

Ruppersberger	Sherman	Van Hollen
Rush	Sires	Vargas
Ryan (OH)	Slaughter	Veasey
Sánchez, Linda	Smith (WA)	Velázquez
T.	Speier	Visclosky
Sanchez, Loretta	Swalwell (CA)	Walz
Sarbanes	Takai	Wasserman
Schakowsky	Takano	Schultz
Schiff	Thompson (CA)	Waters, Maxine
Schrader	Thompson (MS)	Watson Coleman
Scott (VA)	Titus	Welch
Scott, David	Tonko	Wilson (FL)
Serrano	Torres	Yarmuth
Sewell (AL)	Tsongas	

NOT VOTING—12

Brady (TX)	Hudson	Pompeo
Brown (FL)	Kelly (IL)	Reichert
Culberson	Neal	Whitfield
Gutiérrez	Perlmutter	Yoho

□ 1049

So the resolution was agreed to.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with amendments in which the concurrence of the House is requested, a bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 2617. An act to amend the Fair Minimum Wage Act of 2007 to postpone a scheduled increase in the minimum wage applicable to American Samoa.

The message also announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 2078. An act to reauthorize the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, and for other purposes.

JUSTICE FOR VICTIMS OF IRANIAN TERRORISM ACT

Mr. ROYCE. Madam Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 449, I call up the bill (H.R. 3457) to prohibit the lifting of sanctions on Iran until the Government of Iran pays the judgments against it for acts of terrorism, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 449, the amendment in the nature of a substitute printed in House Report 114-273, is adopted and the bill, as amended, is considered read.

The text of the bill, as amended, is as follows:

H.R. 3457

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 “Justice for Victims of Iranian Terrorism Act”.

SEC. 2. PROHIBITION ON LIFTING OF SANCTIONS ON IRAN PENDING PAYMENT OF CERTAIN JUDGMENTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding any other provision of law, the President may not take any of the actions described in subsection (b) until the President has certified to the Congress that the Government of Iran

has paid each judgment against Iran that is described in subsection (c).

(b) ACTIONS DESCRIBED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The actions described in this subsection are the following:

(A) To waive, suspend, reduce, provide relief from, or otherwise limit the application of sanctions described in paragraph (2) or refrain from applying any such sanctions.

(B) To remove a foreign person listed in Attachment 3 or Attachment 4 to Annex II of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action from the list of specially designated nationals and blocked persons maintained by the Office of Foreign Asset Control of the Department of the Treasury.

(2) SANCTIONS DESCRIBED.—The sanctions described in this paragraph are—

(A) the sanctions described in sections 4 through 7.9 of Annex II of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action; and

(B) the sanctions described in any other agreement related to the nuclear program of Iran that includes the United States, commits the United States to take action, or pursuant to which the United States commits or otherwise agrees to take action, regardless of the form it takes, whether a political commitment or otherwise, and regardless of whether it is legally binding or not.

(c) JUDGMENTS.—A judgment is a judgment described in this subsection if it is a final judgment entered by the courts of the United States or of the States—

(1) that relates to a claim—

(A) that was brought against Iran or its political subdivisions, agencies, or instrumentalities (regardless of whether the claim was also brought, or the resulting judgment was also entered, against another defendant); and

(B) for which the court determined that Iran (or its political subdivisions, agencies, or instrumentalities, as the case may be) was not immune from the jurisdiction of the courts of the United States or of the States under section 1605A, or section 1605(a)(7) (as such section was in effect on January 27, 2008), of title 28, United States Code; and

(2) that was entered during the period beginning on April 24, 1996, and ending on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(d) JOINT COMPREHENSIVE PLAN OF ACTION DESCRIBED.—In this section, the term “Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action” means the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action, agreed to at Vienna on July 14, 2015, by Iran and by the People’s Republic of China, France, Germany, the Russian Federation, the United Kingdom and the United States, with the High Representative of the European Union for Foreign Affairs and Security Policy, and all implementing materials and agreements related to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to submit extraneous materials on this measure.

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

There was no objection.

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

I rise in strong support of this bill. This is the Justice for Victims of Iranian Terrorism Act.

I appreciate the work of the bill’s author, Mr. MEEHAN of Pennsylvania. He has worked very hard on this. There are about 100 cosponsors in this House.

On the Foreign Affairs Committee, we have made Iran the central focus of our work. As a matter of fact, we have had over 30 hearings and briefings so far on Iran and on the dangerous nuclear agreement that was struck with this state sponsor of terrorism.

Madam Speaker, since coming to power in the late 1970s—well, 1979—the Iranian regime has funded terrorist groups such as Hezbollah and Hamas and directed their operations.

Now, the way they do that is they have a special force. It is called the Quds Force. It is headed up by General Soleimani. He is in charge of assassinations outside the country, assassinations of U.S. targets, by the way, besides other targets.

Recently you will have heard of General Soleimani because—by the way, European sanctions are going to be lifted on him under this agreement, but you will have read or heard that he traveled—he traveled—to Moscow to meet with Putin. As a result of those meetings, you will notice the discussions about weapons coming from Russia into Syria into the hands of the Quds Forces.

So we look at what he has done and what U.S. courts have done as a result. There have been 80 separate attacks on U.S. installations and U.S. individuals. We remember the 1983 bombing of the U.S. marine barracks in Beirut, the 1996 bombing of the Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia. Those two attacks killed 260 American servicemen and left their widows and left children to be raised by one parent.

There are judgments that have been rendered that direct payment from Iran to these families, to the victims’ families. Unfortunately, under the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act, even though this reward has been given, even though U.S. victims of state-sponsored terrorism got their day in court, and even though they have brought the suits in U.S. courts and had the right to collect these damages, Iran has not as of yet paid.

U.S. courts have held Iran liable for the attacks carried out by its terrorist proxies when those attacks were orchestrated and paid for by the Iranian regime. The judgments that remain outstanding are \$43.5 billion in unpaid damages for those 80 cases over the last decade and a half.

In one case, \$9 billion was awarded to the victims of the bombing of the marine barracks in 1983. Again, the Government of Iran was found responsible through lawful proceedings in a U.S. court. That judgment remains unpaid.

Madam Speaker, the Obama administration during its negotiations with Iran did not seek for Iran to compensate the families of those whose

lives were taken by Iranian terrorism despite these U.S. court judgments. That is very much in contrast with our past procedure.

