

FEMA grants to disaster-stricken areas. This bill includes funding for grants to local fire departments—grants that would not occur.

Thousands of essential public servants—from Homeland Security, to FEMA, to our terrific men and women in the Coast Guard—would be asked to keep on working even though we are not paying them. This is not the way to run a nation. This is certainly not the way to address national security threats that face us.

I think it is telling when a strategy is being criticized from Members on both sides of the aisle. This is a foolhardy game being played with our national security.

A colleague from Arizona said on this floor just yesterday—a colleague from across the aisle—that “to attempt to use a spending bill in order to poke a finger in the President’s eye is not a good move.”

Another colleague from across the aisle, from Illinois, said, “The American people are pretty alarmed, as they should be, about security . . . the way to go forward is just fund DHS,” the Department of Homeland Security. He continued, “We ought to strip the bill of extraneous issues and make it about homeland security.”

That is the path forward, to have a funding bill for Homeland Security, stripped of political riders designed to take on one issue or another when those issues can be addressed in separate bills. If someone really wants to prioritize the deportation of children who came here through no fault of their own and know no country other than the United States, our DREAMERS, then they should write that bill, put it through committee, and then the majority should bring the debate to the floor of this Chamber. I can tell you that I would be voting against that bill, but we would have the debate on that issue separate from the conversation about funding Homeland Security.

I found it interesting to read the Wall Street Journal the other day. It refers to immigration restrictionists who want a larger brawl and have browbeat GOP leaders into adding needless policy amendments. That is coming from the Wall Street Journal. They proceed to say in regard to the fight over prioritizing the deportation of folks who are here without legal credentials and who have criminal backgrounds, that the President is “prioritizing” those deportations of those with criminal backgrounds. The Wall Street Journal says:

That is legitimate prosecutorial discretion, and in opposing it Republicans are undermining their crime-fighting credentials.

So if some of my colleagues want to argue that the President should not prioritize deporting individuals with criminal backgrounds, which I think should be prioritized, have that debate, but do not hold the Homeland Security bill hostage to that particular fight.

In this morning’s paper, there was an article about the funding of the De-

partment of Homeland Security. This is in the Washington Post. It refers to the Grand Old Party at impasse as a measure stalls in the Senate. It quotes the Speaker of the House, Mr. BOEHNER. Speaker BOEHNER says, “It is time for the Senate to do their work,” and he proceeds to give a little lecture to Senators. He says, “You know, in the gift shop out here, they’ve got these little booklets on how a bill becomes a law.” Well, I encourage Speaker BOEHNER to actually read that book because what that book says is that in order to pass through the Senate, it has to get on the floor and it has to have support to be approved by this Chamber.

So, Speaker BOEHNER, I encourage you to actually read the pamphlet you recommended because sending over funding for Homeland Security laden with unrelated policy riders is going to make sure that bill dies here in the Senate. Don’t take my word for it, take the Senate’s version or expression on this. It has come up for three votes in the Senate. We have voted three times to kill this House bill, giving clear instruction to the House: Send us the actual Department of Homeland Security bill free of these political riders, and we will put it on the floor, and we will have that debate, and we will undoubtedly pass that bill. But if you want to play political games rather than looking out for the security of the United States of America, don’t expect the Senate to rubberstamp your political games, Speaker BOEHNER.

So that is where we are now. I do encourage the Speaker to go right down the gift shop—I will be happy to buy him a copy of this, and I will be happy to read the phrases to the Speaker on exactly how a bill becomes law.

It is deeply disturbing to the American people to see these types of political games being played with our Nation’s security. We live in a dangerous world, and we need to take seriously our responsibility to fund this Department.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER (Mrs. ERNST). The clerk will call the roll.

The legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(The remarks of Mr. BROWN pertaining to the introduction of S. 522 are printed in today’s RECORD under “Statements on Introduced Bills and Joint Resolutions.”)

Mr. BROWN. Madam President, I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, are we on the Carter nomination?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senator is correct.

Mr. RUBIO. Madam President, this is an important nomination, at a time when this country faces very significant national security threats.

AUMF

As I commented yesterday, the President came to us yesterday asking us to authorize the use of force, and I think we should do that. I am not necessarily sure we should do it in the way he has asked us to do it. I think it should be a pretty straightforward authorization, and here is what it should say. It should say we authorize the President of the United States to destroy ISIS and to defeat their military. It is up to the Commander in Chief to decide the right way in which to do that.

