

TRANSPORTATION, HOUSING AND
URBAN DEVELOPMENT, AND RE-
LATED AGENCIES APPROPRIA-
TIONS ACT, 2014

SPEECH OF

HON. JOYCE BEATTY

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, July 30, 2013

The House in Committee of the Whole House on the state of the Union had under consideration the bill (H.R. 2610) making appropriations for the Departments of Transportation, and Housing and Urban Development, and related agencies for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2014, and for other purposes:

Mrs. BEATTY. Mr. Chair, I rise in strong opposition to the devastating funding cuts to the Transportation and Housing initiatives in this appropriations bill, and particularly the cuts to the Department of Housing and Urban Development's Community Development Block Grant Program (CDBG).

Established nearly forty years ago, the CDBG program provides State and local governments across the country with the funding and flexibility to most effectively target resources to local community development needs.

The only Federal program of its kind, since 1974, the CDBG program has invested \$135 billion in local communities.

And, in addition to being a critical factor in national economic growth, this program has assisted States and local governments in achieving the kinds of infrastructure projects, job creation and poverty elimination that our communities so desperately need.

In this Chamber, there is often talk of the need to make government more efficient, and reduce wasting taxpayer dollars.

Well, I'm happy to report that this program does just that—it continues to be one of HUD's most efficient programs—with grantees devoting on average 94 percent of CDBG funds directly to efforts that provide benefits to low- to moderate-income families.

Within my district in Franklin County Ohio, CDBG funding has been used for housing rehabilitation, micro-enterprise assistance, ADA compliance, and revitalization of downtown Columbus. These developments have made a real difference in my community.

The City of Whitehall has removed and replaced about thirty-three-hundred feet of curb and gutter along Bernhard Road, enhancing water runoff management in the area—preventing pooling water and possible disease or outbreak.

Recent projects have provided 650 households with access to public transit—public transit that many families use to get to and from work and stores all of which improves the local economy as a whole.

And CDBG funds have given 1400 families in Franklin County, Ohio access to clean, safe drinking water—a project that would have been nearly impossible otherwise because local revenues were just not available.

I'm proud to say that Franklin County continues to leverage \$5.30 for infrastructure development for every dollar of CDBG funding it receives, but with the draconian cuts to CDBG contained in this bill, there's simply no way that we can make up the difference.

That's why the National Low-Income Housing Coalition, the National Housing Trust, the Community Development Finance Authority, the National Association of Counties, the National Association of Development Organizations, the YWCA, Rebuilding Together, the National Association of Housing and Redevelopment Officials, the American Planning Association, and the Council of State Community Development Agencies have all written in strong support of CDBG funding and the programs it sustains.

And yet, here we are considering an appropriations bill that would literally cut the program in half.

The proposed funding level would be less than when CDBG was first authorized in 1974.

This would tip many low- to moderate-income Americans over the brink into poverty and would negatively impact our communities and our country.

So I stand here today—with my colleagues—strongly opposed to the funding level cuts contained in this appropriations bill.

The Chairman of the T-HUD Appropriations Subcommittee, Representative LATHAM, has said “cutting over \$7 billion in programs was very challenging.”

I say this to my Republican colleagues, if cutting these programs was hard—I can assure you, the children, seniors, and families directly helped by CDBG programs will have a much more challenging time dealing with the effects of over \$7 billion in cuts.

I urge opposition to this bill.

NUCLEAR IRAN PREVENTION ACT
OF 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. GEORGE MILLER

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 31, 2013

Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California. Mr. Speaker, I have voted for many of the Iran sanctions bills that have to come before this body in the past, and I strongly believe that sanctions are a crucial tool in the extremely important effort to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons. But I am disappointed that the House took up and passed H.R. 850, the Nuclear Iran Prevention Act, this week. I believe that the timing and substance of this latest sanctions bill are ill-considered and would have the effect of pushing Iran in the opposite direction we seek.

More than 100 Members of Congress from both parties wrote to President Obama just two weeks ago in support of efforts to “utilize all diplomatic tools to reinvigorate ongoing nuclear talks.” I signed that letter because I believe that, while we cannot know at this point whether President-elect Rouhani will in fact be willing to negotiate in good faith to end Iran's pursuit of a nuclear weapon, we must do everything in our power to demonstrate to Iran that it will benefit from ending its pursuit of nuclear weapons. Bringing H.R. 850 for a vote this week, just before President-elect Rouhani's inauguration, I believe, does the opposite, as it indicates an unwillingness to adapt to any adjusting circumstances that may occur. Moreover, it strengthens the hands of extremists in Iran who could use this vote to falsely claim that the American government is

not interested in pursuing a diplomatic solution.