In the case of Libya, for example, a decade ago, when we reached that agreement with Libya, the U.S. secured the right or the demand that the Qadhafi regime compensate the victims of the attacks, such as the bombing of Pan Am 103 over Lockerbie, Scotland. That was \$2.5 billion. That was done. That is our procedure.

Iran will soon obtain \$100 billion, approximately, in unfrozen assets as well as immeasurable economic and financial benefits by escaping the sanctions regime and reintegrating into the global economy. Iran will get sanctions lifted and American victims will still be out in the cold. That is not right.

This legislation would address that injustice. It is straightforward. It would say that, of the \$100 billion and some in sanctions relief, those judgments will be paid out of that. That \$43 billion will be paid to the survivors of those families of those 80 attacks orchestrated, paid for, by Iran.

I reserve the balance of my time.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON WAYS AND MEANS,
Washington, DC, September 30, 2015.

Hon. EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: I am writing with respect to H.R. 3457, the "Justice for Victims of Iranian Terrorism Act," which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

H.R. 3457 involves issues that fall within Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on Ways and Means. As a result of your having consulted with the Committee and in order to expedite the House's consideration of H.R. 3457, the Committee on Ways and Means will not assert its jurisdictional claim over this bill by seeking a sequential referral. However, this is conditional on our mutual understanding and agreement that doing so will in no way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of the Committee with respect to the appointment of conferees or to any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matters contained in the bill or similar legislation.

I would appreciate a response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 3457, and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during Floor consideration of H.R. 3457.

Sincerely,

PAUL D. RYAN,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, September 30, 2015.

Hon. PAUL RYAN,
Chairman, Committee on Ways and Means, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN RYAN: Thank you for consulting with the Committee on Foreign Affairs on H.R. 3457, the Justice for Victims of Iranian Terrorism Act, which involves issues within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on Ways and Means, and for agreeing to forgo a sequential referral request so that it may proceed expeditiously to the Floor.

I agree that your forgoing further action on this measure does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of the Committee on Ways and Means, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this bill or

similar legislation in the future. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 3457 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work with the Committee on Ways and Means as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC, September 28, 2015.

Hon. ED ROYCE,
Chairman, Committee on Foreign Affairs, Washington, DC.

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROYCE: I am writing with respect to H.R. 3457, the "Justice for Victims of Iranian Terrorism Act," which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs.

H.R. 3457 involves issues that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary. As a result of your having consulted with the Committee and in order to expedite the House's consideration of H.R. 3457, the Committee on the Judiciary will not assert its jurisdictional claim over this bill by seeking a sequential referral. However, this is conditional on our mutual understanding and agreement that doing so will in no way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary with respect to the appointment of conferees or to any future jurisdictional claim over the subject matters contained in the bill or similar legislation.

I would appreciate a response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 3457, and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during Floor consideration of H.R. 3457.

Sincerely,

BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, September 28, 2015.

Hon. BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman, Committee on the Judiciary, Washington, DC.

DEAR MR. CHAIRMAN: Thank you for consulting with the Committee on Foreign Affairs on H.R. 3457, the Justice for Victims of Iranian Terrorism Act, which involves issues within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary, and for agreeing to forgo a sequential referral request so that it may proceed expeditiously to the Floor.

I agree that your forgoing further action on this measure does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary, or prejudice its jurisdictional prerogatives on this bill or similar legislation in the future. I would support your effort to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 3457 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work with the Committee on the Judiciary as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman.

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

I rise in opposition to the bill.

Let me start by acknowledging my friend, Chairman ROYCE. The Committee on Foreign Affairs is the most bipartisan committee in Congress. We are collaborative, we are productive, and we have built a record advancing bipartisan legislation that promotes American interests abroad and keeps the American people safe. I want to state that Chairman ROYCE's leadership is to thank for much of our committee's good work.

So I am disappointed that the House Republican leadership decided to ignore regular order on this bill. They have rushed it to the floor without any consideration by the Foreign Affairs Committee. As has been pointed out, we have had 30 hearings. We know a little bit about Iran on the Foreign Affairs Committee.

So rushing it to the floor without any consideration by the Foreign Affairs Committee is wrong. I think it is a shame. Because I think, left to our own volition, we could have sent forward a bill that could make a difference for the victims of Iranian-sponsored terrorism. Iranian-sponsored terrorism is there, it is palpable, and we should do something to try to help the victims.

But this bill, on the other hand, would not do that. Let me explain why. American courts have awarded roughly \$46 billion to about 1,300 victims and their families. We all want justice for these families. We all want to hold Iran accountable for its act of terrorism against Americans. Iran should pay these claims. But this bill does nothing for the victims of Iranian terror.

Here is the problem. Let's assume for argument that Iran's leaders did change course and decide to pay the claims. This bill would actually make it more difficult for Iran to pay these judgments.

Iran owes American claimants \$46 billion, but Iran has access to \$20 billion of its cash reserves, not \$46 billion. The rest—\$95 billion—is frozen in bank accounts in Europe and Asia.

On top of that, Iran's oil revenues are frozen. When Iran sells oil, the payments are kept frozen under the threat of American sanctions, which I support. Iran can access these funds only for certain purposes. Paying court judgments is not one of them. Current U.S. sanctions don't allow it.

□ 1100

And under this bill, all U.S. sanctions are kept in effect, absolutely no changes allowed, until Iran pays the full \$46 billion.

So where would Iran get the money to pay the American claims?

The bill says: Iran, pay the claims, but you can't have any of the funds to pay them. So it is a catch-22. And who does it hurt? Not Iran. It hurts the victims. Not a single claim would be paid under this bill. So, in my opinion, this bill offers nothing but false hope.

Now, I have heard some Members say, well, we can pay the claims by

seizing Iran's frozen assets, but that is really not the case. Virtually all of Iran's funds frozen under our sanctions are overseas, not in the U.S. Though they are frozen by U.S. sanctions, they are beyond the jurisdiction of our courts to seize them.

Another false promise: virtually all of Iran's assets will stay overseas. Under this bill, they would be required to be kept overseas because all U.S. sanctions would be kept in effect by law with no change allowed.

So let's be honest. This bill is not really about helping these victims. It is about exploiting their plight and their tragedy to make a political splash.

