

cold season that they will be able to receive this valuable resource to heat their home.

I thank my colleague and Transportation Committee Chairman BILL SHUSTER for introducing this legislation, and I urge my colleagues to support its passage.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. SHUSTER) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4076.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SUPPORTING THE PEOPLE OF VENEZUELA AS THEY PROTEST PEACEFULLY FOR DEMOCRATIC CHANGE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 488) supporting the people of Venezuela as they protest peacefully for democratic change and calling to end the violence, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 488

Whereas the United States Government should support the rule of law, and free and peaceful exercise of representative democracy in Venezuela, condemning violence and intimidation against the country's political opposition, and calling for dialogue between all political actors in the country;

Whereas, on February 12, 2014, also known in Venezuela as the National Youth Day, students began protesting in several cities Venezuelan leader Nicolas Maduro's inability to stem violent crime, his undemocratic actions, and a rapidly deteriorating economy marked by high inflation and shortages of consumer goods;

Whereas, on February 12, 2014, a judge issued an arrest warrant for Leopoldo López, leader of the opposition party Voluntad Popular, for unfounded allegations in connection with the student protests;

Whereas, on February 17, 2014, the Government of Venezuela notified the United States Department of State that it had declared 3 consular officers at the United States Embassy in Venezuela *personae non gratae*;

Whereas over the last year, the Government of Venezuela has expelled a total of 8 United States Government officials from Venezuela;

Whereas, on February 18, 2014, opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez turned himself in to Venezuelan authorities, was arrested, and charged with criminal incitement, conspiracy, arson, and intent to damage property;

Whereas Leopoldo Lopez is currently being held in a prison at a military facility;

Whereas nongovernmental human rights organizations have alleged that the charges brought against Venezuelan opposition leader Leopoldo López appear to be a politically motivated attempt to silence dissent in the country;

Whereas the Venezuelan Government has blocked users' online images as opposition groups marched through Caracas;

Whereas the Venezuelan people have been protesting economic, social, and political

concerns facing their country, including corruption, rising inflation rates, shortages of everyday products, increasing crime rates, and the erosion of human rights and respect for political dissent;

Whereas, on February 19, 2014, President Barack Obama criticized the Venezuelan Government for arresting protesters, called for their release, and urged the government to focus on the "legitimate grievances of the Venezuelan people";

Whereas, as of February 26, 2014, there have been 14 people killed, over 100 injured, and many persons unjustly detained in relation to pro-democracy demonstrations throughout Venezuela;

Whereas Venezuelan leader Nicolas Maduro threatened to expel the United States news network CNN from Venezuela and has taken off the air the Colombian news channel NTN 24, which transmits in Venezuela, after news outlets reported on the nation-wide protests;

Whereas the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights released a statement on February 14, 2014, which "expresses its concern over the serious incidents of violence that have taken place in the context of protest demonstrations in Venezuela, as well as other complaints concerning acts of censorship against media outlets, attacks on organizations that defend human rights, and acts of alleged political persecution"; and

Whereas as a member of the Organization of American States and signatory to the Inter-American Democratic Charter, the Government of Venezuela has agreed to abide by the principles of constitutional, representative democracy, which include free and fair elections and adherence to its own constitution: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the people of Venezuela in their pursuit of freedom of expression and freedom of assembly to promote democratic principles in Venezuela;

(2) deplores acts which constitute a disregard for the rule of law, the inexcusable violence perpetrated against opposition leaders and protesters in Venezuela, and the growing efforts to use politically motivated criminal charges to intimidate the country's political opposition;

(3) urges responsible nations throughout the international community to stand in solidarity with the people of Venezuela and to actively encourage a process of dialogue between the Government of Venezuela and the political opposition to end the violence;

(4) urges the United States Department of State to work in concert with other countries in the Americas to take meaningful steps to ensure that basic fundamental freedoms in Venezuela are in accordance with the Inter-American Democratic Charter and to strengthen the ability of the Organization of American States (OAS) to respond to the erosion of democratic norms and institutions in Venezuela;

