

Mr. Speaker, the lack of a birth certificate denies children their fundamental human rights that we as Americans oftentimes take for granted. This bill would make it U.S. policy to encourage the registration of all children worldwide and make sure that girls do truly count.

With that, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

I want to once again thank Mr. ROYCE and Mr. ENGEL for their support and leadership in this.

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

I want to again thank the chairman and thank Mr. CHABOT.

Getting children registered at birth helps to get them off to a good start. This bill encourages governments to enact laws and policies that give all children, including girls, a chance to be full participants in society. So I strongly support this bill and urge my colleagues to do so as well.

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

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Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, before I close, I would like to also mention the contributions of Congresswoman BETTY MCCOLLUM and Congressman CHRIS SMITH.

CHRIS SMITH is the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations. He is also an original cosponsor of this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I want to thank the distinguished chairman for yielding and for his leadership in helping to bring this legislation to the floor, and especially Chairman CHABOT for his Girls Count Act of 2013. I am happy and thankful to be an original cosponsor and to urge the House to vote for it.

Mr. Speaker, in many parts of the world, girls are discriminated against simply for being female. Indeed, this blatant disregard for the value of the girl child often begins in the womb, especially in countries such as China and India, where we see the horrific practice of sex-selection abortion. This cruel practice, in turn, has led to a gender imbalance that has fed other crimes against women, especially sex trafficking, which has risen exponentially in the People's Republic of China because of the missing daughters, because of this discrimination against the girl child in utero.

Let me point out that, in her book, "Unnatural Selection: Choosing Boys over Girls, and the Consequences of a World Full of Men," Mara Hvistendahl traces the history of sex selection to population control. Again, we don't count the girl as being of meaning. Of course, this is talking about a physical count, so we have a record of these young ladies, of these young girls, but

there are consequences, again, that continue throughout the life or the lack of because she is destroyed early on.

Hvistendahl writes—and I will only mention this briefly—that there are over 160 million missing girls in Asia—in China, mostly, and in India. It is a direct result of sex-selection abortion, and that discrimination of the girl child has profound implications for the region and for the world and, of course, for all of those girls who have lost their lives.

Again, I want to thank Mr. CHABOT for this important legislation and BETTY MCCOLLUM. This is a very important step forward in making sure we know where the girls are after being counted so they can fully participate in society.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I will close now, and I will urge my colleagues to vote for this important bill.

I thank the chairman, Mr. CHABOT, Mr. SMITH, and Ms. MCCOLLUM.

This is a bipartisan, important piece of legislation, and I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support it.

I yield back the balance of my time. Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

The point I would make in closing is that, in the wake of the horrors we have seen perpetrated by ISIS against women and Boko Haram against schoolgirls—kidnapping and enslaving them and robbing them of their freedom—we had one of these girls testify before our committee. She had narrowly escaped Boko Haram but lost her mother and her father.

I know so many of us are deeply concerned about the plight of women and girls around the world, and this bill recognizes the suffering and aims to empower those who have been cast into the shadows of their society. Birth registration is one of the first steps in the fight to preserve an individual's basic rights under the law. It is also a critical means to ensuring the full participation of women and of girls in communities and schools. Let's help girls count. That is what this does.

Again, I want to thank Mr. CHABOT and BETTY MCCOLLUM and Mr. CHRIS SMITH of New Jersey, as well, for their leadership on this measure, which I encourage all Members to support.

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. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3398, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONDEMNING IRAN FOR HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the reso-

lution (H. Res. 754) condemning the Government of Iran for its gross human rights violations.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 754

Whereas Iran is a member of the United Nations and a signatory to both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, among other international human rights treaties, without reservation;

Whereas in violation of these and other international obligations, officials of the Government of Iran continue to perpetrate gross violations of the fundamental human rights of the Iranian people;

Whereas Iranian women are increasingly subject to heinous acid attacks, either condoned by, or sponsored by, the Government of Iran, through the Basij and other vigilante groups;

Whereas the Parliament of Iran recently enacted a law providing legal protection to private citizens to enforce a strict Islamic dress code and other behavior prescribed under Sharia law, emboldening the Basij and other vigilante groups;

Whereas the Government of Iran "manipulates the electoral process", according to the United States Department of State's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2013, "severely limit[ing] citizens' right to change their government peacefully through free and fair elections";

