

the day when two states—an Israeli and a Palestinian state—can peacefully exist side by side. Until that day, both sides must work towards peace and must refrain from aggressive actions. The kidnapping and ongoing inhumane treatment of Gilad Shalit has exacerbated tensions in the region, causing heartache for Sgt. Shalit's family and country, and making peace negotiations more difficult.

I stand for peace and human rights and am proud to support this resolution. I can see no justification for Sgt. Shalit's continued imprisonment and urge Hamas to release Sgt. Shalit. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting peace and human rights by supporting this important resolution.

Mr. GRAYSON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to call for the immediate and unconditional release of Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit. On June 25, 2006, exactly 4 years ago this Friday, Gilad was kidnapped by Hamas terrorists within Israeli territory, near the Karem Shalom crossing. This kidnapping was a part of an unprovoked and organized military operation by Hamas terrorists who continue to hold Gilad captive in Gaza.

Throughout Gilad's captivity, the International Red Cross has requested to send representatives to assess his conditions of detention and treatment, as well as to provide medical attention to Gilad. Just recently, Hamas once again refused to give the Red Cross access to check on Gilad's well being in accordance with international law. Pierre Dorbes, deputy head of the International Committee of the Red Cross in Israel and the Territories stated that, "... we have been able to visit nearly everyone detained in connection to this conflict, with the exception of Gilad Shalit."

As negotiations for his release continue, it is important to recognize the efforts of Gilad Shalit's family and friends, particularly his mother Aviva and his father Noam to secure his release. I can only imagine the heartache and frustration that they feel as they work to help secure their son's freedom.

Madam Speaker, I along with my colleagues continue to call for the unconditional release of Gilad Shalit. I urge President Obama to continue to make Gilad's release a priority for his administration as he works with all parties to resolve the ongoing conflict in the region.

Mr. MCMAHON. Madam Speaker, I rise today to support H. Res. 1359, a resolution calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit held captive by Hamas.

On June 25, 2006, Hamas captured 19-year-old Israeli corporal Gilad Shalit on the southern Israeli side of the Gaza Strip. This inherent and blatant disrespect for standards of international conduct was a deliberate form of extortion meant to coerce the Israeli government to release Palestinian prisoners.

Hamas has furthered the injustice by denying Shalit access to medical care from the International Red Cross or treatment as a prisoner of war. Shalit has been explicitly denied the most basic humane treatment, and we cannot allow for this abhorrent conduct to persist.

Hamas has continually utilized terrorist cells to attack Israeli soldiers even though Israel unilaterally withdrew from Gaza in 2005. This callous disregard for international humanitarian law is deeply troubling.

I am unwavering in my support for the security and welfare of the democratic nation of

Israel, and the creation of a mutually acceptable two state solution. This cannot happen unless Hamas immediately and unconditionally releases Shalit and accepts the right for Israel to exist and lays down their arms for good.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues in the House of Representatives to join me today in recognizing our dedication to the release of Shalit and the prospect of peace and democracy in the region by supporting this resolution.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Madam Speaker, I rise today to support H. Res. 1359 and mark the 4-year anniversary of the capture of IDF soldier Gilad Shalit. On June 25, 2006, Shalit was taken in a cross-border raid, remains held in Gaza, and for the past 4 years, he has been denied virtually all contact with the outside world.

When he was kidnapped, he was only 19 years old, the age of an average American college student. But instead of being able to serve his country and continue with his bright future, he has been held a prisoner for 4 years.

The plight of this soldier must not be forgotten. I want to honor the sacrifice of this young man and his family who wait every day for news of their son's circumstances. I have met the Shalit family and I have seen the pain in their eyes and the pleading in their voices. The Shalit family has also met with many communities across the United States, urging people to remember their son and speak out on his behalf. Today, I join the communities in Palm Beach and Broward County in sending a message to Gilad Shalit's captors: Let Gilad Shalit go.

As Israel faces dangerous threats from throughout the region and still makes unprecedented sacrifices for peace, America stands with Israel in its hope for the release of Gilad Shalit. American families and Israeli families are united in the hope that the Shalit family should suffer no longer.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 1359, a resolution calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit.

I would like to thank Congressman ACKERMAN for introducing this important resolution, of which I am a cosponsor, and to commend him and Chairman BERMAN for their leadership on this critical issue.

On Friday, Israeli soldier Gilad Shalit will have spent 4 years in captivity. Since June 2006, Shalit has been held by Hamas and denied the humane treatment mandated by international law, including regular communication with his family and visits by the International Red Cross. He has been forced to appear in Hamas propaganda, intended to extort the Israeli government. Shalit was 19 years old at the time of his abduction.

Human beings should not be used as bargaining chips. Gilad Shalit must be immediately and unconditionally released, and all prisoners must be afforded the basic protections of international humanitarian law.