I have very serious concerns and very serious reservations about our current strategy when it comes to ISIS. I am not sure it is sufficient. I think it is a strategy that will contain them but will not defeat them. In fact, ISIS is now popping up, for example, in Libya, where they have a very significant hub. They have a very significant presence in Benghazi. Just a few days ago they carried out an attack in Tripoli. We are now hearing media reports that ISIS has a presence in Afghanistan, perhaps even terrorist training camps.

So they continue to grow their affiliates, they continue to grow their presence, and we need an authorization of the use of force that allows us to defeat them anywhere in the world where they are to be found.

The President’s suggestion has been well received. We thank him for submitting one. But now it is the responsibility of the Senate to do its job and to write one of its own. It may reflect many of the things the President wants, but what I believe it should reflect more than anything else is that we authorize him to defeat ISIS no matter what it takes and no matter how long it takes. If we have problems with the President’s strategy, there are different ways to address it. I do have problems with the strategy and I want that to be addressed.

ISRAEL

Mr. Carter’s nomination comes at another important moment. In that same region of the world, one of America’s strongest allies and its very existence is under attack. Of course I am talking about Israel, the Jewish State—an extraordinary story in the history of the world. Here is a country founded after the end of World War II as a homeland for the Jewish people so that never again—never again—would they have nowhere to go if they faced the sorts of oppression, the sort of genocide they faced during the Holocaust.

Since that time the Jewish State has had an extraordinary story. From an economic perspective, it is a vibrant, first-rate country with a first-rate economy. What is most interesting is this is not a country with oil or a country with vast supplies of natural gas.

This is not a country that is an agricultural superpower, yet it has a world-class economy providing prosperity and upward mobility to millions of its people, and it has done so on the basis of innovation.

There is a very good book recently written called "Start-up Nation" that talks about the extraordinary story of Israel.

It is also a very vibrant democracy—in fact, observers of Israeli politics often joke perhaps a little too vibrant. They have heated debates. But it is a democracy.

So what we have here is a democratic nation with a vibrant free enterprise economy in the middle of the Middle East.

Israel is everything we want that region of the world to become. We wish every nation in that region were a real democracy, a vibrant one. We wish every nation in that part of the world had a first-rate economy that provided upward mobility to everyone. And we wish every nation in the Middle East was as strong an ally of the United States as Israel has been.

This is the extraordinary story of this small but important nation, and this country must continue to be their strongest ally in the world. But they face extraordinary threats to their safety, to their security, and to their existence.

It begins with what I believe is a concerted effort around the world—including in American academia, including in the universities of this very country—to delegitimize Israel's right to exist and its right to exist as a Jewish state, and it is an outrage.

It continues with the growth of anti-Semitism all over the world, increasingly in Europe. Every day we see stories of a mass exodus as more and more Jews are leaving Europe because of the growth of anti-Semitism.

We saw what happened in Paris—not just the attack that happened but how Jews were deliberately targeted for death by terrorists. It was not a random attack. It was a deliberate act to target Jews. It was a deliberate act of violence in the furtherance of anti-Semitism.

In every international body in the world, Israel is often the target of scorn and criticism, without any consideration whatsoever to what its enemies intend to do to them. And now perhaps the greatest risk of all is to its very existence from the threat of an Iranian nuclear program.

I, like everybody else, wish that I would wake up tomorrow morning to the news that the Ayatollah had come to his senses and realized Iran cannot continue down its path; that they have given up their nuclear weapons ambition; that they have given up sponsoring terrorism all over the world; that they have given up their anti-Israeli, anti-Semitic rhetoric; that they have given up oppressing their own people. But I know that is not going to happen because Iran is not

governed by a normal leader the way we would consider a leader of a nation. Iran is governed by a radical shia cleric—a radical shia cleric who believes he is not only the head of Iran, he believes he is the head of all Islam everywhere in the world. Iran is where he lives. Iran is where he is based. But Iran is not what he believes is his domain; he believes every Muslim on the planet under the Sun is under his control and leadership.

But here is the scariest thing he believes: He believes it is his job to trigger an apocalyptic showdown between the Muslim and non-Muslim world because that would bring about the emergence of the 13th Imam—the Hidden Imam, the Mahdi, as they call him—who will then come and govern the entire world under the flag of Islam—his version of radical Islam. We may say that stuff sounds a little far-fetched. That is what he believes. That is what he passionately and legitimately believes.

So when someone wants to trigger an apocalyptic showdown between the Muslim and non-Muslim world, when someone says they want to destroy the State of Israel, wipe it off the face of the Earth, and that person is trying to acquire nuclear weapons capabilities, we had better be very concerned, and we had better conclude that is an unacceptable risk for us to take. It is particularly scary for Israel because they are closer to Iran than we are. They are in their crosshairs both verbally and militarily.