(5) urges the Organization of American States and its Inter-American Commission on Human Rights to utilize its good offices and all mechanisms at its disposal to seek the most effective way to expeditiously end the violence in Venezuela in accordance with the Inter-American Democratic Charter; and

(6) supports efforts by international and multilateral organizations to urge the Venezuelan Government to adopt measures to guarantee the rights to life, humane treatment, and security, and the political freedoms of assembly, association, and expression to all of the people of Venezuela.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the

gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on this measure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 488 signals U.S. support for the people of Venezuela as they protest peacefully for democracy in the face of Nicolas Maduro's violent repression and his crackdown on those who express their opposition to his regime's failed policies.

We must take a clear stand because the Maduro regime has responded in a deeply undemocratic manner by forcibly repressing protesters, attempting to silence critics by blocking media outlets, and even authorizing the arrests of key opposition leaders such as Leopoldo Lopez.

As protests have swelled throughout the country, the actions of regime forces have led to the deaths of at least 15 and to the unjust detention of more than 100 freedom seekers.

It is incumbent upon the Organization of American States, the OAS, to act according to the principles of its Inter-American Democratic Charter and address this crisis of democracy. Yet recent history has shown us that the Secretary General of the OAS will not lead the way in this important effort. Thus, in the absence of his leadership, responsible nations in the hemisphere must act. They cannot remain silent.

The Panamanians have stepped up to the plate. They have proposed a ministerial meeting at the OAS, but regrettably, Mr. Speaker, that proposal has not moved forward. This resolution will send a clear message to the OAS and to Nicolas Maduro that the United States condemns these undemocratic actions.

We see the plight of the people of Venezuela, and we stand on their side in the struggle for democratic change. We stand together with the Women for Life, Mujeres por la Vida, who march clad in white through the streets of Venezuela peacefully, like their companions in the struggle for freedom in Cuba—Las Damas de Blanco, the Ladies in White.

We stand with the students who take to the streets demanding the release of their fellow students who have been unjustly detained, only to be met with the clubs and the teargas of Maduro's henchmen. And we stand together, Mr. Speaker, united with the people of Venezuela who wish to cast the yoke of repression and oppression and the influence of the Castro regime, which has

been more than eager to help Maduro silence the oppression in Venezuela because it fears that the movement will sweep over the island of Cuba.

We must stand together and support those who seek freedom: freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, and the freedom from government abuse and government oppression. We must speak with a unified voice, Mr. Speaker, about the crisis of democracy in Venezuela and stand in solidarity with the Venezuelan people in their spirited struggle.

But in the face of a determined autocrat who disregards expectations of right conduct and who is willing to use violence to impose his will on free citizens, well, Mr. Speaker, words are just not nearly enough. We must act, and we must act now. We must support those who are pleading for respect for democratic principles and for human rights in Venezuela.

I want to thank the chairman of our important committee, Chairman ROYCE, and my good friend, also, Ranking Member ELIOT ENGEL, for getting this measure to the floor so quickly. I also want to thank their exceptional staff. I want to thank Congressmen ALBIO SIREs and MARIO DIAZ-BALART, who have supported this resolution from the very beginning. Mr. Speaker, we have worked closely together in a bipartisan and a bicameral way, including with the State Department, to ensure that this is a strong, bipartisan resolution, and I urge my colleagues to support it.

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

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 488, a resolution supporting the people of Venezuela as they protest peacefully and calling for an end to recent violence, and I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I would first like to recognize my good friend, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN) for offering this important resolution, but more so for her dedication for so many years to these important issues. It has been a pleasure working with her through the years.

The eyes of the world are on Venezuela as President Nicolas Maduro and his security forces crack down on peaceful protesters. It is an absolute tragedy that 17 people have been killed and 261 people have been injured during recent protests throughout the country. It sounds a little bit like Ukraine, doesn't it?