I am also proud to support this resolution because it expresses Congressional support for both the Jewish state of Israel, which must have recognized and secure borders, and a democratic, viable, and independent Palestinian state. I strongly believe that a negotiated, two-state solution offers Israelis and Palestinians alike the best prospect for long-term security and stability.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution calling for the immediate and unconditional release of Gilad Shalit.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ACKERMAN. I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1359, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Madam Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF HOUSE REGARDING ANNIVERSARY OF DISPUTED IRANIAN ELECTIONS

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1457) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives on the one-year anniversary of the Government of Iran's fraudulent manipulation of Iranian elections, the Government of Iran's continued denial of human rights and democracy to the people of Iran, and the Government of Iran's continued pursuit of a nuclear weapons capability.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1457

Whereas Iran's authoritarian system of government violates numerous international norms and principles of democratic governance;

Whereas June 12, 2009, was the date scheduled for Iranian presidential elections, in which only candidates approved by the Government of Iran's Guardian Council were allowed to compete;

Whereas the ensuing announcement by Iranian authorities of an "overwhelming victory" for Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was made suspiciously early;

Whereas reported vote counts in the June 12, 2009, election were inconsistent with Iranian demographics and political trends, including provinces in which more votes were allegedly cast than the number of registered voters and vote counts that indicated unusual pro-Ahmadinejad voting patterns by traditionally anti-Ahmadinejad constituencies;

Whereas the Government of Iran's unrealistic vote count and fraudulent announcement of election results prompted millions of Iranians to rush into the streets in protest and prompted unprecedented public criticism by Iranians of the authoritarian rulers of the Government of Iran;

Whereas the Government of Iran, Iranian riot police, members of the Revolutionary Guard Corps, and Basij militias engaged in a brutal crackdown on the Iranian people in the aftermath of the disputed presidential election of June 12, 2009, killing, injuring, or imprisoning many Iranians, stifling freedom of speech, press, and assembly and violating fundamental human rights;

Whereas, on June 19, 2009, the House of Representatives overwhelmingly adopted H. Res. 560 which “(1) expresses its support for all Iranian citizens who embrace the values of freedom, human rights, civil liberties, and rule of law; (2) condemns the ongoing violence against demonstrators by the Government of Iran and pro-government militias, as well as the ongoing government suppression of independent electronic communication through interference with the Internet and cellphones; and (3) affirms the universality of individual rights and the importance of democratic and fair elections”;

Whereas, on June 23, 2009, President Barack Obama denounced the Government of Iran's crackdown on the Iranian people, stating that “The United States and the international community have been appalled and outraged by the threats, the beatings and imprisonments of the last few days”, that “I strongly condemn these unjust actions, and I join with the American people in mourning each and every innocent life that is lost”, and that the United States must “bear witness to the courage and dignity of the Iranian people, and to a remarkable opening within Iranian society”;

Whereas, on December 27, 2009, the Shiite Muslim holiday of Ashura was observed and at least eight Iranian civilians were killed and hundreds arrested in confrontations with the Iranian authorities;

Whereas the Government of Iran is violating its international and constitutional obligations to respect the human rights and fundamental freedoms of its citizens by—

(1) using arbitrary or unlawful killings, beatings, rape, torture, and cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment, including flogging and amputations;

(2) carrying out an increasingly high rate of executions in the absence of internationally recognized safeguards, including public executions and executions of juvenile offenders;

(3) using stoning as a method of execution and maintaining a high number of persons in prison who continue to face sentences of execution by stoning;

(4) carrying out arrests, violent repression, and sentencing of women exercising their right to peaceful assembly, a campaign of intimidation against women defenders of human rights, and continuing discrimination against women and girls;

(5) permitting or carrying out increasing discrimination and other human rights violations against persons belonging to religious, ethnic, linguistic, or other minority communities;

(6) imposing ongoing, systematic, and serious restrictions of freedom of peaceful assembly and association and freedom of opinion and expression, including the continuing closures of media outlets, arrests of journalists, the censorship of expression and of the press in newspapers and online forums such as blogs and websites, as well as blockage or disruption of Internet-based communications and of mobile phone and text messaging networks; and

(7) imposing severe limitations and restrictions on freedom of religion and belief by carrying out arbitrary arrests, indefinite detentions, and lengthy jail sentences for those exercising their rights to freedom of religion or belief and by proposing a mandatory death sentence for apostasy, the abandoning of one's faith;

Whereas according to the Department of State's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2009, Iran's “poor human rights record degenerated during the year . . . the government severely limited citizens' right to change their government peacefully through free and fair elections . . . authorities held political prisoners and intensified a crackdown against women's rights reformers, ethnic minority rights activists, student activists, and religious minorities”;

Whereas hundreds of political prisoners remain imprisoned by the Government of Iran;

Whereas Ahmad Jannati, who heads the Government of Iran's powerful Guardian Council, has called for the execution of more dissidents and protestors, and a senior official of the Iranian “judiciary” has stated that the Government of Iran will soon execute further dissidents;