Look, everyone here knows I am no fan of the Iran nuclear agreement. I voted against it, but the other side won. Whether you are for or against the deal, it is time to be realistic about what happens next.

In my opinion, there were two potential courses. The first is to do everything we can to strengthen enforcement of the agreement and hold Iran to its commitments. We should double down on our support for friends and allies in the region. We should crack down on Iran's support for terrorist organizations. We should push leaders in Tehran to release detained Americans and improve its abysmal record on human rights. That is the course I hope we will take. I will soon introduce legislation to pursue those aims, and I will work with members of both parties to get these measures to the President's desk.

The other course would be doing to the Iran agreement what leaders on the other side have tried to do to the Affordable Care Act, and that is what I am afraid of here: vote after vote after vote after vote, whether we like it or not, on an issue that has already been voted on by this Chamber many, many times. I don't want the dispute on Iran to turn into the Affordable Care Act where we try to kill it 60 different ways.

We should not be using this for political purposes. We should be passing legislation, which I know we can get out of the Foreign Affairs Committee in a collaborative way, that would really do something to help these victims, that would really do something to hold Iran accountable for all its reprehensible acts. So I hope that what we are doing today is not the path we are going down not only now, but in the future with other things.

There was a measure in the Senate that was very similar to this, which tried to hold Iran to certain things and say that the funds couldn't be released unless Iran did this or did that. We could do this another 60 times; it would be counterproductive. Let's put our heads together. Let's figure out a way that we can continue to hold Iran accountable, and let's move on that way.

So I hope we can move past this bill and start working on measures to ensure that the Iran agreement is implemented as strongly and stringently as

possible. I hope we can get back to our regular practice in the Foreign Affairs Committee of which we have been so proud and focus on making policy that leaves politics at the water's edge.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. The administration is arguing, Mr. Speaker, that although the Iranian regime has access to over \$20 billion and that this judgment is \$43 billion, there isn't enough money there to make payment. In addition to the 20-some billion, Iran is in the process right now of negotiation and paying and supporting in transfers to other regimes.

For example, a report out this week says Iran is purchasing \$21 billion of airplanes and satellites from Russia. That is \$21 billion. Iran somehow has the money to do that, but it doesn't have the money for this claim.

A report out about a month ago says that Iran's annual support for Hezbollah is over \$100 million per year. Somehow they have got the spending cash for that.

It is providing the Syrian regime, one estimate of one of the think tanks here in town is that they have provided them a little over \$10 billion a year.

So Iran somehow has the discretionary money for these other purposes, but not for the purpose of the judgments won in U.S. court for over 1,000 victims or family members of the victims of their attacks.

I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE), chairman of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Terrorism, Nonproliferation, and Trade.

Mr. POE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. MEEHAN for this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, the Iranian ayatollah has preached and practiced "Death to America" since the 1970s.

Iran is a state sponsor of terrorism. Iran has been sued in Federal courts by the families of the murdered victims. Iran is guilty of the murder of 421 Americans in Beirut, Lebanon, in 1983. Iran is guilty of the murder of 19 servicemembers and injuring 372 others in Saudi Arabia in 1996. Iran is guilty of murdering a thousand other Americans, including some in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Federal courts have awarded the victim and families over \$40 billion for these crimes, but Iran will not pay. It laughs at the death of the innocent it has murdered. It laughs at American justice.

Well, Mr. Speaker, it is about time for the long arm of American justice to hold Iran accountable for its sins—make them pay.

I don't understand why some appeasers are more concerned about the murderous Iranian regime than they are about justice, justice for the victims that were murdered by this regime.

Let the ayatollah know he cannot get a diplomatic pass or sanctions relief until he pays for his crimes. The ayatollah has sown the seeds of murder, and now it is time for Iran to reap the consequences of their crimes.

It seems to me that the voices of the murdered cry out for us to do something for justice, justice for them that has been too long waiting. This bill, in my opinion, will do it.

It is about time we have justice because justice is what we are supposed to do in this country.

And that is just the way it is.

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

Mr. ELLISON. Mr. Speaker, I urge Members to vote "no" on this particular bill.

You know, once we were able to secure this negotiation and once the deal was put in place, the focus of our attention should shift to making sure that Iran lives up to its commitments, and we should use this prior negotiation as a template for negotiating other issues, including the captives, including the interests of these victims talked about here today.

What this bill does is it handcuffs the President and says that the President doesn't have any discretion to do his end of this bargain, to exercise his discretion to forward and help America and the P5+1 live up to our end of the bargain. That is the wrong way to go.

So I can credit the authors of this bill with having good intentions, but I think that the method that they are going about it is just wrong.

Let's use the template that has been developed through the negotiation process to go back and say, "Okay, now we got other things we want to talk to you about," rather than pass legislation on this floor that will do nothing other than hamstringing the President. It is the wrong way to do it. It is a mistake, and it should be voted down.

Mr. ROYCE. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, in 1983, 241 American servicemen in Beirut were killed and another 60 injured by a car bomb.

One of the Marines murdered was my constituent, Paul Innocenzi III, who lived with his young family in my hometown of Hamilton. In my second term as Congressman, I joined mourners at his funeral. I will never forget the agony and the sorrow of his family. Iranian terrorism killed Paul Innocenzi and, over the decades, has killed or maimed thousands of other Americans.

A Federal court, Mr. Speaker, found that the 1983 bombing was "beyond question" perpetrated by "Hezbollah and its agent who received massive material and technical support from the Iranian Government." Later a three-judge Federal appeals court panel approved \$1.75 billion in judgment against Iran for the 1983 bombing and some other Iranian acts of terror.

Today Iran is poised to get billions of dollars through so-called sanctions relief for an egregiously flawed comprehensive plan of action, money that will procure for Iran a significantly larger arsenal of sophisticated weapons

and an enhanced capability to terrorize, murder, and destabilize.

The chairman talked about Iran's \$21 billion weapons purchase from Russia. Billions more to Iran will exponentially increase weapons buys. The Justice for Victims of Iranian Terrorism Act authored by PAT MEEHAN says not so fast.

The President has said he will veto this bill. That is wrong, Mr. Speaker. That is uncaring, it is unacceptable, it is unconscionable. And does a grave disservice to American victims of Iranian terrorism.