Whereas following voting irregularities that resulted in the election of President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, the Government of Iran brutally suppressed peaceful political dissent from wide segments of civil society during the Green Revolution in 2009 in a cynical attempt to retain its undemocratic grip on power;

Whereas the Government of Iran has kept the principal leaders of the Green Revolution, Mir Hussein Moussavi and Mehdi Karroubi, under house arrest since February 2011;

Whereas the United States Department of State consistently finds that Iranian authorities have "limited freedom of association through threats, intimidation, the imposition of arbitrary requirements on organizations, and the arrests of group leaders and members";

Whereas the United States Department of State's Virtual Embassy Tehran website highlights human rights violations and abuses in Iran on a weekly basis;

Whereas the Government of Iran continues to restrict freedom of speech and peaceful assembly, particularly for journalists and human rights activists;

Whereas the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Situation of Human Rights in the Islamic Republic of Iran found in its August 2014 report that the laws and policies of the Government of Iran "continue to place overly broad restrictions on the rights to freedom of expression and access to information", including "severe content restrictions, intimidation and prosecution of Internet users and limitations on Internet access through throttling and filtering";

Whereas the ability of religious freedom and human rights activists to freely express themselves, and mobilize civil society, is actively thwarted by the Government of Iran;

Whereas the Special Rapporteur found that the Government of Iran continues to apply capital punishment to offenders convicted of crimes below the international human rights law threshold of "most serious crimes"; political prisoners; and juvenile offenders, including 8 individuals in 2014 believed to be

less than 18 years of age at the time of their alleged crimes;

Whereas Iranian women continue to face legal and societal discrimination, as well as rampant domestic violence, which is not specifically prohibited under domestic law;

Whereas, on October 25, 2014, Iranian authorities executed Reyhaneh Jabbari, an Iranian woman convicted of killing a man she said she stabbed in self-defense during a sexual assault, an execution preceded by the lack of due process, including a reported forced confession;

Whereas the United States Department of State issued a statement condemning Jabbari's execution and calling on Iran to "respect the fair trial guarantees afforded to its people under Iran's own laws and its international obligations";

Whereas the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom found in its 2014 Annual Report that the Government of Iran "continues to engage in systematic, ongoing, and egregious violations of religious freedom, including prolonged detention, torture, and executions based primarily or entirely upon the religion of the accused";

Whereas the Government of Iran persecutes such religious minority groups as the Baha'is, Christians, Sufi, Sunni, and dissenting Shi'a Muslims (such as imprisoned Ayatollah Hossein Kazemeyni Boroujerdi) through harassment, arrests, and imprisonment, during which detainees have routinely been beaten, tortured, and killed;

Whereas since 1999, the United States Department of State has repeatedly designated Iran as a "country of particular concern" for severe violations of religious freedom pursuant to the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (Public Law 105-292), most recently on July 28, 2014;

Whereas the Government of Iran has long persecuted with particular intensity the Baha'i community, the largest non-Muslim religious minority in Iran, who number at least 300,000, and are viewed as "heretics", and therefore are subjected to repression on the grounds of apostasy;

Whereas according to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, since 1979, Iranian authorities have killed or executed more than 200 Baha'i leaders;

Whereas ordinary Iranian citizens who belong to the Baha'i faith are disproportionately targeted, interrogated, and detained under the pretext of national security;

Whereas senior governmental, military, and public security officials in Iran are responsible for ordering, controlling, and committing gross human rights violations that, in many cases, represent national policies of the Iranian regime;

Whereas the United States Department of the Treasury, pursuant to section 413 of the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 (22 U.S.C. 8753), issued a General License in September 2013 to permit the exportation of services and the transfer of funds for activities related to human rights and democracy building projects in Iran, which facilitate United States non-governmental organizations' activities that increase Iranian access to information and freedom of expression;

Whereas since 2010, the United States Department of the Treasury, in consultation with the United States Department of State, has sanctioned 19 Iranian officials and 18 Iranian entities for their involvement or complicity in serious human rights abuses or in restricting the freedom of expression or assembly of the Iranian people;

Whereas the most recent designation was for Morteza Tamaddom, former Governor-General of Tehran Province, designated May 23, 2014, under Executive Order 13628 for his

involvement in censorship and other activities that limit the freedom of expression and freedom of assembly of Iran's citizens;

Whereas the United States led the effort in the United Nations Human Rights Council to renew the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Iran in order to further expose Iranian human rights abuses; and

