

Unfortunately, some key members of Congress advocate blocking any U.S. contribution to these additional funds. On December 3, Rep. Ryan Zinke (R-MT) introduced House Resolution 553, supported by several House committee chairs, urging that additional funding be blocked unless the IAEA releases confidential documents between it and Iran.

Release of these documents would violate the confidentiality of the IAEA, which has been universally regarded as necessary to ensure the cooperation of countries with inspection and verification agreements. Though the resolution is not legally binding, it sets a dangerous precedent for future legislation.

It is difficult to understand why Members of Congress would block verification of Iran's nuclear activities. Such a self-defeating move would only increase the potential for Iran to hide violations of the agreement by reducing the likelihood of detection.

We strongly urge Congress to ensure that the IAEA receives full funding to effectively monitor Iran's implementation of and compliance with the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action. Doing so will make the United States, its allies, and the world safer.

Sincerely,

Hans Blix, Director General Emeritus, IAEA; Maj. General Roger R. Blunt, USA (Ret.); Amb. Kenneth C. Brill (ret.), Former ambassador to the IAEA, Founding Director of the U.S. National Counterproliferation Center; Matthew Bunn, Professor, Managing the Atom Project, Belfer Center, Harvard University; Brig. Gen. Stephen A. Cheney, USMC (Ret.); Charles D. Ferguson, Ph.D., President, Federation of American Scientists, Former Naval Nuclear Officer; Trevor Findlay, Associate, Managing the Atom Project, Belfer Center, Harvard University; Brig. Gen. Evelyn "Pat" Foote, USA (Ret.); Lt. Gen. Robert Gard, USA (Ret.), Chairman Emeritus, Center for Arms Control & Non-Proliferation; Richard L. Garwin, Contributor to design and test of nuclear weapons, IBM Fellow Emeritus; Amb. Thomas Graham Jr. (ret.), Chairman, Lightbridge Corp.; Lt. Gen. Arlen D. Jameson, USAF (Ret.); Brig. Gen. John H. Johns, USA (Ret.), Ph.D., Professor Emeritus, National Defense University.

David Kay, Former IAEA Chief Weapons Inspector in Iraq (after first Gulf War); Lt. Gen. Claudia J. Kennedy, USA (Ret.); Daryl G. Kimball, Executive Director, Arms Control Association; Maj. Gen. Frederick H. Lawson, USA (Ret.); Edward P. Levine, Ph.D., Retired senior professional staff member, Senate Foreign Relations Committee; Jeffrey Lewis, Director of the East Asia Non-proliferation Program, Center for Non-proliferation Studies; Martin Mallin, Executive Director, Managing the Atom Project, Belfer Center, Harvard University; Laura Rockwood, Executive Director, Vienna Center for Disarmament and Non-Proliferation, Former Section Head, IAEA; Joan Rohlfing, President and COO, Nuclear Threat Initiative; Andrew K. Semmel, Former Deputy Assistant Secretary of State for Nuclear Nonproliferation and Policy; Lt. Gen. James M. Thompson, USA (Ret.), Vice Chair, Boise, ID Committee on Foreign Relations; Jim Walsh, Ph.D., Security Studies Program, MIT; Honorable Andy Weber, Former Assistant Secretary of Defense for Nuclear, Chemical and Biological Defense Programs.

MILITARY CONSTRUCTION AND VETERANS AFFAIRS AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2016

SPEECH OF

HON. SANDER M. LEVIN

OF MICHIGAN

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, December 17, 2015

Mr. LEVIN. Mr. Speaker, House Democrats did not include the excise tax when we approved the House version of ACA—it was added later by the Senate. I expressed concern about the impact of this provision from day one, and have worked to raise awareness of the problem. I am pleased with the provision in the budget calling for a two-year delay and voted for the Omnibus bill with this provision.

When it comes to reigning in health care cost growth, Democrats don't take a back seat to anybody. Indeed, that is one of the main aims of the healthcare law—one that has already had significant success.