Support court-ordered victim payments by the terrorist State of Iran. Fundamental justice demands that this bill become law.

Mr. Speaker, what was previously unacceptable—an Iranian nuclear state—is now inevitable under the terms and conditions of what is officially known as the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action.

Tragically, the deal is riddled with serious flaws, gaps, and huge concessions to Iran. Taken as a whole, this egregiously flawed deal poses an existential threat to Israel, our allies in the region—and poses significant risks to the United States.

Today Iran is poised to get billions of dollars through so-called sanctions relief—money that will procure for Iran a significantly larger arsenal of sophisticated weapons and an enhanced capability to terrorize, murder and destabilize.

The Justice for Victims of Iranian Terrorism Act (H.R. 3457) authored by Pat Meehan says not so fast.

The bill prohibits the President from waiving sanctions until Iran pays its more than \$44.5 billion in court ordered damages to thousands of victims and survivors of Iranian terror attacks.

To date, the U.S. Department of State has refused to release funds ordered by the courts to victims and surviving families in more than 80 cases despite clear authority to do so under the Foreign Sovereign Immunities Act (FSIA).

In 1983, 241 American servicemen in Beirut were killed and another 60 injured by a car bomb. One of the Marines murdered was my constituent WO1 Paul Innocenzi III who lived with his young family in my hometown of Hamilton. In my second term as congressman, I joined mourners at his funeral. I will never forget the agony and sorrow of his family. Iranian terrorism killed Paul Innocenzi and over the decades, has killed or maimed thousands of other Americans.

A federal district court found that the 1983 bombing was “beyond question” perpetrated by “Hezbollah and its agents (who) received massive material and technical support from the Iranian government”. Later a three judge federal appeals court panel approved a \$1.75 billion judgement against Iran for the 1983 bombing and other Iranian acts of terror.

The President has said he will veto this bill. That's wrong. That's uncaring, unacceptable, and unconscionable. Support court-ordered victim payments by the terror state of Iran. Fundamental justice demands that this bill become law.

Mr. ENGEL. I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY), our colleague on the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from New York (Mr. ENGEL) for his leadership on the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

This bill prohibits any waivers, reductions, or other relief from U.S. sanctions on Iran until Iran pays all court-ordered damage claims to U.S. victims. Those claims total about \$46 billion.

This bill would prevent the U.S. from implementing its commitments under the Iran deal, which is really what my friends on the other side are trying to do. Not being able to win directly, let's get at it indirectly and let's cover it with the patina of respectability. But the real issue is, cynically, how we use the plight of U.S. victims for another partisan shot.

We all want to help American victims of Iran's terrorism and lack of justice, but this is not the way to help them. It would have the opposite effect by reducing the chance that any claims, in fact, would be paid because, by freezing assets, Iran wouldn't have the wherewithal to do what this bill says it should do before sanctions are lifted.

Think about this: Iran owes \$46 billion in U.S. claims, but it doesn't have the money right now, even if it wanted to pay. Iran only has access to about \$20 billion of its own reserves.

Realistically, the only funds that could be used are the frozen funds under U.S. sanctions held in banks around the world. Under this bill, the frozen funds couldn't be used to pay the claims, and all the money remains frozen until Iran pays the claims. It is a catch-22 if there ever was one. It couldn't sell any oil to use to free up cash because those funds, too, would be frozen.

Another clue about what is really behind this bill is that all of the 76 sponsors are my friends on the other side of the aisle, not a single Democrat.

Regardless of one's position on the Iran deal, a deal I probably supported because it keeps Iran from becoming a nuclear state, opposing this cynical bill is, in fact, the right vote if you care about the victims of Iranian injustice and terrorism.

Mr. ROYCE. I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEEHAN), a member of the Committee on Ways and Means and author of this bill.

Mr. MEEHAN. Mr. Speaker, \$21 billion for Russian jets, but not a penny for the victims of their own acts of terror. That is what my colleagues are trying to say? In fact, the President can negotiate it. Let him reach an installment plan, but let's make sure that these dollars are paid.

Look, this is a fundamental question: Should Iran receive relief from the U.S. sanctions before it pays the victims of terrorism the \$43 billion that U.S. courts say these victims are owed?

When we say “terrorism,” what are we talking about? We are talking about Iranian-backed assassinations, bomb-

ings, and attacks across time zones, from Paris to Jerusalem, to New York, to Beirut, to East Africa, to Buenos Aires.

I say not one cent.

These victims are United States citizens. They are wives, brothers and sisters, children who hail from all across the Nation, and they were killed in hijackings and suicide attacks and bombings of buses and planes and buildings and embassies and shopping malls and pizza parlors.

□ 1115

In fact, I met with one of those victims this morning and yesterday, the widow of Kenneth Welch and his child. They are here in Washington today. They have been waiting 30 years for the opportunity to see this issue addressed.

My friends, by voting against this legislation, you are saying that Iran and the perpetrators of these atrocities deserve U.S. sanctions relief before the victims deserve the court-ordered compensation. Let me say it again. By voting “no,” you are putting the interests of Iran's terror machine before the American victims of that terror. I say not 1 cent.

To those who say Iran can't afford to pay these damages, let me remind you of a few facts. Iran has a yearly gross domestic product in excess of \$1.3 trillion, and they just spent \$21 billion on Russian jets. The facts show that Iran has the money and will have much more if the sanctions are lifted, money that our own administration freely admits will go to finance even more terror.

I sat yesterday with Ken Stethem, the brother of Robert Stethem, the United States Navy diver who was executed on Beirut Flight 847. His brother Ken, himself a retired Navy SEAL, said to me yesterday, “If the President doesn't take this opportunity and Congress doesn't take the opportunity to hold Iran accountable for their terrorist acts now, I have to ask them when will they. Thirty years for one family, more than 15 for another. When will they?”

He is talking to us. Let's answer him. Let's today stand up for the standards of U.S. Navy Petty Officer Robert Stethem. Let's today vote as one House to say we will put Robert Stethem and the many victims of Iran's terrorism before—before—the criminals who conspired to kill them.

Until they pay these victims what they are owed, let's say no to Iran, not 1 cent.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER).

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the gentleman's courtesy in permitting me to speak on this issue. I listened to the impassioned pleas from my friends on the other side of the aisle about horrific acts of the thugs who run Iran. Nobody disputes that, and nothing before us would take away the sanctions that we have against their terrorist activity.