Whereas it is important that the President of the United States consistently and rigorously exercise the statutory authorities granted by the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 and the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 to impose sanctions on officials of the Government of Iran and other individuals directly responsible for human rights abuses, engaging in censorship, or engaging in the diversion of goods intended for the people of Iran; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) calls on the Government of Iran to abide by all of its international and domestic obligations with respect to human rights and civil liberties, including freedoms of assembly, speech, and press;

(2) deplores the dramatic rise in executions of Iranian citizens by authorities since the election of President Hassan Rouhani in June 2013;

(3) condemns, in particular, the recent cruel execution of Reyhaneh Jabbari, an Iranian woman convicted of killing a man she said she stabbed in self-defense during a sexual assault;

(4) deplores the Government of Iran's mistreatment of its religious minorities, including through the deprivation of life, liberty, and property;

(5) condemns, in particular, the Government of Iran for its relentless persecution of its Baha'i minority;

(6) calls on the Government of Iran to release all political prisoners and prisoners of conscience;

(7) notes that the Administration has designated only one Iranian person for the commission of serious human rights abuses under the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act, as amended, since May 30, 2013;

(8) urges the President to increase the utilization of all available authorities, including the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010, to impose sanctions on officials of the Government of Iran and other individuals directly responsible for serious human rights abuses, including by freezing those individuals' assets and barring their entry into the United States;

(9) urges the United States Government to adopt and implement the following recommendations of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom with respect to Iran—

(A) continue to seek that violations of freedom of religion or belief and related human rights are part of multilateral or bilateral discussions with the Government or Iran whenever possible, and continue to work closely with European and other allies to apply pressure through a combination of advocacy, diplomacy, and targeted sanctions;

(B) continue to speak out publicly and frequently at the highest levels about the severe religious freedom abuses in Iran, press for and work to secure the release of all prisoners of conscience, and highlight the need for the international community to hold authorities accountable in specific cases; and

(C) continue to call on Iran to cooperate fully with the United Nations Special Rapporteur on the Human Rights Situation in Iran, including allowing the Special

Rapporteur, as well as the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief, to visit and continue to support an annual United Nations General Assembly resolution condemning severe violations of human rights, including freedom of religion or belief in Iran and calling for officials responsible for such violations to be held accountable;

(10) condemns the undemocratic elections process that denies Iranians the ability to freely choose their own government; and

(11) stands with the people of Iran who seek the opportunity to freely elect a government of their choosing.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise today in support of this resolution, which condemns the Government of Iran for its gross human rights violations.

This bipartisan resolution, which I have introduced together with my good friend from New York—the ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, ELIOT ENGEL—comes at a very important moment. The administration, together with the world's powers, is seeking a diplomatic solution to Iran's nuclear program. We all want this outcome, though, at this point, it is unclear how an agreement that is in the long-term national security interests of the United States can be reached.

One thing is clear: we can have no illusions about the true nature of the Iranian regime. The history of rogue regimes teaches us that the manner in which these governments treat their own people is a pretty good indicator of how they will treat their neighbors and of whether they will abide by international agreements. This is a regime that has systematically violated the fundamental human rights of large segments of Iranian society since embarking upon the Revolution that brought it to power in 1979. It is a regime that rules by force, preventing the people of Iran from choosing their own government.

The world saw the undemocratic nature of this regime back in 2009 when millions of Iranians took to the streets to peacefully protest a stolen election. Not many are going to forget the images of the young girl bleeding to death in the capital city there, and today, the leaders of the Green Revolution opposition movement are confined to

their homes, they are under house arrest, and, of course, at the time, thousands were imprisoned, many disappeared, and hundreds were tortured. It is a regime that has brutally suppressed the voice of human rights activists and journalists and religious minorities. But what I want to focus on today is the plight of women, who, in particular, face heinous treatment.

Recently, the parliament in Iran enacted a law. What they were responding to were acid attacks that had occurred because young men in this Basij militia had taken it on their own responsibility to go up to women who were uncovered and throw acid in their faces. The reason for the enactment of the law—which followed the harassment and arrest of a human rights activist, a woman who protested the fact that young men were themselves taking on this responsibility of enacting shari'a law, and doing it sometimes by motorcycle, driving by and throwing the acid, sometimes by walking up to the women—was that they were doing this with impunity. The state, the government, was not coming in. The argument that these young men were making was, it is shari'a law that they do this, so this is our enforcement mechanism.