I was particularly disturbed when the government issued an arrest warrant for opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez on trumped-up charges. Mr. Lopez turned himself in on February 18 and is currently being held in a prison at a military facility.

And, by the way, the elections that supposedly elected Mr. Maduro, as far as I am concerned, are in question because there never was a real recount. The ballots were destroyed before there could be a recount.

I am so deeply troubled by the crack-down on press freedom in Venezuela. The Colombian news network NTN24 was recently taken off the air after it broadcast footage of the protests. Journalists from CNN were also threatened with expulsion.

Today's resolution makes it clear that Congress stands with the Venezuelan people and against all acts of violence and undemocratic actions. I am pleased that President Obama and Secretary Kerry have also spoken out forcefully in condemning violence in Venezuela.

Let me be clear. It is not just the United States that has been taking notice of recent events in Venezuela. The Inter-American Commission on Human Rights released a statement on February 14 which "expresses its concern over the serious incidents of violence that have taken place in the context of protest demonstrations in Venezuela, as well as other complaints concerning acts of censorship against media outlets . . . and acts of alleged political persecution."

Last week, the European Parliament passed a resolution calling on the Venezuelan Government to release jailed opposition members and protesters and to end the violence.

I hope all member states of the OAS, the Organization of American States, will similarly call on the Venezuelan Government to abide by the OAS Convention on Human Rights and the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

Finally, let me say that the only way out of this crisis is through dialogue. Our resolution makes this absolutely clear by encouraging "a process of dialogue between the Government of Venezuela and the political opposition to end the violence."

I stand with the people of Venezuela in calling for an end to the senseless violence, and I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 488, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DIAZ-BALART), our colleague who is on the Appropriations Committee who has been a leader in this fight for freedom and liberty for the Venezuelan people.

Mr. DIAZ-BALART. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this House resolution introduced by my dear friend and one of the great leaders and champions for freedom around the world, Congresswoman ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN. I also want to thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL, speaking of folks who believe in freedom and are always looking out for those who are repressed.

For the last several weeks, Mr. Speaker, the people of Venezuela have risen up to protest the corruption, the food shortages, the soaring crime rates, and, most important of all, the increased and alarming repression by the Maduro regime. In response to those legitimate protests—those peaceful protests—the Venezuelan regime has or-

dered security forces to, frankly, brutally crack down on the opposition.

Since the protests began, Mr. Speaker, more than 500 people have been arrested. Those are the ones that we can document. Approximately 150 have been injured, and more than a dozen—more than a dozen—have been killed.

Not only that, Mr. Speaker, but the Maduro regime has instituted something which should not surprise us, a virtual media blackout. They have blocked out images. They tried to block out images over the Internet. They even closed down, in certain parts of the country where they had the ability to do so, parts of the Internet, including Twitter. They have thrown out independent news organizations like CNN and NTN.

Why? Why are they doing this? They are doing this because the Venezuelan people are fed up with the corruption; they are fed up with, as my father would have said, this so-called "decaffeinated dictatorship." And why would he have said a "decaffeinated dictatorship"? It is a dictatorship that got there, arguably, through democratic means that then has done everything to eliminate all semblance of democracy, all semblance of human rights, all semblance of freedom of the press, and all semblance of the basic institutions of democracy.

And not only that, Mr. Speaker, there are reports of thousands of Cuban special operation forces and also intel forces that are helping the Maduro regime in the crackdown of the Venezuelan people. So at a time when a lot of the so-called international community, particularly in our hemisphere, stays quiet to the reality of the Venezuelan people's struggle for freedom, I am so proud of this Congress—this Congress, this House—that once again is standing with those who are oppressed and standing with those who are struggling for freedom. This is a House that traditionally has done that. This is a House that traditionally, in a bipartisan way, has done that, which is why I am, again, so grateful, particularly to the chairwoman, to my, I would say, younger but wiser sister, Congresswoman ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, to the chairman and to the ranking member; for when others are silent, they are demonstrating that the United States House of Representatives will not stay silent. We will continue to support the Venezuelan people. We will stand with the heroic Venezuelan people, those students who have hit the streets demanding their freedom.