We are all committed to justice for those victims, but bear in mind what this legislation seeks to do is to unwind another critical objective of the United States, of our allies, to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran.

That agreement was a signal achievement of diplomacy not just of the Obama administration, but of Russia, China, Germany, France, Great Britain, working with us to secure the strongest agreement that we have seen to contain these thugs' nuclear ambitions. The world is united with us to restrain a nuclear Iran.

Now, we have had testimony from our partners that, if the United States walks away from that agreement, we are on our own. They are not going to continue to enforce nuclear sanctions against Iran, and, ultimately, Iran will get its money and a free hand to develop nuclear weapons unencumbered by the allies that we have assembled and the pressure that we have put on them.

Now, my friends, Mr. ENGEL and Mr. CONNOLLY, are correct. The construct here is very difficult, even if this were to be approved, to actually work out on paper. But take it a step further. These elements have been in place for years and have not resulted in any movement for the victims.

We have had what the rest of the world thinks is a significant breakthrough with Iran. We have got an area of cooperation, and the world is united with us to keep the pressure on them. I would suggest, rather than throwing this agreement in the trash can and allow Iran to develop nuclear weapons and make them stronger—and, ultimately, they will get their money because India and China are going to go ahead and start buying oil from Iran again as the sanctions collapse. It will be the United States against the world again.

We couldn't even sanction itty-bitty Cuba to change their regime. It takes multinational efforts to be able to make changes. This agreement is an important first step, and I would suggest it gives us an opportunity to continue putting pressure on Iran to be able to obtain the justice that we all want for those victims.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN), a member of the Committee on Appropriations.

Mr. FRELINGHUYSEN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Mr. MEEHAN and Mr. ROYCE for their leadership. I oppose the Iranian deal for many reasons. Among the reasons is the over \$100 billion windfall Iran will receive in unfrozen assets and sanctions relief.

The administration has acknowledged that some of this money will be certainly distributed to the Iranian military, its global terrorist network, and to the Quds Force, an organization with American blood on its hands.

We remember the marines and sailors killed in the bombing of the barracks in Beirut in 1983 and civilians in that

embassy in Beirut, the airmen who died in Khobar Towers in Saudi Arabia in 1995. And what about the victims of the Iranian-financed attacks, like Alisa Flatow of West Orange, New Jersey, who died in a bus bombing in Gaza in 1995 and Sara Duker of Teaneck, New Jersey, who was murdered on a bus in Jerusalem in 1996? Who speaks for them, for those innocents and their families? This bill does.

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

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Texas (Mr. HURD), a member of the Committee on Homeland Security.

Mr. HURD of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation. Justice is a powerful word. For those who have been wronged, justice can bring peace and closure. For those guilty of harming the innocent, justice is absolutely necessary to ensure the authority of our laws. Without justice, truth becomes irrelevant.

If America is going to continue to be the greatest nation in the world, it is imperative that we pursue justice. But the Iran nuclear deal does the exact opposite. It rewards lawlessness and corruption. It tells Iran that they can be unjust to our own citizens and the current administration will allow them to get away with it.

Iran is responsible for sponsoring terrorism that has led to the death of thousands of Americans. When the families of these Americans sought justice in the court, Iran was found guilty and ordered to make reparations. The family of Cyrus Elahi from Dallas, Texas, was awarded more than \$300 million after Cyrus was assassinated for criticizing the Iranian Government.

Judgments like this have added up to billions of dollars that Iran owes the families of American victims. But is this administration forcing Iran to pay? Are they demanding justice for Americans like Cyrus? No. Instead, this administration is handing over an estimated \$100 billion to Iran. That is not justice. That is outrageous.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. WENSTRUP).

Mr. WENSTRUP. Mr. Speaker, this bill would respond to one of many significant problems with President Obama's disastrous Iran deal, which gives Iran sanctions relief without requiring it to make reparations for the crimes it has committed against Americans.

Anne Dammerell, who was born in Cincinnati near my district, was working at the U.S. Embassy in Beirut in 1983. A bomb exploded while she was in the embassy cafeteria, breaking 19 of her bones. She received a judgment against Iran for \$6.8 million because of the physical and mental suffering she endured. Anne is one tragic story among many.

Over the past 15 years, U.S. courts have handed down 80 judgments against Iran, adding up to more than

\$43.5 billion in unpaid damages. Iran refuses to pay. Yet, the President's nuclear agreement provides Iran with \$150 billion in sanctions relief. Those that have destroyed innocent American lives, Iranian terrorists, are being chosen over the American victims themselves.

This bill would prohibit the President from removing any sanctions in place against Iran until the President has certified to Congress that Iran has paid each Federal court judgment.

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

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK).

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEEHAN) for introducing this good bill. It is a compassionate bill. It is a bill that tells victims of terrorism that they are not forgotten.

I chair the task force in the House Committee on Financial Services to investigate terrorism finance, and we had a hearing specifically on the joint plan of action, the so-called P5+1. That was back in July.

There was an attorney who testified at the hearing about the \$43 billion in judgments and how this deal, then not approved yet, was likely going to sidestep the ability of victims who did all the right things through the legal process, who hired lawyers, who went to court, who got the judgments, legitimate judgments, how these judgments would not be paid.

On July 29, I wrote a letter to Secretary Lew—Secretary of the Treasury—and Secretary Kerry of the State Department asking whether or not they had addressed the issue as part of the negotiations. That was July 29. I have yet to receive a response from the Treasury Department, from the Department of State, in any way.

Mr. Speaker, the deafening silence of this administration has led me to believe that they completely overlooked the victims of terrorism.

What we are going to do is we are going to give the money to the Islamic Republic of Iran and not to American victims, and that is wrong. This bill is right. I urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. Speaker, as the chair of the bipartisan Task Force to Investigate Terrorism Financing, I analyzed the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) put forward by this Administration at length.

After numerous hearings and research, I opposed the deal for a number of reasons—not the least of which is because of its potential impact on terrorism financing by Iran. At hearing after hearing, members heard directly from foreign policy experts about this threat and the danger of the influx of cash provided by this agreement finding its way to terrorist organizations threatening Iran's neighboring states as well as those planning strikes in the United States.