Additionally, I am concerned that certain provisions in H.R. 850 would unwisely limit President Obama's authority to negotiate as he sees fit. In particular, the bill would impose a total oil embargo, without providing an appropriate exemption for President Obama to utilize if need be. This creates two problems. First, it diminishes President Obama's ability to offer economic benefits to Iran in exchange for an Iranian halt to enrichment of uranium. Second, it makes it substantially more challenging for President Obama to maintain the strong international coalition that he has developed in support of sanctions. Without international support, our sanctions would be for naught, as Iran would be able to simply continue trading with other countries and would not face the economic harms intended by sanctions.

I support a strong sanctions regime as part of an effort to achieve a diplomatic solution that prevents Iran from developing nuclear weapons. I also support some important provisions of H.R. 850, such as those that provide for new sanctions against Iranian officials who are responsible for human rights abuses. Yet, overall, I am concerned that H.R. 850 will not strengthen the effort to utilize sanctions to achieve a diplomatic solution, but will instead be counterproductive to it.

NUCLEAR IRAN PREVENTION ACT
OF 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. KEVIN YODER

OF KANSAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 31, 2013

Mr. YODER. Mr. Speaker, I rise to enter into the record my support for H.R. 850, the Nuclear Iran Prevention Act. Unfortunately, I was not present for the rollcall vote on this bill. Please let the record show that I am a co-sponsor of this legislation and that had I been present I fully intended to vote: “yea.”

The message should be heard loud and clear from America: Iran must abandon its nuclear ambition. H.R. 850 is the vital next step in toughening sanctions on this brazen nation. Iran is an existential threat to Israel, our strongest ally in the Middle East, and a threat to peace throughout the world. Our steadfastness and resolve for peace and stability in the world will see this through.

NUCLEAR IRAN PREVENTION ACT
OF 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. DARRELL E. ISSA

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 31, 2013

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I submit the following exchange of letters.

JULY 30, 2013.

Hon. DARRELL ISSA,
Chairman, Committee on Oversight and Government Reform, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN ISSA: I am writing concerning H.R. 2711, the “Citizen Empowerment Act,” which your Committee ordered reported on July 24, 2013.

As you know, H.R. 2711 contains provisions within the Committee on the Judiciary's Rule X jurisdiction. As a result of your having consulted with the Committee and in order to expedite the House's consideration of H.R. 2711, the Committee on the Judiciary will not assert is jurisdictional claim over this bill by seeking a sequential referral. However, this is conditional on our mutual understanding and agreement that doing so will in no way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary with respect to the appointment of conferees or to any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matters contained in the bill or similar legislation.

I would appreciate your response to this letter confirming this understanding, and would request that you include a copy of this letter and your response in the Committee Report and in the Congressional Record during the floor consideration of this bill. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman.

JULY 30, 2013.

Hon. BOB GOODLATTE,
*Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary,
House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for your letter regarding the Committee on the Judiciary's jurisdictional interest in H.R. 2711, the "Citizen Empowerment Act," and your willingness to forego consideration of H.R. 2711 by your committee.

I agree that the Committee on the Judiciary has a valid jurisdictional interest in certain provisions of H.R. 2711 and that the Committee's jurisdiction will not be adversely affected by your decision to forego consideration of H.R. 2711. As you have requested, I will support your request for an appropriate appointment of outside conferees from your Committee in the event of a House-Senate conference on this or similar legislation should such a conference be convened.

Finally, I will include a copy of your letter and this response in the Committee Report and in the Congressional Record during the floor consideration of this bill. Thank you again for your cooperation.

Sincerely,

DARRELL ISSA,
Chairman.

NUCLEAR IRAN PREVENTION ACT OF 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. YVETTE D. CLARKE

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 31, 2013

Ms. CLARKE. Mr. Speaker, today, I rise in opposition to the Motion to Concur in the Senate Amendment to H.R. 1911—the Bipartisan Student Loan Certainty Act of 2013.

This bill will peg student loan interest rates to the 10-year Treasury note allowing the rate to fluctuate with financial markets.

Specifically, the bill would peg the permanent student loan interest rate to the 10-year Treasury note plus 2.05% for undergraduate subsidized and unsubsidized Stafford loans; the 10-year Treasury note plus 3.6 % for subsidized and unsubsidized Stafford loans; and the 10-year Treasury note plus 4.6% for Parent Plus and Graduate Plus loans.