Whereas thousands of Iranian citizens have continued to peacefully and courageously assemble and protest against the Government of Iran's denial of human rights and democracy to the people of Iran;

Whereas article 21 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights recognizes that “(1) Everyone has the right to take part in the government of his country, directly or through freely chosen representatives; (2) Everyone has the right of equal access to public service in his country; (3) The will of the people shall be the basis of the authority of government; this will shall be expressed in periodic and genuine elections which shall be by universal and equal suffrage and shall be held by secret vote or by equivalent free voting procedures”;

Whereas the United States supports the right of the citizens of Iran to freedom and democratic governance, including the right to select their political leaders in free, democratic, and independent elections;

Whereas the Government of Iran is pursuing a nuclear weapons capability which, if obtained, would usher in a dangerous new era of instability in the Gulf and the Middle East, and allow the Government of Iran to act with impunity in the face of international pressure to cease its dangerous international behavior and its horrific human rights abuses;

Whereas Iran continues to enrich uranium and carry out other nuclear activities in violation of United Nations Security Council Resolutions 1696 (2006), 1737 (2006), 1747 (2007), 1803 (2008), 1835 (2008), and 1929 (2010);

Whereas Iran has failed to cooperate with International Atomic Energy Agency inspectors looking into the possible military nature of the Iranian nuclear program, including by denying inspectors access to facilities, people, and documents; and

Whereas according to the Department of State's Country Reports on Terrorism, Iran remains “the most active state sponsor of terrorism”, continues to provide arms, financing, training, and other support to Hamas, Hezbollah, and other groups designated by the United States as foreign terrorist organizations, in addition to providing lethal support to violent militants in Iraq and Afghanistan: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) reaffirms its support for all Iranian citizens who courageously struggle for freedom, human rights, civil liberties, and the protection of the rule of law;

(2) condemns the ongoing violence and human rights abuses against the people of Iran by the Government of Iran and pro-government militias, as well as the ongoing government suppression of independent electronic communication through interference with the Internet and cell phones;

(3) condemns the Government of Iran's continued pursuit of a nuclear weapons capa-

bility and unconventional weapons and ballistic missile capabilities, and its use of its nuclear program to distract attention from its horrific abuses of the human rights of the Iranian people;

(4) urges the immediate release of all political prisoners detained by the Government of Iran and the immediate end of all harassment and violence against the people of Iran by the Government of Iran and pro-government militias;

(5) reaffirms the universality of individual human and political rights; and

(6) calls for freedom and democracy for the people of Iran, including fair, democratic, and independent elections in Iran.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROSELEHTINEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include any extraneous materials on this resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution today, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

House Resolution 1457 expresses the sense of the House of Representatives on the 1-year anniversary of the Government of Iran's manipulation of the Iranian elections, the continued denial of human rights, and their continued pursuit of a nuclear weapons capability. And I would like to thank my friend, Congressman Judge POE of Texas, for joining me in the introduction of this important resolution.

Madam Speaker, just over a year ago, on June 12, 2009, the world watched as Iran's rulers manipulated and stole an election for their chosen candidate, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad. Thousands of Iranians took to the streets following that sham presidential election that had been orchestrated for the regime. Following that, we all know what happened. So we speak in this resolution on the anniversary of that disputed election result because I believe, and those who are supporting this resolution believe, that Congress must reaffirm its commitment to supporting democracy and freedom around the world, including in Iran.

We know that as the street protest continued against the fraudulent election and it intensified, the Government of Iran, its riot police, and members of the Revolutionary Guard Corps engaged in a brutal crackdown on the Iranian people. Sadly, many Iranians were injured, imprisoned, or killed.

Human rights in Iran, we know, have deteriorated precipitously over the years since the first election of President Ahmadinejad. But since that disputed presidential election last year,

Iran's slide into what is clearly a brutal dictatorship has sharply accelerated. Iran's Revolutionary Guard, its militia, and its police arbitrarily arrest thousands of peaceful protesters and dissidents, including students, women's rights activists, lawyers, and journalists, in a clear effort to intimidate their critics and stifle dissent. This regime obviously cannot withstand these critics.

□ 1420

But as champions of freedom and democracy, the United States must, must condemn these abuses of this Iranian regime whenever possible as we witness such actions around the world. It is in our Constitution, and it is one of the reasons why we still remain a beacon of light around the world as we stand up for human rights, human rights that have sadly been abused in Iran by this regime.

But it's not just in our Constitution. In the Koran it states: Help one another in a righteousness and goodness way. Help not one another when in sin and aggression.

Clearly, this despotic regime in Iran is engaged in full-time sin and aggression of its own people. But this quote, of course, is from the Koran, which is the book of the major religion of the people of Iran. Yet they violate their own faith in this way.