I urge every single one of our colleagues to express solidarity with those like over 200 years ago, how people in our country went out and struggled for freedom. Now we see that the Venezuelan young people, that the students, are doing the same thing. How proud of this House, how proud I am to see this House stand with those heroic Venezuelan people, the heirs of Simon Bolivar—los herederos de Bolivar—who

are trying and will succeed in recapturing their sovereignty, their freedom, and their democracy.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Florida will provide the Clerk a translation of his remarks.

□ 1445

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. DEUTCH).

Mr. DEUTCH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Resolution 488, supporting the Democratic aspirations of the people of Venezuela.

I would like to thank my friend, Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN, for her leadership and for always fighting for democratic principles. I would like to thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL for working to bring this resolution to the floor.

I strongly condemn the violence used by the Maduro regime: 17 dead and 261 injured in the recent protest. Peaceful assembly should never be met with the use of deadly force. This government has resorted to political intimidation and free media censorship to squash the voices of the people.

I join my colleagues today in support of the people of Venezuela to determine their own political future. It is their democratic right to seek government policies that put their country on a path to democratic and economic prosperity for all Venezuelans.

By passing this resolution, Congress will send a clear message to the people of Venezuela—and to all those around the world struggling to achieve true democracy and freedom—that we stand with you. We support your most democratic rights of free expression and peaceful assembly. Any true democracy must be accountable to its people. We call on the Maduro government to work with the people, not against them, to end the violence, and to find a political resolution.

This resolution, Mr. Speaker, makes clear to the Venezuelan people and to the Maduro regime that the United States stands for freedom and democracy, and that the human rights of the Venezuelan people matter to the American people, and they must be defended. I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased and honored to yield 4 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE), the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlelady for yielding to me. I also thank the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), our chairman emeritus, and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) the ranking member, for their working together to craft this bipartisan resolution, a resolution that is focused on supporting Venezuelans, supporting their right to free expression, their right to democracy, their right for those who yearn to return to the rule of law, and, frankly, not just democratic norms, but just the most basic respect for human beings.

In recent weeks, Venezuela has been rocked by nationwide protests against the government of the late Hugo Chavez's hand-picked successor, Nicolas Maduro. I as I watched events unfold on CNN, they began as student protests. Students were going through the streets explaining that they were against rampant street crime, and they wanted the protections of the state rather than the predatory nature of what was happening with these armed gangs. Those protests have since evolved into a referendum on the government's statist policies, their destructive economic policies, the government's near elimination of civil society's freedoms in Venezuela.

Maduro's heavy-handed response, frankly, I think all of us see this now as having really worsened this crisis. We are in a situation now where more than a dozen Venezuelans have been killed, and many students have been grievously wounded. Even more than that have been jailed. The leading opposition figure right now is in prison.

These parliamentary gangs that we talked about that are so predatory, that roam the streets and commit these crimes, now they threaten civilians who are trying to peacefully express opposition. The President of the country has threatened to release, in his words, all of the military force of the country against those who oppose him, against the opposition. Even one sitting governor who had long allied himself with Hugo Chavez was driven to say that the government has gone too far. He took to the radio and said:

I am against putting down a peaceful protest with weapons.

Precisely. Precisely—and that, of course, is why the international community is concerned and we are concerned here today.

All of this, of course, is taking place in our own Western Hemisphere, just a 3-hour flight from the United States. As a major energy producer positioned along drug trafficking routes, Venezuela's instability harms the interests of all in the Western Hemisphere.

Venezuela once had a strong democratic tradition. We would like to see that democratic tradition returned. We think the right of free expression is an important human right. Speaking out in support of those who share this vision, as we are doing today, I think is an important step in realizing that goal, and that is why I again commend Chairman ROS-LEHTINEN and Ranking Member ENGEL for this resolution that they have brought forward.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 3 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ).

Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Resolution 488, and I thank my south Florida colleague and friend, Congresswoman ROS-LEHTINEN, for her leadership in introducing this measure and giving us an opportunity to stand with the people of Venezuela.

I stand in solidarity with my colleagues and the people of Venezuela to condemn the deplorable, horrific, and inexcusable violence the Maduro regime has perpetrated against its own citizens. Brave activists have taken to the streets in Venezuela to demand basic freedoms from an increasingly repressive government. These are students, lawyers, and average citizens simply asking their government to respect their basic human and democratic rights.

Since his election, President Maduro's economic and political policies have driven Venezuela's economy into the ground. His attempts to silence these outcries have not worked, and they will not work. Despite jailing leading opposition voices and expelling independent media voices, the world is watching and listening, and we still hear the calls loud and clear for democracy, for governance, and reform.

President Maduro's ridiculous accusations about United States involvement in fomenting unrest will prove to be a grossly failed attempt to distract from his own shortcomings in serving his people. We will not allow his rhetoric to try to blame the United States for what is a clear struggle between his repressive policies and the legitimate demands of his people.

My hometown of Weston is often affectionately known as "Westonzuela." Just yesterday, I spoke with community leaders in south Florida—many of them my neighbors, my friends, my constituents—about the fear and horrors that family members and their friends are experiencing.

This resolution calls upon the government of Venezuela to respect the principles enshrined in its own governing documents as well as those in the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights—including freedoms of speech and the press.

This resolution affirms what we know to be true: that the best way to address the legitimate grievances of the people is through genuine dialogue between all parties involved. It calls for our country to work with our partners in the Western Hemisphere and through regional organizations to help facilitate this dialogue and, importantly, to do everything possible to cease this senseless violence and create the space for peace. This resolution reflects that we stand in solidarity with the people of Venezuela.

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

Mr. Speaker, this resolution can only be the first step to hold Maduro and his fellow regime thugs accountable for their terrible and violent response, and their abuse of Venezuelan people's liberties and human rights.

I have already begun circulating a letter amongst my colleagues in the House addressed to President Obama asking him to take immediate action against Maduro and other Venezuelan officials who are responsible for violations of their people's human rights.

We are calling for the President to enact immediate sanctions against those officials under authorities granted to him under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act, including denying them visas to enter the United States, blocking their property, freezing their assets in the U.S., as well as prohibiting them from making any financial transactions in the U.S. This letter already enjoys bipartisan support. I invite my colleagues to join me in signing this letter, and I hope that the President will recognize the severity of this issue and do the right thing and take these important steps.

However, Mr. Speaker, I will file a bill this week that would force the implementation of these sanctions even if the President chooses not to use these authorities granted to him under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act.

Now is not the time to dither or sit on the fence. The United States must stand up for the people of Venezuela and for the American ideals of freedom, democracy, of the rule of law, of respect for human rights. Failure to hold Maduro and his officials accountable would be irresponsible and a failure of leadership.

On the resolution before us today, Mr. Speaker, I am optimistic that the U.S. House will pass my bill expressing support for the people of Venezuela as they protest peacefully for democracy. I hope that it will pass so that we can send a swift and strong message to Maduro that the United States House of Representatives has taken notice of the developments in Venezuela and that we will not allow these transgressions to pass by quietly.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to repeat what I said before, that I hope all member states of the Organization of American States will similarly call on the Venezuelan government to abide by their OAS Convention on Human Rights and the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

This is a very bipartisan resolution. I agree with everything that the gentlewoman from Florida said. In fact, I agree with everything that all of the speakers on both sides of the aisle have said.

The United States stands for freedom in the world, and I think it is very important that the Congress of the United States speaks out loudly and clearly when people's rights are being trampled on, as is the situation in Venezuela today.