One positive thing that this bill does do is that it caps student loan interest rates at 8.25% for undergraduates, 9.5% for graduate students, and 10.5% for Parents Plus and Graduate Plus loans.

I am disappointed with this bill because it fails to permanently keep student loan interest rates at their current fixed rate, and in doing so increases the cost to borrowers over the next 10 years by an estimated \$715 million dollars.

Despite the public outcry over student loan debt, now totaling over \$1 trillion dollars, Congress has chosen to make an estimated \$715 million dollar profit off of student loans.

This is shameful! We should not be making a profit off the backs of students. Students are our future. An educated populous is what America needs to remain competitive in the 21st century. Balancing the budget on the backs of students is wrong, unfair and shameful!

NUCLEAR IRAN PREVENTION ACT OF 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. JOHN CONYERS, JR.

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 31, 2013

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I regretfully rise to express my opposition to H.R. 850, the most recent legislative effort by this body to further increase sanctions on Iran. Although I believe the intentions of the authors of this legislation are good, I believe our shared goal of preventing Iran from achieving a nuclear weapon will actually be harmed by bringing this legislation forward at this critical moment.

In three days, Iran will inaugurate a new president—Hasan Rowhani—who was elected after he ran on a platform of engaging with the United States and rejecting the extremist policies of his predecessor. Despite the fact that Mr. Rowhani was not the preferred candidate of Supreme Leader Khamenei, he was elected by an overwhelming majority of the Iranian people this past June. In short, the Iranian people rejected an extremist government and voted for the candidate who represented the best opportunity to break with the human rights violations and belligerent policies of the past.

Yet, instead of taking this moment to re-engage with Iran and pursue diplomacy—which is the only way to ultimately prevent Iran from obtaining a nuclear weapon—we are instead moving forward with new, crippling sanctions before we have the opportunity to see whether President-elect Rowhani's campaign promises will lead to new, positive action. Even worse, this legislation sends a message to the Iranian people that their bravery and massive turnout this past June in the face of violent repression and intimidation from the government, was a futile and irrelevant action in the eyes of the United States.

In addition to this legislation's unfortunate timing, this bill also contains several troubling provisions which diverge significantly from previous Iran sanctions legislation. The bill contains policy language that changes the red line

for war with Iran from the clear position laid out by the Obama Administration to a nebulous position that Iran should not be allowed to obtain a nuclear weapons "capability." The term "capability" is not defined in the bill. When dealing with questions of war and peace, it is incumbent that Congress and the Administration speak with one voice and avoid putting forward policy positions are open to interpretation and could pave the way for war.

Additionally, the bill places significant restrictions on the President's ability to waive sanctions in exchange for positive action by Iran on the nuclear issue. In doing so, the bill threatens to fracture the unprecedented international coalition working to prevent Iran from achieving a nuclear weapon.

For all of these reasons, both procedural and substantive, I oppose the bill.

NUCLEAR IRAN PREVENTION ACT OF 2013

SPEECH OF

HON. GENE GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, July 31, 2013

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 850, the Nuclear Iran Prevention Act.

This legislation will significantly strengthen the impact of existing sanctions on Iran in the hopes of convincing the regime's leaders to stop their nuclear weapons program.

The message to Iran must be crystal clear: stop your nuclear program or face intensifying international isolation and crippling economic pressure until your program stops.

I stand with over 350 over my colleagues who have co-sponsored this legislation in strong opposition to Iran's nuclear weapons program.

Allowing Iran to achieve nuclear weapons capability would start a very dangerous nuclear arms race in a region that is already unstable—endangering our Nation's security and the security of our friends and allies in the Middle East.

Iran continues to increase its stockpiles of twenty-percent enriched uranium, approaching a level where they can very quickly breakout whenever they want. They are also installing advanced centrifuges that would allow them to substantially increase their uranium enrichment at a rapid pace.

This legislation will eliminate sources of foreign funding, reduce oil exports by an additional million barrels per day and apply harsh penalties to human rights violators.

By passing this legislation and ensuring its enforcement, we can continue to enforce the strongest possible amount of financial pressure against Iran.

The window for a peaceful resolution is quickly closing. Through tightening sanctions, pursuing the diplomatic track, and keeping all options on the table, I believe we can persuade the Iranian regime to stop their quest for nuclear weapons before it is too late.

As co-chair of the Democratic Israel Working Group, I urge my colleagues to stand for peace and a nuclear-free Middle East and vote in support of this important legislation.