But this excise tax will shift costs to employers, who, in turn, will shift more costs to employees, who will not make up for these costs with increased wages.

We need to use this two year delay to address this excise tax completely. In our continued efforts to control health costs, we must not harm consumers in the process and must continue to support working families.

A DAY IN HONOR OF JANET LANGHART COHEN

HON. CHARLES B. RANGEL

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 18, 2015

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in honor of Emmy nominated journalist, author and playwright Janet Langhart Cohen's one-act play, "Anne & Emmett." On October 23, 2015, at the MIST Harlem Cultural Center, I joined with the New Heritage Theatre Group, the Greater Harlem Chamber of Commerce and MIST Harlem to welcome playwright Janet Langhart Cohen to the Village of Harlem, where she presented the one-act play "Anne & Emmett," directed by Thomas W. Jones II. The play, "Anne and Emmett," focuses on an imaginary conversation between Anne Frank and Emmett Till, who were victims of religious intolerance and racial hatred. That evening, "Anne and Emmett" was filmed by The New Heritage Group under the supervision of celebrated director/producer and former Chair of Columbia University's Graduate Film Program, Professor Jamal Joseph.

The presentation of "Anne and Emmett" was made possible by RARIA (Race and Reconciliation in America), a not for profit organization co-founded by Janet Langhart Cohen, New York City Police Commissioner William J. Bratton and the New York City Police Academy. First premiered in 2009 at the United States Holocaust Museum, "Anne & Emmett," was conceived by Janet Langhart Cohen. The plays two main characters were Emmett Till, a 14-year-old boy whose brutal murder in Mississippi sixty years ago which sparked the modern civil rights movement; and the young

Holocaust victim Anne Frank, a Jewish girl who had to go into hiding during World War Two to avoid the Nazis and after almost two years in hiding she was discovered and deported to Bergen-Belsen Concentration Camp where she died. The play has received rave reviews during performances in Washington, DC, Indianapolis and Chicago.

Mrs. Cohen is passionate about ensuring Emmett Till's story is never forgotten; which she does daringly throughout the play. It has been presented to dignitaries, students, Supreme Court justices, and now, the NYPD and its recent classes of recruits. Her commitment and understanding of how vital Emmett Till's story is to our nation was heralded by the Till family last spring when they honored Mrs. Cohen with the "Women of Courage" award established to honor the memory of Emmett's mother, Mamie Till Mobley. Additionally, in 2014 Mrs. Cohen led the way to have a tree planted in memory of Emmett Till, at the United States Capitol.

To understand why she produced the play, one needs to learn where she came from. Janet Langhart Cohen grew up in segregated housing in Indianapolis, where the Indiana Ku Klux Klan rose to prominence in the early 1920s. Janet went on to attend Crispus Attucks High School and later moved to New York City, where she began her career in television. Her television career included stints at NBC, America Alive with Bruce Jenner, AM New York on ABC, WPIX-TV Channel 11, 9 Broadcast Plaza on WOR-TV and Entertainment Tonight. Mrs. Cohen has had the privilege of interviewing such luminaries as President Jimmy Carter, Margaret Thatcher, Rosa Parks, Mel Gibson, Arnold Schwarzenegger, Denzel Washington, Dan Rather, Oprah Winfrey, Whoopi Goldberg, Barbara Walters and Larry King, as well as David Duke former head of the Ku Klux Klan.

Janet married William S. Cohen, who at the time served as Secretary of Defense, under President William Jefferson Clinton, and became known as "First Lady of the Pentagon" due to her active and visible public role at the Defense Department. Mrs. Cohen spurred several initiatives aimed at morale and well-being of military and civilian employees at the Pentagon; which included the Military Family Forum, the Pentagon Pops concert series, the Secretary of Defense Annual Holiday Tour, and her own series of interviews on Pentagon TV, Special Assignment. She was given a volunteer position as "First Lady of the USO" and helped recruit celebrities and civilians to work with the United Service Organizations. Her many awards and honors include Hadassah Woman of the Year and The Zachary and Elizabeth Award for Distinguished Civilian Humanitarian Service for her work on behalf of members of the U.S. Armed Forces and their families. In President Bill Clinton's last State of the Union Address, he praised Mrs. Cohen for her enormous contribution to the welfare and morale of our men and women in uniform and their families.