So again, I want to thank the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), and I want to thank Chairman ROYCE, who once again has shown in such a bipartisan way that members of the Foreign Affairs Committee work closely together because both parties share a love of freedom and democracy. Both parties care very much that freedom and democracy around the world takes root. I can think of nothing more

bipartisan than to stand up for freedom and democracy all over the world, and when a country has its rights trampled by the government that is supposed to protect it, it is time that we in the United States Congress say enough: we are not going to sweep this under the rug. We are going to speak out loudly and forcefully against it.

I again thank Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN and Chairman ROYCE.

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

Mr. Speaker, I want to reiterate my strong thanks to the chairman of our committee, Mr. ROYCE, and to our esteemed ranking member, Mr. ENGEL. Both of them have been very present and very energized on the United States House of Representatives speaking in a clear voice in favor of democracy, the rule of law, freedom, and liberties being respected by the Maduro regime, and so far we have seen the opposite be true.

I want to again suggest to my colleagues that passing this resolution of solidarity with the peaceful protesters of Venezuela is an important first step, and we hope that those who support this cause will follow-up with my office and sign the letter to President Obama asking for economic sanctions against human rights violators and also co-sponsor my bill that follows and tracks that same letter.

With that, Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 488, 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.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

□ 1500

UNITED STATES-ISRAEL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP ACT OF 2014

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 938) to strengthen the strategic alliance between the United States and Israel, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 938

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE AND TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act of 2014”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents for this Act is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title and table of contents.

Sec. 2. Findings.

Sec. 3. Declaration of policy.

TITLE I—UNITED STATES-ISRAEL STRATEGIC ALLIANCE

Sec. 101. Amendments to the United States-Israel Enhanced Security Cooperation Act of 2012.

Sec. 102. Authorization of assistance for Israel.

Sec. 103. United States-Israel cooperation on cyber-security.

Sec. 104. Statement of United States Policy Regarding Israel's defense systems.

Sec. 105. Report on other matters.

Sec. 106. Statement of policy.

Sec. 107. Sense of Congress.

TITLE II—UNITED STATES-ISRAEL ENERGY COOPERATION

Sec. 201. United States-Israel energy cooperation.

TITLE III—OFFSET

Sec. 301. Offset.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The turmoil in the Middle East poses a serious threat to United States national security interests and requires cooperation with allies that are willing to work with the United States in pursuit of shared objectives.

(2) The October 31, 1998, Memorandum of Agreement signed by President Clinton and Prime Minister Netanyahu commits the United States to working jointly with Israel towards enhancing Israel's defensive and deterrent capabilities and upgrading the framework of the United States-Israel strategic and military relationships, as well as the technological cooperation between both countries.

(3) On August 16, 2007, the United States and Israel signed a Memorandum of Understanding reaffirming United States commitment to the security of Israel and establishing a 10-year framework for incremental increases in United States military assistance to Israel.

(4) The Memorandum of Understanding signed two years later on January 16, 2009 reaffirmed the United States commitment and noted “the security, military and intelligence cooperation between the United States and Israel”.

(5) The United States and Israel conduct a semi-annual Strategic Dialogue. The Department of State, in a statement following the July 12, 2012, meeting of the Strategic Dialogue, noted that the discussions focused on such issues of mutual concern as “Iran's continued quest to develop nuclear weapons, which the United States and Israel are both determined to prevent” and “how the continued violence of the Syrian regime against its citizens [assisted by Iran and Hezbollah] could also lead to severe consequences for the entire region”.

SEC. 3. DECLARATION OF POLICY.

Congress declares that Israel is a major strategic partner of the United States.

TITLE I—UNITED STATES-ISRAEL STRATEGIC ALLIANCE

SEC. 101. AMENDMENTS TO THE UNITED STATES-ISRAEL ENHANCED SECURITY COOPERATION ACT OF 2012.

(a) UNITED STATES ACTIONS TO ASSIST IN THE DEFENSE OF ISRAEL AND PROTECT UNITED STATES INTERESTS.—Section 4 of the United States-Israel Enhanced Security Cooperation Act of 2012 (Public Law 112-150; 22 U.S.C. 8603) is amended—

(1) by striking “It is the sense of Congress that the United States Government should”