What strikes me is the brutality of the law passed by parliament that would enact a law providing legal protection to citizens to enforce a strict Islamic dress code and other behavior prescribed under shari'a law. In other words, it is cover for these young men. It says if you are going to go out there and if you are going to enforce the Islamic revolution, and you are going to do it by throwing acid, you now have protection under the courts to do it.

This law will embolden these Basij. It will embolden them and other vigilante groups, who in recent months have prowled the streets of Iran's cities, conducting these cruel acid attacks on innocent women. I was going to hold up one of these pictures today, but I thought better of it. I think what we should do is appeal to reason here and make an appeal to the parliament in Iran and say, Reverse this law. Reverse this act. You are only going to encourage more acid attacks.

Let me underscore this point: today, Iranian women face the terror of knowing that state-sanctioned vigilantes may attack them by dousing them with corrosive acid, disfiguring them and blinding them. This is an unspeakable reality there. In 2014, the women of Iran, frankly, are under siege, not by an external force but by their own theocratic government. This is not the history of Cyrus the Great. Iran was the home of the first human rights document thousands of years ago. That was Persian culture. What is this?

We who live in freedom have a moral responsibility to condemn this brutal regime and insist that it treat its people with the dignity and respect that they deserve. This resolution stands for the principle that U.S. foreign policy

can and must pursue strategic objectives like the dismantling of Iran's nuclear program while promoting the importance of democracy and human rights. Ultimately, the best chance for a peaceful Iran is a democratic Iran. These two go hand in hand.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in strong support of H. Res. 754, a resolution condemning the Government of Iran for its gross human rights violations.

When President Hassan Rouhani was elected in June 2013, he came to office with a reputation as a so-called “moderate.” Some hoped that the human rights situation inside Iran would improve. A year later, we know that was a false hope. In fact, on so many fronts, things have gotten worse.

It is interesting when people say Rouhani is a moderate. No moderates were allowed to run for President in the Iranian election. There were six hard-liners at the end who were allowed to run. Rouhani may be the most moderate of those six hard-liners, but he is still a hard-liner, and I think we are seeing it time and time and time again. In fact, we don't even really know that he has the power to make decisions. Supreme Leader Khamenei is the one who really makes all of those decisions. So, while we can hope for certain things, I think we have to deal with things, unfortunately, as they are and not as we wish they were.

For example, Iranian authorities have dramatically escalated the number of executions of Iranian citizens. This is from the so-called “moderate” Rouhani regime. According to the U.N., there were 852 executions between July 2013 and June 2014.

Last month, Iran executed Reyhaneh Jabbari. She was convicted of killing a man whom she apparently stabbed in self-defense while she was being sexually assaulted. That evidence wasn't allowed to be a part of her trial. While she was in prison, awaiting execution, she was tortured.

We all remember the massive protests, as the chairman mentioned, after the fraudulent 2009 Iranian elections. We all remember the images of tens of thousands of Iranians—brave Iranian citizens—taking to the streets, and we all remember how the Iranian government responded—sending the Basij militia to brutally beat peaceful protesters. The leaders of that Green Revolution remain under house arrest to this very day.

Religious minorities also face constant danger in Iran. This is especially true for members of the Baha'i faith. The Baha'i people are frequently detained and interrogated by Iranian security forces. Since 1979, hundreds of Baha'i leaders have been executed.

The United States has helped to shine a light on Iran's human rights violations. We have pushed the U.N. Human Rights Council to continue the work of the Special Rapporteur on

Iran. Now, I have been one of the strongest critics of the Human Rights Council and its outrageous bias against Israel, but this Rapporteur has done important work to reveal the scale of human rights abuses in Iran.

Since 2010, the administration has sanctioned 19 Iranian officials and 18 Iranian entities. We have gone after them for their involvement or complicity in serious human rights abuses or in restricting the basic freedoms of the Iranian people. I am proud of the role that Congress has provided in putting forth these sanctions.

The most recent designation was for Morteza Tamaddon. He was the governor-general of Tehran Province. On May 23 of this year, we singled him out for his involvement in censorship and other activities that limit the freedom of expression and the freedom of assembly of Iran's citizens. This designation occurred even while the P5+1 is negotiating with Iran on its illicit nuclear program. Even as those negotiations continue, we cannot and must not turn a blind eye to the horrific abuses taking place in Iran every single day.