Madam Speaker, the people of the United States stand behind the people of Iran, who simply want to live their lives in peace and freedom, free of the brutal oppression of their government. Let us be clear: At the end of the day, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad is nothing more than a bully and a dictator. His regime uses every tactic they can to subdue and terrorize their own people.

And we need to recognize this phony regime for what it is. It's a killer of freedom of speech, freedom of religion, and freedom of press. And I believe that when history is written, that the record of this terrorism regime in the 21st century will compare, sadly, to those same brutal dictatorships that we witnessed in the 20th century. I am talking about Hitler, Stalin, Tojo, and Mussolini. That is the level of despotic dictatorship that we are witnessing today in Iran.

So, therefore, this resolution before us confirms Congress's support for all Iranian citizens who struggle for freedom, human rights, and civil liberties. It condemns the ongoing violence and human rights abuses against the people of Iran by their government, and it urges immediate release of all political prisoners detained by this regime.

House Resolution 1457 also calls for freedom and democracy for the people of Iran, including fair, democratic, and independent elections, unlike the ones that were held a year ago. Finally, this resolution condemns the Government of Iran's continued pursuit of nuclear weapons capability and a ballistic missiles program, for clearly we know what they are intended for.

This is especially timely, Madam Speaker, since later this week the House is expected to vote on the conference committee report H.R. 2194. We hope by the end of this week, certainly by next week. The Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 is an important measure. I am proud to be a conferee on the conference committee. This piece of legislation represents, I think, a monumental step toward our fight against Iran's nuclear proliferation. These sanctions reinforce and go far beyond the enacted United Nations sanctions aimed at persuading Iran to change its conduct that was voted on over a week ago.

These tough new petroleum and financial sanctions will restrict the ability of Iran's regime and its thugs to continue their nuclear aspirations and their oppression of the Iranian people. The legislation also increases penalties for sanction violations and bolsters the U.S. trade embargo against Iran. These sanctions will send a strong signal that our Nation will not stand for the escalation of this regime's aims at a nuclear arms program, especially with violent threats against our strategic ally Israel, and the threat of that ally and its impact throughout the regions of Europe and Southeast Asia, along with the Middle East.

Clearly, their medium-range missiles are capable of reaching all of those countries within that area, and, therefore, we stand with Israel and our allies. These sanctions are a powerful step forward. We must continue to take all necessary actions and to keep every option on the table to prevent nuclear arms races in that region.

Madam Speaker, I encourage my colleagues to support this important resolution and to send a strong message to Iran and the entire world that America will not stand by while these human rights abuses continue and they continue to pursue nuclear weapons capabilities.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Texas, Judge POE, an esteemed member of our Committee on Foreign Affairs and the coauthor of this resolution before us.

Mr. POE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentlelady from Florida for yielding. I also want to thank my friend from California (Mr. COSTA) for introducing this Resolution 1457, and I am proud to be a cosponsor of this important resolution.

The people of Iran are under the oppression of the little fellow from the desert, Ahmadinejad. And the little fella claimed that he won the election last year, but the whole world knows, including he, that he stole the election in Iran. The people of Iran want democracy, they want freedom, and so they took to the streets opposing the little fella. And what did he do? He retaliated. He used his henchmen, his goon squad to come out and brutalize his

own people, who were unarmed but yet taking to the streets wanting freedom and a legitimate election. He injured them; he beat them; he hung them, and he shot them, peaceful Iranians wanting freedom and democracy.

But the folks of Iran were not going to be intimidated by the crimes committed against them in their pursuit for freedom and a free election, so they have continued to speak out. By continuing to speak out, of course, more of them get arrested. As my friend from California mentioned, it includes everybody: Women and children, lawyers and journalists. They are all arrested, brutalized, and some are killed in the name of keeping the little fella, Ahmadinejad, in power in Iran.

This past week in Paris, France, 100,000 people, mainly Iranians, marched in support of freedom and democracy for their homeland in Iran. And it's important that we in America let everybody know where we stand when it comes to freedom versus tyranny, freedom versus a dictatorship, that we stand by the people of the nation who want self-determination and freedom.

The Iranians kind of wonder where we stand as a Nation. They are concerned because, you see, they get their government-controlled media and it tells them one thing, that the United States is not supportive. So we need to make it clear to them that we do support them. And they don't want weapons. They don't want armament. They don't want even money. They just want to know that this country, the center and hope for the world when it comes to human rights and democracy, stands with the people, the people of Iran in their quest to control their own destiny and control their own government.

There is no freedom in Iran as long as this regime is in power and Ahmadinejad continues to be the dictator, the tyrant of the desert who threatens to destroy not only our ally Israel, but destroy the West as soon as he can get his hands on those nuclear weapons.