Mr. Speaker, I joined with the New Heritage Theatre Group, the Greater Harlem Chamber of Commerce, MIST Harlem and the Village of Harlem to dedicate Friday, October 23, 2015 in honor of Janet Langhart Cohen for her life-long commitment to ending racial and religious intolerance and hatred in our Nation. I ask you and my colleagues to join me in recognition of this great unheralded American, Janet Langhart Cohen.

THE STATE OF WOMEN'S RIGHTS
IN AMERICAHON. SHEILA JACKSON LEE
OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, December 18, 2015

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, we face a real problem in America as it relates to the rights of women and how this will one day impact our young girls.

We live in a great country founded on principles of liberty, justice and equality.

Throughout history, we have grown and developed into a nation where women hold some of the most prestigious and powerful positions in our country and throughout the world, as scientists, astronauts, businesswomen, educators, government officials, Supreme Court justices, and hopefully one day soon, the President of our United States.

However, as a global champion and advocate of international human rights and the rule of law, the United States still has a long ways to go guaranteeing equal access to legal rights and protections for all women in America.

The United Nations Working Group on Discrimination against Women in the Law and Practice (U.N. Working Group) recently issued a sobering statement and assessment, with a full report to follow in June 2016, delineating an infringement on the rights of women in America.

Upon visiting several states throughout the country, including my home state of Texas, the U.N. Working Group concluded that women in the United States inexplicably lag behind international human rights standards.

Pointing to data and research on public and political representation, economic and social rights, and health and safety protections, experts in the U.N. Working Group boldly acknowledged that there is a myth that women in the United States already enjoy all of the expected standards of rights and protections because they live in America.

A woman's fundamental reproductive right is tied to their economic independence, empowerment and wellbeing of her family.

The reality is, women in the United States are experiencing continued discrimination and daunting disparities that curtail their ability to fully participate as equal members of society.

The primary areas and statistics noted, include the following:

Women have risen to some of the highest levels of legislative and executive representation over the years, yet with only 4 of 15 cabinet members, 19.4% of Congressional Members and an average of 24.9% of state legislatures, the U.S. ranks at only 72 in the global market of women represented in public and political positions.

While the number of women justices has significantly increased, women litigants' access to justice is severely limited.

Although women vote in higher percentages than men, women's access to voting is under attack in states like Alabama where increased voter ID requirements pose unprecedented barriers.

Women constitute nearly half of the US labor force, at a participation rate of 57%. Yet, equal economic opportunity is severely lacking given deficient or nonexistent mandatory standards for workplace accommodations for

pregnant women, post-natal mothers and persons with care responsibilities.

What also remains a shameful truth in America, is the gender wage gap which has remained at or near 21% over the past decade. Shockingly, women with higher levels of education experience the largest earning gaps, as do minority women regardless of educational attainment.

The percentage of women in poverty has increased over the past decade, from 12.1% to 14.5%, with a higher rate of poverty than men. As such, women are exposed to higher rates of homelessness and violence without adequate protections in place in shelters and housing support options.

Women in detention facilities throughout the country are also experiencing increasingly high rates of over-incarceration, sexual violence, shackling while pregnant, solitary confinement, lack of alternative custodial sentencing for women with dependent children, and inadequate access to health care and reentry programs.

Migrant women traveling to the U.S., many victims of trafficking and violence, including sexual violence, are kept in detention centers with children for prolonged periods of time.

Notably, the criminalization of women in prostitution places them in unjust, vulnerable and stigmatized situations that are contrary to international human rights law.