□ 1600

The resolution we are now considering urges the administration to use every tool at its disposal to target, expose, and punish those who violate the human rights of the Iranian people because, at the end of the day, Mr. Speaker, despite the sharp differences between our governments, we have no ill will toward the people of Iran, to the citizens of Iran.

They are, unfortunately, oppressed by a government that calls itself their government, but it is really a brutal oppressor of the Iranian people.

On the contrary, I believe the people of our two nations should be natural friends. Iran would be the natural U.S. ally in the region, but because of the Iranian regime, this of course cannot happen and will not happen as long as they are in power.

I hope that this resolution will demonstrate to the people of Iran, who are our friends—not the government, but the people of Iran—that we join them in seeking a future for their country based on respect for democracy, human rights, and the rule of law.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

I thank the chairman, as always, for his cooperation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 754, condemning the government of Iran for its gross human rights violations, authored by my good friend and colleague, Chairman Ed ROYCE of California.

I want to thank him, especially on the eve of the November 24 deadline for the Iranian-U.S. talks on nuclear, as it is very important to have this discussion on the floor of the House, so your timing as well as the substance is deeply appreciated by all, especially the victims of Iran.

Ironically, Iran wants the world to lift sanctions and trust them with nuclear capabilities, despite ongoing reckless and violent disregard for even the most basic of human rights of its own citizens, as well as U.S. citizens.

U.N. special rapporteur for human rights in Iran, Dr. Ahmed Shaheed, noted in a March 2014 statement that hundreds of individuals remain in some form of confinement for exercising their basic rights, including 179 Baha'i, 97 Sunni Muslims, 49 Christians, and 14 Dervish Muslims.

Mr. Speaker, it has now been nearly 2½ years since American pastor Saeed Abedini has seen or hugged his children, Rebecca and Jacob, or his wife, Naghmeh; and she has been a tireless advocate on his behalf. She was back here yesterday on Capitol Hill, pleading for her husband.

Members will recall that Pastor Abedini was arrested in Iran in September of 2012. He was in Iran to help orphans. Orphans. He was arrested while he was there, and he was there with the full knowledge and consent of the Iranian Government.

I have chaired two congressional hearings on Saeed Abedini. His wife testified at both, and to hear this noble, brave, and loving wife present her husband's case brings tears to your eyes.

She testified at a hearing that FRANK WOLF had chaired previous to the two that I had, and you could hear a pin drop when she told her story and told about the agony that both she and her family—especially her two young children—experience, knowing that their father has now been given an 8-year sentence and has been subjected to torture of many, many kinds.

We are also concerned about Robert Levinson, a retired agent of the FBI. His daughter lives in my district. That family is in utter agony. He got 7 years.

Amir Hekmati, a 31-year-old retired U.S. Marine, disappeared while visiting his grandmother in Iran in 2011. He got 10 years.

Now, recently, Jason Rezaian, a Washington Post reporter, has disappeared.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution sends a clear message to the Iranians and to the world that we care about human rights, but I would also ask that the President of the United States invite to the White House the family members of these Americans unjustly held captive in Iran and to ask, petition, push for, and link to our negotiations the release of these Americans and for a fuller expression of human rights in Iran.

I thank Chairman ROYCE for yielding the time.

Mr. ENGEL. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PERRY), a member of the Foreign Affairs, Homeland Security, and Transportation Committees.

Mr. PERRY. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman ROYCE for this legislation, and I offer my strongest support because, if nothing else, it reminds us of what the Iranian regime really is at its foundational core, what its essence is.

With much of today's focus on the prospects of a nuclear deal with Iran and the potential military cooperation of our Nation with theirs against ISIS, we absolutely cannot and must not forget the unacceptable and appalling human rights abuses the Iranian regime commits on a daily basis.

Just today, a U.N. resolution condemned Iran's numerous human rights abuses, which include an "alarmingly high frequency" of the use of the death penalty, the persecution and imprisonment of religious and ethnic minorities, and the suppression of multiple individual freedoms, and the list just goes on.

Firsthand reports continue to emerge, describing how, of the over 800 documented executions over the past year, 80 percent were for drug offenses, and legal due process was almost never given to defendants. We don't even know if the defendants committed any offenses whatsoever.