He needs to go. His time has come. It needs to go. And the way that that can happen is when the people of Iran take control of their own country. The best hope for the Iranians, the best hope for the world, Madam Speaker, is for a regime change in Iran by the people of Iran. So we should support that endeavor. We should tell those freedom-loving folks, those sons of liberty, those daughters of democracy, that we in America, halfway around the world, who believe in liberty and believe in democracy and believe in freedom, we stand with them. We support them morally, and we support them because they have the right to determine their own destiny.

Our quarrel as a Nation is not with the people of Iran. Our quarrel is with this dictator, this tyrant, the little fellow from the desert who wants to destroy his own nation and the rest of the world as well.

□ 1430

So I support this resolution and I want to compliment the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA) for bringing this to the floor.

And that's just the way it is.

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE) for his good remarks, as always.

I yield such time as she may consume to the gentleman from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY).

Ms. BERKLEY. Madam Speaker, I want to thank the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA). We have worked on many issues, this being one of the most important, and I thank him for yielding some time to me.

It has been 1 year since Ahmadinejad and his thugs stole the election in Iran. The world watched with shock as 1 million Iranians took to the streets of Tehran to protest the so-called results of the sham election, and dismay as the protesters were cruelly squelched. The world was horrified as we watched a beautiful Iranian woman killed in the prime of her life as she peacefully protested the election results.

I stand with the people of Iran as they protest the continued denial of human rights and democracy by their illegal government. Iran's government is on a very dangerous path. They are the state sponsors of terrorism across the planet. They are the main sponsors of Hamas, and we watch Hamas cruelly treat the Palestinian people in the Gaza like animals more than people. We know that the Iranians are supporting Hezbollah in Lebanon and transporting weapons to them that could be used against Israel. We watch as they infiltrate South America through Venezuela, trying to spread their tentacles of hate and terrorism across the planet. We have a very serious problem with Iran. They will not join the family of civilized countries that are trying to improve this world. Quite the contrary. They are the main obstacle to peace everywhere.

In addition to their exporting of terrorism and supporting of terrorist organizations, the threat to wipe Israel off the map, what is this dangerous country doing? It is attempting to acquire nuclear weapons with all deliberate speed. When there is a president of a rogue nation that is supporting terrorism and terrorists across the planet, that is calling for the destruction of the State of Israel, that talks with great disparagement about western civilization, particularly the United States of America, when a country like this is attempting to acquire nuclear weapons, it is time for the world to wake up and recognize that they say what they mean, they mean what they say, and the Iranian Government must be stopped at all costs.

I stand with the Iranian people. I support them and I thank them for having the courage to stand up to their own government. It is not easy to do when you know if you stand up,

chances are you will be killed. I thank them very much for doing that, and I thank the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA) for bringing this to our attention through this resolution.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, in discussions about the Iranian regime's pursuit of a nuclear weapons program, or its state sponsorship of violent extremists, the persecution that the thugs in Tehran inflict on ordinary Iranians, that is sometimes overlooked. This is particularly true on the international stage.

The United Nations Human Rights Council has condemned the democratic Jewish State of Israel over and over again for defending herself, but has not once condemned the Iranian regime's brutality against the Iranian people.

Iran, a regime that stones women to death, was elected by acclamation to the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women. Let me repeat that again; it is so absurd, it is almost incomprehensible. It is incomprehensible. Iran, a regime that stones women to death, was elected by acclamation to the U.N. Commission on the Status of Women. This is a Kafkaesque scenario.

So it is all the more important that we in this House stand in solidarity with the Iranian people and with all of those who support and defend human rights, support and defend democracy, support and defend freedom. We must also be clear and steadfast in describing and condemning the Iranian regime's human rights abuses, of which there are many.

Those in power in Tehran practice torture, flogging, rape, amputation, and murder. The regime conducts systematic, official discrimination against women, Baha'is, Christians, Jews, dissident Muslims, and many others. No one is exempt.

All seven members of the national Baha'i leadership in Iran remain in prison, where they have been held unjustly for 2 years and are on trial for trumped-up charges that potentially carry the death penalty. Gay people are hanged from cranes, even as their very existence in Iran is denied by Ahmadinejad.

Since the sham "elections"—using the term loosely—1 year ago, the regime has intensified its repression, increasing restrictions on the freedom of religion, expression, association, assembly and the press.

What is left?

Thousands of protesters, dissidents, journalists have been arbitrarily detained or killed, with innocent people shot on the street, and the Stalinesque show-trials continue.

Even Iranians who succeed in fleeing their country are reportedly still in danger as agents of the Iranian regime threaten with death if they continue to speak out and protest human rights violations by Tehran.

Despite this repression, the people of Tehran continue to put their lives on

the line in pursuit of freedom, and the United States and other responsible nations must stand with them. There are many further steps we can take to help at this critical time. Above all, we must do no harm. Negotiation with the regime legitimizes its illegitimate leaders and distracts attention from their repressive acts.