At a hearing specifically on this deal and its impact on Tehran's state sponsorship of terror, one witness, a practicing attorney, testified to

the fact that American citizens and families who were victims of Iranian sponsored terrorist attacks—including families in my district in Pennsylvania—are owed over \$43 billion in compensation as awarded by United States.

Following the Task Force's fourth hearing I wrote this letter to both Secretaries John Kerry and Jack Lew asking if this nuclear deal would strip victims of Iranian terrorism the right to this compensation.

That was July 29. I have yet to receive any sort of response from either the Treasury or State departments. The deafening silence from the Administration has led me to believe they completely overlooked these families when they rushed to finalize this bad deal with Iran.

Mr. Speaker, it is unconscionable to think that—as a nation—we would allow the world's largest state sponsor of terror access to billions of dollars in sanctions relief and unfreezing of held assets while victims of Iranian terrorism are left with nothing.

These victims are Americans from all around the country—from my home and yours. They've lost loved ones and suffered irreparable damages because of Iran's long, sordid history with terrorism. By failing to take this situation into account throughout the negotiation process, the administration has failed these victims and their families.

The Justice for Victims of Iranian Terrorism Act we are considering today rights that wrong. It says simply: Not one cent in sanctions relief for Iran until these families are paid. That's not a partisan demand—that's common sense.

I strongly support this legislation and ask for my colleagues to join me in standing up for our constituents impacted by Iranian terror and pass this bill in the bipartisan fashion it deserves.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. HOLDING), a member of the Committee on Ways and Means.

Mr. HOLDING. Mr. Speaker, Iran is shortly set to receive over \$100 billion when President Obama uses his pen to lift our sanctions against the world's largest sponsor of terrorism. At the same time, Mr. Speaker, Iran owes U.S. victims of terror it sponsored and supported \$43.5 billion.

One of these victims was Petty Officer 1st Class Michael Wagner of Columbia, North Carolina. He was serving in the American Embassy in Beirut in 1984 when a car bomb filled with explosives paid for by Iran detonated outside his office, killing him and 23 other people. In the case of Petty Officer Wagner and Tehran's other victims, our courts have found Iran guilty and ordered Iran to pay restitution, but Iran has not paid a penny.

Mr. Speaker, we should require Iran to pay every penny it owes to the victims of terrorism before sanctions are lifted, period.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Mississippi (Mr. HARPER), a member of the Committee on Energy and Commerce.

Mr. HARPER. Mr. Speaker, I am and will remain opposed to the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action on Iran. It represents Iran's ability to build a nu-

clear weapon at a future date while reaping the financial benefits of immediate relief from international sanctions. By removing sanctions, the agreement injects almost \$100 billion into the Iranian regime.

Iran is the single largest state sponsor of terrorism in the world, funding—even with sanctions in place—Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in Gaza. Over \$43 billion in judgments have been awarded to Americans who have been the victims of Iranian terrorism. The agreement fails to clear those judgments.

The agreement, at best, delays Iran's ability to build nuclear weapons. At worst, it gives the regime more money to engage in more terrorism while providing no justice to Americans already harmed by the regime.

The Justice for Victims of Iranian Terrorism Act is timely. It is appropriate, and it should be supported by every member of this body who believe in the validity of U.S. courts and the Federal Sovereign Immunities Act.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. HILL), a member of the Committee on Financial Services.

□ 1130

Mr. HILL. I thank Mr. MEEHAN for his leadership on this, and I thank the ranking member and the chairman for their opposition to the Iranian agreement, which I believe was ill-conceived and not enough time given for those negotiations to bear true fruit. In fact, that is the whole point of our debate today. The maximum amount of negotiating clout that the United States had over these sanctions was during these negotiations, before we released sanctions, before Iran gets access to their monthly oil flow and their \$100 billion.

We have \$44 billion and 85 judgments. The number of intelligence agents that have worked day and night to adjudicate these claims in court, the number of FBI agents involved, the Federal Government's obligation to generate awards for these victims, and yet this administration has never raised it in public in regard to the Iranian agreement.

Under the 1996 and 2008 Federal Sovereign Immunities Act, the President of the United States is obligated to seek resolution for these claims.

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

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

Mr. HILL. He is obligated to adjudicate these claims and seek restitution for these victims under the Federal Sovereign Immunities Act. President Bush did his duty. When he had leverage over Libya, he got the claims paid for the victims of terror in Libya.

For every day we come to work in this House and we ask, "What can we do to help this country? How can we do to help this country? How can we right a wrong?" today is that day.

I urge my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support Mr. MEEHAN's outstanding bill. Let's right the wrong. Let's adjudicate these claims. Let's get this money back for the victims of terrorism.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. COSTELLO).

Mr. COSTELLO of Pennsylvania. A majority of this House thinks this deal is bad, a majority of the Senate thinks this deal is bad, and a majority of the American people think this deal is bad. We have not had any input, and the effort here today is to simply make a bad deal a little less bad.

The idea behind Mr. MEEHAN's bill is to provide restitution to American victims. It is not just any American victims. It is the victims of Iranian terror. \$150 billion is going to flow to Iran. It seems to be common sense that the first \$43 billion should instead be paid to the victims of Iranian terror.

Joseph Cicippio was one of those victims. He lived right outside my congressional district. He spent 5 years in brutal captivity before being released in 1991.

A vote for this bill today is a vote for the victims of Iranian terror.

I also want to say Congressman MEEHAN's congressional district is right next to mine. I want to thank him for his thoughtful, creative approach and his leadership in this country and in this House on this bill.

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

Mr. ROYCE. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. COFFMAN).

Mr. COFFMAN. Mr. Speaker, in 1982, I was with the United States Marine Corps off the coast of Beirut, Lebanon, waiting on orders to do evacuations of the U.S. Embassy and U.S. citizens and their families. Our assignment was done in August of 1982. We returned to the United States. I finished my 2 years with the battalion.

The battalion went back out. This time, they took positions in the airport in Beirut, Lebanon. On October 23, 1983, a suicide bomber drove a truck laden with explosives into the marine barracks; 241 marines were killed that day.

To my friends who died there—First Lieutenant Bill Zimmerman, Captain Bill Winter, Captain Joe Boccia, Master Sergeant Roy Edwards, Captain Mike Haskell—today is your day. Today is your day for justice. God bless you. God remember all of you.