Also, disturbingly, in 2014 alone, at least eight people under the age of 18 at the time they allegedly committed their crimes were executed.

Mr. Speaker, President Hassan Rouhani promised to improve the Iranian regime's human rights record. Really? Does anybody take that seriously at all? Realistically, the Iranian regime has only ramped up the oppression of its citizens.

We absolutely must remain clear-eyed when dealing with this extremist regime in all accounts, whether it is a nuclear deal, whether it is in cooperation against ISIS, and certainly when it comes to their human rights violations.

Mr. ENGEL. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. CLAWSON), a member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs and the Committee on Homeland Security.

Mr. CLAWSON of Florida. I thank the chairman.

Mr. Speaker, I am here in support of H. Res. 754, and I wholeheartedly support this resolution, and I commend Chairman ROYCE for his important work and leadership on this issue.

Any successful negotiation must be based on mutual trust and respect. Trusting and respecting the Iranian regime as an equal member of the world's community of nuclear power producers would be a tragic mistake, in my view. Iran has not earned our trust or Israel's trust or the world's trust. For

35 years, Iran has done anything but earn our trust.

It is time for Iran to free Christian pastor Saeed Abedini. Iran's horrific human rights violations, their state sponsorship of terrorism, their public condemnations of our own country, and their repeated denials of Israel's right to exist spell potential disaster here, I am afraid. Let's not trust the untrustworthy.

This dilemma reminds me of a scorpion and the frog fable that my friend from Arkansas, TOM COTTON, recently used. A frog is about to cross a river when he is asked for a ride by a scorpion. Now, the frog knew that scorpions are poisonous and untrustworthy. He knew that, if the scorpion stung him on the way across the river, they would both drown.

When the frog asked for assurance from the scorpion, the scorpion replied, "Of course, I won't sting you. If I do, we will both drown." Halfway across the river, of course, the scorpion struck, and as they were both headed for their demise, the frog asked, "Why did you sting me?" The scorpion responded, "Because it is my nature."

Even though the frog knew that the safe way to go was to say "no" to the scorpion, he caved in, dismissed better judgment, and the result was tragic.

Let us not repeat the mistake of the frog. We cannot give Iran a free ride across the Rubicon to nuclear weapons. We must not hand the keys of nuclear proliferation to a scorpionlike regime that cannot be trusted.

So what do we do? We can't do a bad deal. We can't walk away, but we also can't trust Iran. What must Iran do to gain our trust? Treat its people right. Treat its neighbors right. Treat Israel right, with dignity and respect. I think we have many rivers to cross before we get to that state.

As we work on this Iranian nuclear dilemma, which will take years, we need to see concrete progress toward the civil liberties that have been mentioned today. They must stop the crimes against humanity exposed in Chairman ROYCE's resolution.

To gain our trust, Iran must acknowledge the right of Israel to exist.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MARCHANT). The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentleman an additional 30 seconds.

Mr. CLAWSON of Florida. I thank the chairman.

Mr. Speaker, in the 1930s, the world trusted a scorpion, thinking that we had achieved peace in our time, and millions paid the price for that mistake with their lives. Let's not stand here someday and admit that we messed up because we trusted an Iranian scorpion.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. ELLISON).

Mr. ELLISON. I thank the gentleman from New York for the time.

Mr. Speaker, I have said time and time again that the Iranian Government must improve the status of

human rights in their country. Let's not pretend though that this resolution is taking place at this time outside of any context. There is a context, and the context is that we are closer than we have ever been to reaching a peaceful agreement with Iran on nuclear weapons.

I don't know what is going to happen on November 24, and I suspect the people who do know aren't telling the public just yet, but I do know that we have made substantial progress and that we are close.

The context is important that we should stand with the people of Iran and stand for their human rights. I absolutely believe that that is the right thing to do; therefore, I ask for a "yes" vote on this.

I have to ask the question: Is this the most well-timed time for this resolution? I do worry that we could undermine the negotiations, but the four corners of this resolution are right, so I am a "yes" vote.

I think today's resolution, which highlights the human rights abuses in Iran, also could be improved if it included words and language about the best way to bring those abuses to an end.

I believe improving human rights in Iran is much more likely if we secure a nuclear agreement. The best way to empower human rights leaders within Iran is to engage, not isolate.