We must hit the regime where it hurts by fully implementing sanctions targeting the regime's vulnerabilities, both existing sanctions and the new ones that Congress will soon enact. The same refined petroleum products and other petro-dollars that bankrolled the regime's weapons program also bankrolled its repression of human rights. Requiring the immediate implementation and enforcement of comprehensive sanctions can help stop both of these threats.

We must also support those who seek human rights for Iran and monitor abuses, such as the Iran Human Rights Documentation Center, which has actually seen its funding cut. And as the beacon of liberty and democracy to the entire world, the United States must do our duty to name and shame the guilty. Because we must take an all-of-the-above approach to this issue, I introduced H.R. 4649, the bipartisan Iran Human Rights Sanctions Act which was introduced in the Senate by JOHN MCCAIN and JOE LIEBERMAN. That legislation requires the President to designate and sanction those who violate the human rights of Iranians. I am gratified that some versions of this bill will be included in the Iran sanctions conference report that Congress will soon consider.

And given the importance of human rights for the Iranian people and worldwide, I am proud to strongly support the resolution before us today, H. Res. 1457. This resolution marks the 1-year anniversary of the Iranian people's mass uprising against the regime's fraud, manipulation, and repression; and it also condemns the regime's brutality.

Furthermore, the resolution reaffirms our support for all Iranians who courageously struggle for freedom. It urges the immediate release of all political prisoners and calls for freedom and democracy for the people of Iran, including fair, democratic and independent elections.

I would like to thank the authors of this resolution, distinguished members of our Foreign Affairs Committee, the gentleman from California (Mr. COSTA) and the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE). This legislation builds on a resolution that Judge POE introduced 6 months ago, as well as a resolution introduced by the distinguished gentleman from Texas (Mr. MCCAUL). I appreciate the long-standing efforts of all of these Members on this important issue.

Ultimately, the purpose of this resolution reflects the words of Holocaust survivor and Nobel Peace Prize winner Elie Wiesel, words that are salient to

any discussion on the status of human rights in Iran under that brutal regime: "We must always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented."

□ 1440

With these words in mind, we must take sides. We must act together in support of the people of Iran. I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I, too, want to thank my friend and colleague, the gentlewoman from Florida, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, for her strong bipartisan comments on a resolution that there is strong bipartisan support for, as witnessed by the statements here this afternoon.

Make no mistake about it, Madam Speaker, and to those who are listening. This resolution is about human rights violations in Iran. This resolution is about the despotic, sham regime that is currently governing in Iran that is oppressing the people of that country. This resolution speaks to the higher values and goals that are enshrined in our country's Constitution and Bill of Rights, those freedoms that we hold most dear, that are at the end of the day the basis for all human rights, not just in our country but throughout the world.

Therefore, today, the Congress must speak to these human rights violations that are existing in Iran. Today, the Congress must voice its opinion on the despotic rule of this regime, and by passing this resolution in a bipartisan fashion, we will not only put the House of Representatives firmly on record as to the year anniversary of the sham election that took place in Iran, but we will also reiterate our strong support for sanctions against this country that, in fact, is violating these human rights and that is turning its back on the rest of the world.

Make no mistake about it. The Iranian Government today, not its people but the Iranian Government today, is, in my view, the largest concern not only in the Middle East but throughout the world in terms of achieving peace that we all hold most dear. The goals of peace in the Middle East and throughout the world are at greatest risk by the actions and the activities and the supports of terrorist activities by this Iranian regime, whether it be to Hezbollah, whether it be to Hamas, or whether it be to other terrorist groups that it supports in so many different ways because they know at the end of the day they cannot support the family of nations throughout the world in expressing freedoms that we hold most dear.

So I ask my colleagues to support this bipartisan resolution.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of the resolution. I want to thank the Chairman and commend Mr. COSTA and Mr. POE for their work on the resolution.

The anniversary of the uprising of the Iranian people to secure their democratic rights is a solemn occasion. The images from last year of ordinary Iranians showing unbelievable courage in challenging the ruthless and vicious theocracy that controls Iran resonated powerfully with Americans. Recalling the late 1980s and the collapse of Communism, many have begun to hope that this wholly indigenous movement, by virtue of its own success, and entirely for its own reasons, will throw on to the ash-heap of history the brutal, irresponsible, and vicious regime of the mullahs.

I don't think any one believes the current leadership of the Islamic Republic of Iran will go quietly or easily into retirement. And I think it would be foolish to assume that a reformed Iranian government would automatically be very friendly to the United States, or be less committed to the pursuit of its own national interests. But there is good reason to think that a different Iranian government, one that was truly answerable to the aspirations of the Iranian people, would transform the politics of the Middle East, dramatically change the global struggle against violent Islamic extremism and, potentially, salvage the global non-proliferation regime.

But as we think about how we can aid the Green Movement, I believe we need to be especially careful and thoughtful. There is, unfortunately, a painful history of American intervention in Iranian affairs, and we should, at the very least, have some humility about our ability to competently shape highly politicized and dynamic events in other nations.