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

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

Mr. COFFMAN. Today is the day for justice for these marines—and their families—who were lost on that day by the Iranian-backed Hezbollah bomber.

So I want to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania for bringing this measure forward. I urge my colleagues not to forget those who have died and

to remember this: when the Iranians say “death to Americans,” they mean death to Americans.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Members are reminded to direct their remarks to the Chair.

Mr. ROYCE. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. BISHOP).

Mr. BISHOP of Michigan. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to join my colleagues to support this legislation. I want to thank the gentleman for his sponsorship. I am proud to be a cosponsor.

Thirty-one years ago, one Michigan family's sleepless worry became a heartbreaking reality. Their son, brother, and father, U.S. Army Warrent Officer Kenneth Welch, was one of two U.S. servicemen to lose his life in the bombing in Beirut, Lebanon.

U.S. judgments later found that the act of terrorism was sponsored by the Iranian regime. For its crimes, that regime was ordered to pay damages to the family of Kenneth Welch. Not surprisingly, however, not one dime has been paid to the family. Yet today, in this country, we find ourselves dealing with an administration that wants to lift sanctions.

Mr. Speaker, I am beside myself to think that this is the Nation that we have become. America is built on bravery and freedom, and that is because of the unwavering strength and sacrifice of men and women in the military. I am forever proud of our soldiers, and I know my colleagues here today are, too. That is why we cannot let the Iran terror continue. We need to do whatever we can to address the victims like Ken Welch.

Mr. ROYCE. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DOLD).

Mr. DOLD. I thank my good friend from California, the chairman, for yielding me the time. I also want to thank my good friend from Pennsylvania for bringing this piece of legislation.

Supporting victims of Iranian terrorism is a cause that every single Member of this body should be able to support, regardless of where they stand on the Iranian nuclear agreement. Under no circumstances should we be ignoring the victims of Iran's terrorism while simultaneously rewarding the greatest state sponsor of terror the world has seen.

Make no mistake, under this administration's agreement with Iran, Iran will be receiving approximately \$150 billion in sanctions relief—in new funding—almost immediately, while American victims of Iranian terrorism, whether it be bombings, kidnappings, murder, and the like, are basically going without resources.

Where are our priorities? Where are our priorities in this Chamber when the victims of Iranian terror are being ignored while Iran is being rewarded with new funds that will inevitably be used to fund new terror—Hezbollah, Hamas, and those around the globe?

Iran's terror proxies have killed Americans and continue to do so to

this day. This is a fact that cannot be ignored. I certainly hope that my colleagues on both sides of the aisle will support this piece of legislation.

Mr. ROYCE. I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. ROTHFUS).

Mr. ROTHFUS. I thank my colleague, Mr. MEEHAN from Pennsylvania, for introducing this very important piece of legislation.

The President's nuclear agreement with Iran provides them with billions in frozen assets and sanctions relief. One needs only to look at recent history to know exactly what Iran will do with this financial windfall.

While pursuing a nuclear bomb, Iran has been engaged in a decades-long campaign of terror that resulted in the deaths of many, many Americans. They continue to bankroll proxies like Hezbollah, Hamas, and the Houthi rebels.

Atrocities like the Beirut marine barracks bombing, the murder of Bobby Stethem on TWA flight 847, Khobar Towers, and the kidnapping of CIA Agent William Buckley, are just a small taste of what Iranian state-sponsored terrorism has wrought.

This bill is about everyday Americans getting justice. Americans like the family of Beaver County native Major John Macrogrou, the highest ranking officer killed in the attack on the Beirut marine barracks.

Victims of Iranian terrorism have successfully brought suit in U.S. courts, yet billions in judgments remain unpaid. The Obama administration failed to secure restitution for the victims of Iran in its negotiations with this country, but this legislation can rectify this wrong.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, may I inquire as to how much time is remaining.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from California has 2½ minutes remaining. The gentleman from New York has 17½ minutes remaining.

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

In closing, let me say to my friends on the other side of the aisle, and they know this, no one has been more of an adversary of the Iranian regime than I have, but a number of us found the deal with Iran wanting. We voted “no,” but it didn't prevail, and now we have to figure out the best way forward. The best way forward, I sincerely believe, is not to keep trotting out these bills.

No one is condoning anything that Iran has done, particularly with terrorism. It is a matter of how we combat it. The way I see it is that we have two paths forward: we can choose to mirror what we did with the Affordable Care Act, voting and revoting on an issue that has been settled to some degree, or we can choose the path that suits our Nation's interests the best. This path includes doing everything we can to strengthen the enforcement mechanisms of this agreement.

The path also includes holding Iran accountable for its nefarious activities that destabilize the region, as well as pushing Tehran to release detained Americans and improve their human rights records in the interim, and, of course, taking care of the victims of terrorism and their families. This path requires the strengthening of bilateral partnerships and supporting our allies in the region, both of which help us in the long term.

This is the course I hope we take. We cannot let this opportunity go to waste. So that is why I won't be supporting H.R. 3457. After that, we need to work together on measures that strengthen implementation of the agreement as much as possible.

I hope we can do that in a bipartisan way, as we have for the past 3 years in the Foreign Affairs Committee. This path promises to bring us back to making foreign policy rather than using political bills that deflect from the important issues at hand.

I do not doubt the sincerity of anyone who spoke today. We all are sincere and we all feel the same way: Iran is a bad actor and must be held accountable. But this bill is not the correct mechanism to do so, so I urge my colleagues to vote “no.”

I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, consider the case of Anne Dammarell, a USAID worker who was posted in the U.S. Embassy in Beirut in 1983. At 1 p.m. on April 18, a suicide bomber in a delivery van drove 2,000 pounds of explosives into the front door of our U.S. Embassy and the blast demolished the front of the building and caused the upper floors to collapse on top of each other.

When that went off, she was eating lunch in the Embassy cafeteria until suddenly she awoke outside, covered in cement, with 19 bones broken. Sixty-three people were killed in that blast.

Now we have a moral obligation to ensure that these judgments for these victims, which represent Iran's legal debt to the victims of its official policy of terrorism, are paid. There have been 90 such attacks on Americans, and this legislation helps us fulfill that moral obligation we have to our constituents and to all Americans.