Increased sanctions and the threat of war hurts human rights activists because it allows the hard-liners in Iran to claim that they are under imminent threat and, therefore, there is no time or space or room for human rights. I believe that a nuclear agreement will actually increase the likelihood for human rights advocacy.

I don't want to see us go back to the days when we talked in terms of the "axis of evil." It didn't improve the set freedom and security of Americans or anyone. I liked the fact that we have embarked on the path of diplomacy.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentleman has expired.

Mr. ENGEL. I yield the gentleman an additional 1 minute.

Mr. ELLISON. President Rouhani has prioritized diplomacy, and I think this is an important opportunity that we should pursue.

In the final analysis, human rights are what the United States should always stand for, and we in this Congress should never not stand for human rights. I am proud that we are clear on human rights in this resolution.

I simply want to admonish and warn us that taking action that could undermine very delicate negotiations may not be the best timing that we have ever pursued and that for the last 30 years—and I hope for the next 30 years—we will always raise the banner of human rights whenever and wherever, but I think we should be sensitive of the reality of the moment that we are in.

Let me just say thank you to the brave souls who stand up for human

rights under very difficult conditions in Iran.

□ 1615

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 2 minutes to respond.

One of the reasons the timing on this is important is because this is the timing that the Iranian regime has chosen to pass legislation that would protect those young men in the Basij who carry out these acid attacks against women. One of the reasons I am bringing this bill to the floor is because I am concerned about what it tells us about a regime that, rather than come to the defense of these women who admittedly were in violation of the dress code in terms of their facial, in terms of their mode of dress, to allow individuals in a theocratic country to make the decisions that they are the arbitrator of what is shari'a law and then to exonerate them by saying it is the right of the individual to step in against another and enforce shari'a law rather than have the state do it, this is a theocratic state that is taking a principle against the individual, against individual freedom, and especially against rights of women to an extra step that is so injurious to human liberty, but also the fact that they would do this now and that they would be so unconcerned that we might not even respond to this or that the international community would have a reaction to this, I think it demands a reaction. Because if we do not, in the court of international opinion, hold them to account for these kinds of acts in their Parliament, what is the message that is given to those who are encouraged to further violate women's rights and minority rights in Iran? That is why I am pushing this bill today.

Mr. Speaker, I had a conversation a little over a week ago with a group of Iranian American women about their experiences in Iran and their reaction to this parliamentary act and their reaction to the acid attacks which are increasing in number to a truly alarming percentage. There have been over a dozen of these now. So that is why the timing of the legislation. It is in response to this. In the process, it catalogs the other abuses that the regime recently has undertaken under President Rouhani at a time when we thought they might put a different foot forward to the international community.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time to close.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to send a message of support to the Iranian people that they build a better future for themselves and their children. Today this House exposes the gross violations of human rights by the Iranian regime. The Iranian people deserve better. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, there were observers that were tempted to believe that Iran's President Rouhani would

usher in a more tolerant attitude at home. I think many of us suspected that might be the case because he did occasionally offer less antagonistic rhetoric than his predecessor, even if he had had the history he did have in the security services. But it turns out that was wrong. That assumption was wrong.

In a new report, the U.N. Special Rapporteur has documented an alarming increase in the number of executions, including political prisoners, juveniles, and religious minorities, such as the peaceful Baha'i, since President Rouhani took office in August of 2013. The motif of this regime is becoming a religious dissident swinging by the neck from a crane, if you watch the news coming out of Iran.

I won't again articulate my concerns about these acid attacks that are going on, but this comes, I think, at a time when millions of Iranians yearn for basic freedoms—basic freedoms—that we in the West take for granted.

Mr. Speaker, I think it is incumbent upon all of us, as the House is doing today, to stand with the people of Iran who suffer under this theocracy and to speak out.

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. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 754.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MALALA YOUSAFZAI SCHOLARSHIP ACT

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3583) to expand the number of scholarships available to Pakistani women under the Merit and Needs-Based Scholarship Program, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3583

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Malala Yousafzai Scholarship Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings:

(1) On October 9, 2012, Malala Yousafzai was shot in the head by Pakistani Taliban on her way home from school.

(2) In late 2008, Malala began writing a blog for BBC Urdu under a pseudonym pressing the case for access to education for women and girls despite objections from the Pakistani Taliban.

(3) Malala's advocacy for the education of women and girls made her a target of the Taliban.

(4) The Taliban called Malala's efforts to highlight the need for education for women and girls an "obscenity".