The administration would have us believe that we are in the midst of this negotiation and hopefully we will delay the Iranian nuclear program or extend the amount of time they would need to break out. Let me break it to everyone: They are not going to break out. They are going to sneak out. They will concoct some sort of excuse at some point in the future as to why they need a nuclear weapons program.

Let me begin by saying that Iran is an oil-rich nation. They have no need for civilian nuclear power. But if they want one, they can have it, like most of the other countries in the world do, by importing enriched uranium or reprocessed plutonium and using it for their reactors for peaceful purposes. But instead they insist on the ability to enrich and reprocess, and there is only one reason why they would insist on that—because they want the infrastructure necessary to one day build a weapon when they decide they need it.

But don't take my word for it. That is not the only thing they are doing. There are two other aspects of their program that aren't even being discussed.

The first is that they continue to develop long-range rockets. Why do they need intercontinental missiles? Why do they need long-range rockets? They don't need them for conventional purposes. They don't put a conventional warhead—they don't spend all the time and energy and money that it takes to

build that capacity to bomb someone with a conventional weapon. There is only one reason to build long-range rockets such as those, and that is to put a nuclear warhead on them. That is not being discussed in these negotiations, and they continue to make unabated progress toward their long-range rocket capabilities.

The other is a weapons design. The three things they need for a nuclear weapons program: a weapons design, long-range rockets, and the ability to enrich and reprocess. They are already building the rockets. The weapons design they can literally buy from dozens of people around the world who will sell it to them. And the reprocessing? Even under the deal the President is asking for, if it went down exactly the way the President is asking for, they would still keep all the infrastructure, all the things that it takes to enrich to weapons-grade. They would have all the equipment, all the scientists, all the infrastructure.

Here is one more point. Iran has always had a secret component to their nuclear program. They have always had some secret component to their program. And I would venture to guess that right now they have a secret component to their program as well that we do not know about.

That is why I have little hope in this deal, and that is why Prime Minister Netanyahu is so concerned about the deal. See, he doesn't have the luxury of living an illusion. He doesn't have the luxury of pretending that somehow we can work this out, as if somehow we are negotiating with Luxembourg or Belgium. He knows the neighborhood he lives in, and he knows his enemy. He knows their true nature. He knows their true intentions. And it is his obligation not just to protect his people but to fight for that nation's very existence. So he has chosen to come before the Congress at the invitation of the Speaker. I am glad he has accepted his invitation, and I think we owe him the courtesy to hear what he has to say.

I want you to go back and look at the United Nations rollcall votes. Time and again, when the interests of this country are being challenged around the world, I want you to see how many times Israel is one of the few countries—often the only country—that vote with the United States of America in that international forum. I want you to see all the times that the Israelis have stood with America on issue after issue around the world.

I also want you to think about what it says about us as a nation if we are not prepared to make it very clear that before anything else, we are the friends of our allies. What does it say to our other allies around the world, to other nations in other parts of the world that are counting on the American security guarantee for their own existence and their own security, what does it say to Japan and to South Korea and to our allies in NATO if the United States is

prepared to create daylight between us and the State of Israel?

That is exactly the message people will get—that there is a division between us and Israel—if, in fact, Members of Congress carry through on their threat to boycott the Prime Minister's speech before Congress on the 3rd of March. If a significant number of Members of the Senate and the House boycott his speech, that message will be heard not only by Israel's enemies but also by our allies. And the message will be twofold—one, that America is no longer firmly on the side of Israel as it once was, and two, that America is an unreliable ally; look what they just did to Israel.

I think everyone has the right to go or not go to any speech they want, but I hope my colleagues who are thinking about not going will reconsider. You may not like the way this went down. You may not like the fact that the Speaker did it the way he did it. That is your choice. But I want you to think about the implications beyond that. I want you to think about the implications this leaves on Israel. I want you to think about the message this sends to Israel's enemies because what we have seen decade after decade is that anytime Israel's enemies get the perception that somehow America is no longer as committed to Israel's security as it once was, it emboldens them to attack Israel, and Israel has no shortage of enemies that want to not just attack them but destroy them. We have seen what Hamas has done. We have seen what Hezbollah has done. We have seen what Iran wants to do and is doing.

If you boycott this speech, if a significant number of Members of Congress boycott this speech, you will send an incredibly powerful message to Israel's enemies. So I hope you will reconsider.

I don't question anyone's commitment on this issue. I believe there are supporters of Israel who won't attend the speech because they think it is disrespectful to the President. This is a lot bigger than that. We are talking about the existence of this nation. We are talking about whether people in that nation will survive in 20 years or 15 years. That is how important and monumental this moment is.