Iran is a sovereign state whose people are struggling bravely for their own freedom. It is natural and right for us to want to support their struggle. The question is how? It seems to me that our first obligation is "to do no harm." And our second obligation is to recognize that we are not a doctor, and Iran is not a patient.

With these caveats, I believe there are some important things that we can and should do; all of which can be done publicly and outside of Iran. First, as we are doing today, we must continue to let the people of Iran know that we have not forgotten them or their struggle for freedom. Second, we must continue to bear witness to vicious crimes the Iranian regime is perpetrating against its own citizens. A government at war with its own citizens is illegitimate by definition. Third, we and other nations truly committed to universal human rights must continue to highlight Iran's absolutely illegitimate and immoral behavior in international forums and in the United Nations. The Iranian regime's behavior can not be denied and it can not be excused.

Finally, and most critically, we absolutely must prevent Iran from acquiring the capability to produce nuclear weapons. For the sake of the people in Iran, for the sake of the people in the Middle East, for the sake of our allies in Israel, and for our own vital national security interests, Iran's nuclear ambitions absolutely must not be allowed to succeed.

Mr. JOHNSON of Georgia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to express my support for H.R. 1457, which recognizes the one-year anniversary of the Government of Iran's deceitful manipulation of Iranian elections and the Government's continued violation of Iranian citizens' democracy and their human rights.

One year ago, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad was re-elected to become the President of Iran in an unfair and manipulated election. Since

then, this date, the Iranian regime, run by Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, has continually violated the human rights of innocent Iranian citizens, brutally beating back popular demonstrations against Mr. Ahmadinejad's election. This resolution is necessary and desperately important to show the world that the United States does not condone oppression and supports the Iranian people in their quest for freedom and democracy.

Our country has always prided itself on the human rights our own citizens enjoy. I believe we should strive to protect and champion the freedoms of people the world over. Unrestricted arrests of innocent individuals, killing of citizens who oppose the government, and extreme oppression of women, all common acts by the Iranian regime, that must be stopped. There needs to be a continued strong disapproving stance taken by our nation towards the destructive and unfair way that the Iranian regime treats its people.

As a member of the Armed Services committee, I take this matter very seriously and see the continued reign of the Iranian regime as a national security threat not only to our nation at home, but also to our armed forces abroad. I urge my colleagues to stand with the Iranian people to support this important resolution.

Mr. McMAHON. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of, H. Res 1457, the Resolution on the one-year anniversary of the June 12, 2009 Iranian Elections. Though one year has passed since the widely contested elections, the stain of Iran's government and its callous disregard for human rights continues to run through the streets of its cities. Although the protests of courageous voters have been violently crushed by the regime, the Iranian people remain proud and steadfast in their belief that this electoral atrocity will one day transition to dying authoritarianism and the birth of a democratic Iran.

The Iranian electoral system does not reflect the ideals of democracy held by the vast majority of other nations in the world, but rather demonstrates the desperation of a despotic regime clinging to power under the guise of fair elections.

For the June 12, 2009 elections, candidates had to be pre-approved by the Government of Iran's Guardian Council, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's victory announcement was made prematurely, and the final vote tallies were inconsistent with the demographics of the nation, the number of registered voters, and common sense.

Those who protested the elections had their rights of free speech brutally denied, and were beaten, jailed, injured, and killed. The Iranian regime has spilled the blood of its own citizens in the streets to maintain its illegitimate hold on power. We were all heartstruck to see the death of Neda Agha-Soltan broadcast across the globe. It is now up to the nations who stand for democracy and freedom to support the courageous protesters in Iran.

Furthermore, following the failed Iranian elections in June, the Iranian regime has had its legitimacy wounded and its paranoia increased. The regime has taken a posture of increased repression at home and antagonism abroad. In that dangerous environment, Israel's leaders have every right to be concerned for their country's safety. While hope still exists for a free Iran, Europe, Israel and the United States must undoubtedly prepare

for a more dangerous Iranian regime in the near-term.

We must be ready for the possibility that Iran will intensify its pursuit of nuclear weapons to overcome the embarrassment of the recent elections.

For this reason, I applaud the House Foreign Affairs Committee and the Senate Banking Committee on yesterday's announcement that they had reached an agreement on the Iran sanctions conference report agreement. This long-awaited sanctions package is absolutely necessary to persuade Iran to change its conduct and its course on its nuclear program.

Madam Speaker, I urge the House of Representatives to condemn the authoritarian Iranian regime and to stand with the millions of Iranians who rushed to the streets not only to defend their right to vote, but also to defend the very ideals of democracy and free and fair societies. I call on my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. COSTA. 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 California (Mr. COSTA) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1457.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. COSTA. Madam Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

GRANTING SUBPOENA POWER TO COMMISSION INVESTIGATING BP DEEPWATER OIL SPILL

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5481) to give subpoena power to the National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 5481

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

SECTION 1. SUBPOENA POWER OF THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON THE BP "DEEPWATER HORIZON" OIL SPILL AND OFFSHORE DRILLING.