What I will share with you is that it is not going to work to release the \$100 billion first, because that \$100 billion goes into the hands of the IRGC. They are the ones who have taken over the companies in Iran as of 1979, and the Iranian Revolutionary Guard forces and the Quds forces are the ones that carried out these attacks.

So the only leverage we are going to have in this negotiation is if we pass legislation that says, first, you have got \$20 billion in reserves. Start the process of paying the victims of that attack.

□ 1145

If we don't get them paid now, if we don't get the survivors and the family

members of those who were killed paid now, it will never happen later.

But more importantly, at least we would do this. If we are going to give \$100 billion out of escrow into the hands of the IRGC, what do you think they are going to do with it?

They have already announced \$20 billion in sales to Russia for fighter planes. They have already announced the money, \$100 million, that they are going to give to Hezbollah.

Why not at least get our own civilians paid the judgments that they earned up front?

That is exactly what we did with the Lockerbie agreement. We were going to lift the sanctions or allow the return of the escrowed money to Libya. Right?

\$2.5 billion had to go to the victims and the family members killed in the Pan Am 103 bombing because of the judgment in U.S. courts.

This needs to be done under that procedure. That is why this legislation is necessary.

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

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong opposition to H.R. 3457, the "Justice for Victims of Iranian Terrorism Act."

If enacted into law, H.R. 3457 would prevent the United States from implementing its sanctions relief commitments under the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA) reached between the P5+1 countries, the European Union (EU), and Iran by tying the Administration's ability to fulfill its commitments to non-nuclear issues that are outside the scope of the JCPOA.

Mr. Speaker, this bill has absolutely no chance of becoming law because President Obama has already announced he will veto it if presented to him for signature.

And that is as it should be since this ill-considered and unwise bill comes to floor without being vetted by any of the committees of jurisdiction.

The bill was not considered by the Judiciary Committee or its Subcommittee on Crime, Terrorism, Homeland Security, and Investigations, of which I serve as Ranking Member and which has jurisdiction over issues federal lawsuits and compensation involving victims of terrorist acts.

Nor was the bill considered by the Committee on Foreign Affairs, even though that committee has held several hearings relating to violent extremism and terrorists acts.

In the month of September alone, the Committee on Foreign Affairs held six hearings that addressed some aspect of terrorism and violent extremism, not one of which involved H.R. 3457 or the subject matter raised in the legislation.

Given its adverse impact on the JCPOA, one would have thought that this legislation would have been fully vetted before being rushed to the floor, and this lack of careful scrutiny is sufficient in itself to vote against this bill.

Mr. Speaker, let me be clear: I am, and long have been, a strong supporter and advocate for adequate compensation for victims of terrorism sponsored or supported by foreign states.

For example, I have fought for compensation for the victims of Boko Haram, the Lord's

Resistance Army, ISIL and Al-Shabaab from Nigeria, to Syria, to Kenya, to name just a few.

I have requested the Attorney General of the United States to take action to secure relief for thousands of victims of terror from different regions of the world.

But I have never advocated or supported actions to achieve this result that puts the national security at risk.

And that is why I cannot support H.R. 3457.

By obstructing implementation of the JCPOA, H.R. 3457 would greatly undermine our national security interests and likely would result in the collapse of the comprehensive diplomatic arrangement that peacefully and verifiably prevents Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon.

This would in turn allow for the resumption of a significantly less constrained Iranian nuclear program, lead to the unraveling of the international sanctions regime against Iran, and deal a devastating blow to America's credibility as a leader of international diplomacy.

This would have the collateral effect of jeopardizing both the hard work of sustaining a unified coalition to combat Iran's destabilizing activities in the region and America's ability to lead the world on nuclear non-proliferation.

Mr. Speaker, the Administration supports efforts by U.S. terrorism victims to pursue compensation, consistent with our national security.

It bears pointing out that nothing in the JCPOA prohibits or impedes those efforts.

Mr. Speaker, we have called Iran untrustworthy because it has not always lived up to its commitments.

What would it say about the United States and its reputation of being an honest broker and trustworthy partner if we reneged on a carefully and painstakingly negotiated agreement before the ink barely had time to dry?

The single and overriding purpose of the JCPOA was to address the international community's concern over Iran's nuclear program and the need to verifiably prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon.

This goal is achieved by the JCPOA this objective is undermined by H.R. 3457.

After all our hearings and thoughtful deliberations on the JCPOA, it defies reason to collapse the historic and landmark diplomatic success that created the framework for a peaceful and verifiable methodology to prevent Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapon.

For these reasons, Mr. Speaker, I strongly oppose H.R. 3457 and urge all Members to join me in voting against this unwise measure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to House Resolution 449, the previous question is ordered on the bill, as amended.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the bill.

The bill was ordered to be engrossed and read a third time, and was read the third time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

Mr. ROYCE. 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 question will be postponed.

CONFERENCE REPORT ON H.R. 1735, NATIONAL DEFENSE AUTHORIZATION ACT FOR FISCAL YEAR 2016

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to House Resolution 449, I call up the conference report on the bill (H.R. 1735) to authorize appropriations for fiscal year 2016 for military activities of the Department of Defense, for military construction, and for defense activities of the Department of Energy, to prescribe military personnel strengths for such fiscal year, and for other purposes, and ask for its immediate consideration.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to House Resolution 449, the conference report is considered read.

(For conference report and statement, see proceedings of the House of September 29, 2015, at page H6337.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from Texas (Mr. THORNBERRY) and the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) each will control 30 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and insert extraneous material on the conference report to accompany H.R. 1735.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. THORNBERRY. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 5 minutes.

Mr. Speaker, the first and most important thing I can say today is that this conference report is good for the troops and it is good for the country, and nothing that I or anybody else is going to say in this next hour is going to be more important than that one basic proposition.

Now, we may hear a variety of excuses, ifs, ands and buts about this, that or the other thing, and I certainly don't agree with every provision in this conference report.

But in pulling this bill together, I had to put aside personal preferences and party considerations and other things because getting a bill passed and enacted that is good for the troops and good for the country is more important than anything else.

The second point I want to make is that this bill is the product of work from Members from both sides of the aisle and both sides of the Capitol. About half of the amendments that were adopted in committee and on the floor were from Democratic Members.

Democratic conferees played a substantial role in shaping this final conference report. And if you look at the