. 2631 does just that. That is why, Madam Speaker, I urge passage of this important legislation.

Madam Speaker, as you heard, Ranking Member KING is attending the services of Tim Russert. I would like to join my ranking member and other Members of Congress in expressing our sympathies to the family of Tim Russert.

Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. THOMPSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2631, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

The title was amended so as to read: "A bill to strengthen efforts in the Department of Homeland Security to develop nuclear forensics capabilities to permit attribution of the source of nuclear material, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1315

CONDEMNING POSTELECTION VIOLENCE IN ZIMBABWE

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1230) condemning postelection violence in Zimbabwe and calling for a peaceful resolution to the current political crisis, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1230

Whereas the Zimbabwean African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF), led by President Robert Mugabe, has controlled Zimbabwe's executive and legislative branches for 28 years;

Whereas over the past 8 years, ZANU-PF has suppressed political dissidents and won elections and referendums through the use of vote rigging, localized violence, harassment, and intimidation;

Whereas the political and economic situation in Zimbabwe has been worsening since 2000, culminating in the current electoral crisis;

Whereas Presidential and Parliamentary elections were held in Zimbabwe on March 29, 2008;

Whereas the Zimbabwe Election Commission (ZEC) released the results for the 2008 presidential election 5 weeks after the contest took place, announcing President Mugabe won 43.2 percent of the vote, while Morgan Tsvangirai, leader of the opposition party Movement for Democratic Change (MDC), won 47.8 percent of the vote;

Whereas as the ZEC announced neither candidate won over 50 percent of the vote, the 2 candidates have to compete in a runoff election;

Whereas the long delay in announcing the presidential election results undermined the credibility of the ZEC;

Whereas the Zimbabwean people have indicated through the ballot box that they want a change in leadership;

Whereas in the wake of the elections, President Mugabe has unleashed security

forces and militia against opposition supporters and members of civil society;

Whereas over 2,900 people have been tortured and beaten, and at least 36 have been confirmed dead as a result of an ongoing campaign of state-sponsored political violence;

Whereas government security forces raided the MDC party headquarters, arresting 300 people, some of them children;

Whereas government security forces have detained Morgan Tsvangirai on multiple occasions as he has tried to campaign for the June 27, 2008, runoff election, and have arrested MDC Secretary General Tendai Biti;

Whereas the offices of the Zimbabwe Election Support Network have been raided and some of its employees detained;

Whereas security forces have attacked humanitarian organizations and civil society groups;

Whereas the Government of Zimbabwe has suspended the activities of humanitarian aid organizations in its country, putting hundreds of thousands of children and other vulnerable members of the population at risk of hunger and malnutrition;

Whereas diplomats, including the United States ambassador to Zimbabwe, have been detained by government security forces in direct contravention of the protections offered diplomats in the Vienna Convention;

Whereas South African President Thabo Mbeki has stated that the political violence in Zimbabwe is a cause for "serious concern";

Whereas the African Union (AU) and Southern African Development Community (SADC) have been continually engaged in efforts to bring about an end to the political crisis in Zimbabwe;

Whereas the AU and SADC dispatched delegations to Harare, but have not yet successfully compelled the Government of Zimbabwe to restore the rule of law;

Whereas Zimbabwe's gross domestic product declined about 43 percent between 2000 and 2007 and the unemployment rate is 80 percent;

Whereas Zimbabwe's inflation rate, at almost 165,000 percent, is the highest in the world and has contributed significantly to the country's economic collapse;

Whereas worsening economic conditions and commodity shortages have caused at least 3,000,000 people to flee the country;

Whereas after the March 29, 2008, elections the opposition offered to enter into a dialogue to bring about an end to the ensuing political crisis;

Whereas all parties must engage constructively towards peace and reconciliation for the sake of the Zimbabwean people; and

Whereas the people of Zimbabwe deserve the assistance of the international community in the restoration of fundamental human rights, democratic freedom, and the rule of law: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) calls on all security forces, informal militias, and individuals to immediately cease attacks on and abuse of civilians;

(2) strongly condemns the orchestrated campaign of violence, torture, and harassment conducted by the ruling party and its supporters and sympathizers in the police and military against members of the opposition, opposition parties, and all other civilians;

(3) calls on the Government of Zimbabwe to create an environment conducive to a peaceful transition of power;

(4) encourages the political parties to commit to forming a government that reflects the will of the Zimbabwean people and promotes national unity, the restoration of the