(a) SUBPOENA POWER.—The National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling established by Executive Order No. 13543 of May 21, 2010 (in this section referred to as the "Commission"), may issue subpoenas to compel the attendance and testimony of witnesses and the production of books, records, correspondence, memoranda, and other documents.

(b) ISSUANCE.—

(1) AUTHORIZATION.—A subpoena may be issued under this section only by—

(A) agreement of the Co-Chairs of the Commission; or

(B) the affirmative vote of a majority of the members of the Commission.

(2) JUSTICE DEPARTMENT COORDINATION.—

(A) NOTIFICATION.—The Commission shall notify the Attorney General or his or her designee of the Commission's intent to issue a subpoena under this section, the identity of the witness, and the nature of the testimony sought before issuing such a subpoena. The form and content of such notice shall be set forth in the guidelines to be issued under subparagraph (D).

(B) CONDITIONS FOR OBJECTION TO ISSUANCE.—The Commission may not issue a subpoena under authority of this Act if the Attorney General objects to the issuance of the subpoena on the basis that the taking of the testimony is likely to interfere with any—

(i) Federal or State criminal investigation or prosecution; or

(ii) pending investigation under sections 3729 through 3732 of title 31, United States Code (commonly known as the "Civil False Claims Act") or other Federal statute providing for civil remedies, or any civil litigation to which the United States or any of its agencies is or is likely to be a party.

(C) NOTIFICATION OF OBJECTION.—The Attorney General or relevant United States Attorney shall notify the Commission of an objection raised under this paragraph without unnecessary delay and as set forth in the guidelines to be issued under subparagraph (D).

(D) GUIDELINES.—As soon as practicable, but no later than 30 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Attorney General, after consultation with the Commission, shall issue guidelines to carry out this subsection.

(3) SIGNATURE AND SERVICE.—A subpoena issued under this section may be—

(A) issued under the signature of either Co-Chair or any member designated by a majority of the Commission; and

(B) served by any person designated by the Co-Chairs or a member designated by a majority of the Commission.

(c) ENFORCEMENT.—

(1) REQUIRED PROCEDURES.—In the case of contumacy of any person issued a subpoena under this section or refusal by such person to comply with the subpoena, the Commission shall request the Attorney General to seek enforcement of the subpoena. Upon such request the Attorney General shall seek enforcement of the subpoena in a court described in paragraph (2). The court in which the Attorney General seeks enforcement of the subpoena shall issue an order requiring the subpoenaed person to appear at any designated place to testify or to produce documentary or other evidence, and may punish any failure to obey the order as a contempt of that court.

(2) JURISDICTION FOR ENFORCEMENT.—Any United States district court for a judicial district in which a person issued a subpoena under this section resides, is served, or may be found, or where the subpoena is returnable, shall have jurisdiction to enforce the subpoena as provided in paragraph (1).

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from West Virginia (Mr. RAHALL) and the gentleman from Washington (Mr. HASTINGS) each will control 20 minutes. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from West Virginia.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and in-

clude extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. RAHALL. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, last month President Obama issued Executive Order 13543 establishing the National Commission on the BP Deepwater Horizon Oil Spill and Offshore Drilling. The measure we are considering today, introduced by our colleague, Representative LOIS CAPPs, would authorize the commission to issue subpoenas, if necessary, to gather information and compel testimony.

With it, we are giving the commission some teeth. The commission should be demanding and receiving a full and fair accounting to carry out its important mission. Without subpoena power, the commission runs the risk of allowing BP to write its own history of what happened in the gulf.

As amended, H.R. 5481 includes language worked out with the Justice Department to ensure that any commission subpoena does not interfere with any present or future criminal investigation or prosecution or civil litigation involving the United States.

I want to commend the bill's sponsor and a valued member of our Committee on Natural Resources, Representative LOIS CAPPs, a valued member not only on our Resources Committee but in this body who has experienced oil spills in her history as many of our colleagues are today. Having lived through the Santa Barbara oil spill which was in her congressional district in 1969, Representative CAPPs has a deep understanding and a commitment to oil spill prevention and mitigation.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 5481 is just one of a number of actions that this Congress will need to take to help gather information on the causes of the BP Deepwater Horizon disaster and develop safety and environmental measures to prevent such a disaster from occurring again.

I urge my colleagues to support the passage of H.R. 5481, a commonsense bill that will help shed some light on what happened the night of this tragic explosion.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, at this very moment, oil continues to flow into the Gulf of Mexico, and the urgency to address this crisis should not be forgotten or dismissed. It is important that we get to the bottom of the causes of this terrible tragedy. We need to know what went wrong and who did precisely what wrong. At the same time, we should not lose sight of the most immediate priorities.

Those priorities are, first, the leak must be stopped. Second, the oil must