The U.N. has also pointed out that women, particularly black and LGBTQ women, in the U.S. experience deplorable police brutality and increased incidents of homicide by police.

Even though women own over 1/3 of firms in the U.S., primarily in small and medium sized businesses, these businesses face greater barriers in obtaining low cost capital from sources such as the Small Business Administration—which awards less than 5% of federal contracts to women-owned business.

Lastly, one of the most alarming deficiencies for women in America is the lack of access to basic health care and the imposition of devastating barriers to reproductive health and rights.

Too many women are suffering dire and deadly consequences.

Between 1990 and 2013, the maternal mortality rate for women in the U.S. has increased by 136%.

Black women are nearly 4 times more likely to die in childbirth, and states with high poverty rates have a 77% higher maternal mortality rate.

Our global experts and allies acknowledge that even though women's reproductive rights in America are constitutionally protected, access to reproductive health services are severely abridged by states' imposition of sweeping barriers and restrictions.

For instance, in many states, women must undergo unjustified and invasive medical procedures; endure groundless waiting periods; be subjected to harassment, violence or other threatening conditions that remain constant throughout all reproductive health care clinics; and forced to forgo treatment or engage in lengthy and costly travel due to closure of clinics faced with burdensome licensing conditions.

These restrictions disproportionately discriminate against poor women.

The United States can and should do better.

It is unacceptable that women in America are facing a reproductive health care crisis so

dire that the global community is denouncing it as a human rights violation.

Sadly, the direction States are taking will only further dismantle women's access to affordable and trustworthy reproductive healthcare.

Clinics are shutting down at alarming rates throughout the country as a result of devastating restrictions and barriers imposed throughout Texas.

A Texas statute known as HB2 (House Bill 2), was enacted several years ago claiming to promote women's health, when in fact it only set in motion dangerous restrictions on women's access to reproductive health care.

In addition to constant attacks on funding for reproductive health care clinics, abortion providers in Texas were forced to undergo impossible million dollar renovations and upgrades.

Denying hundreds of thousands of women health care services in Texas, nearly half of all reproductive health care clinics were forced to shut down, and now only 10 remain in the second largest state in the country.

Another moment will occur when the Supreme Court decides Whole Woman's Health v. Cole, which will decide the fate of the remaining clinics in Texas and throughout the nation.

No woman in America should be denied the dignity of being able to make choices about her body and healthcare.

Access to safe, legal and unhindered healthcare must be realized by all women.

A woman's right to choose to have an abortion is a constitutionally protected fundamental right.

More than 40 years ago in the landmark decision in *Roe v. Wade*, 410 U.S. 113, (1973), the U.S. Supreme Court ruled 7-2 that the right to privacy under the Due Process Clause of the 14th Amendment extends to a woman's decision to have an abortion.

More recently, in *Planned Parenthood v. Casey*, 505 U.S. 833 (1992), the Supreme Court upheld *Roe v. Wade* and further explained that states could not enact medically unnecessary regulations meant to create substantial obstacles for women seeking abortion services.

Yet, fairness and access to exercise constitutionally protected fundamental rights is trampled on and denied to millions of women.

We cannot ignore the unfairness of imbalanced protection and access to fundamentally protected rights for women in America when it is easier to purchase and lawfully possess a firearm—even for a person on the terrorist watchlist—than it is for a woman to exercise her constitutional right to terminate a pregnancy.

Mr. Speaker, this is neither fair nor right and it should not be rewarded.

As our nation continues to push back against horrific acts of violence at the hands of dangerous and irresponsible gun owners and gun dealers, and our nation's number one provider of women's healthcare continues to experience violent and deadly attacks on its personnel and facilities, it is time we find common ground.

A woman's right to choose to have an abortion and an individual's right to possess a firearm are both constitutionally protected fundamental rights.

I will be working with my colleagues to find ways to address the unfair and unjust disparity by reviewing and responding to unwarranted