I am not claiming that by you not attending the speech, somehow that is going to lead to Israel's destruction. I am claiming that if you boycott this speech, you will send a message to Israel's enemies that could embolden them, and I hope you will reconsider that position.

I find it quite frankly outrageous that reports are that the White House has asked Members of Congress to boycott the speech. I find it outrageous that the Vice President of the United States—the Vice President—has decided to boycott that speech. I find it outrageous, for example, that on the one hand we are more than glad to send administration officials at the highest

levels to sit down and meet repeatedly with the highest ranking officials that Iran will send, but our strongest ally's Prime Minister is coming to Washington and they won't even meet with him? One of our strongest ally's Prime Minister wants to speak before the Congress and they won't even attend the speech? What do you think the headlines will be read as in Iran, by the terrorists in Gaza, by the terrorists in Judea and Samaria, by the terrorists in all parts of the world, such as in Lebanon, who want to destroy Israel? What do you think they are going to read into it? What they are going to read into it, unfortunately, is that somehow Congress's commitment to the future security of Israel is not as strong as it once was. And I fear what the implications of that will be. We should not take this lightly.

I can think of no nation on Earth that needs our help more right now than Israel, and I can think of no people on Earth who deserve our support more than they do. As I said earlier, they are a reliable, strong, committed ally of this Nation. We have strong links to them on personal, cultural, political, and economic levels. They have stood by us time and again in international forums when America's interests have been challenged. They are everything we want the Middle East to look like in the future—free, prosperous, democratic, aligned with America, peace-loving, desirous of a better future. What more do you want? What more could they do? What else could they be for us to be any stronger an ally of theirs than we should be or are right now? Yet there are people who are talking about boycotting the speech to protest because their feelings are hurt, because they are upset about the way it went down, because they don't like the way it was scheduled, because it was disrespectful to the President.

You have the right to voice your concerns, but don't do this to an ally. Don't do this to a nation that is as threatened today as it has ever been at any time in its existence. Don't do this to a people who are in the crosshairs of multiple terrorist groups with the capability of attacking them. Don't do this to a nation whose civilians are terrorized by thousands of rockets launched against them at a moment's notice. Don't do this to a country that is facing down the threat of a nuclear weapon annihilating them off the face of the Earth. Don't do this to a people who are being stigmatized all over the world even as we speak, who are being oppressed. Don't do this to a country that in forum after forum has become the subject of delegitimization, as people argue that somehow Israel's right to exist is not real. Don't do this to them.

I hope my colleagues will reconsider their decision to not attend. This is an important speech. It is the Prime Minister's choice, obviously. He must always act in the best interests of his na-

tion and his people. But I hope he will speak to us on March 3, and I hope he will speak to us clearly. I hope that through his speech he will open the eyes of this Congress and the American people that this is not child's play, that what Iran intends to have is not just a nuclear weapon to destroy Israel but ultimately to terrorize the world. I hope he will speak to us bluntly about the true nature of this threat.

I know there is a lot going on in the world, but there is no greater threat to the long-term security of the planet than the Iranian nuclear ambition. No people and no nation on Earth know that better than the people of Israel, and no leader on Earth understands that better than Prime Minister Netanyahu.

I think after years of commitment to this alliance, after the bravery he has shown in his time in office and the bravery the Jewish people of Israel have shown in defending their nation's right to exist after being attacked multiple times throughout their history and even to this modern day, they deserve our unambiguous support. Of course, there are differences between allies. There always have been and always will be.

If we won't stand for Israel, for whom will we stand? If the United States of America will not defend its ally, whom will we defend? What message do we send to our alliances across the planet and what message do we send to our enemies and Israel's enemies?

I hope cooler heads will prevail. I hope Members of the House and Senate who have announced they are boycotting will reconsider. I hope we will all be there, if we can, to hear what the Prime Minister has to say the first week in March.

I suggest the absence of a quorum.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will call the roll.

The assistant legislative clerk proceeded to call the roll.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent that the order for the quorum call be rescinded.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, are we in morning business?

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Senate is in executive session.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I ask unanimous consent to speak as in morning business.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

TRIBUTES TO KATHIE ALVAREZ

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, regular C-SPAN viewers, this is your DVR alert. Get your TiVo ready. After today you will no longer hear the dulcet voice of Kathie Alvarez calling the roll in the United States Senate. After nearly 30 years as an integral part of the floor staff, Kathie is leaving the Senate.

Her road to the Senate began as a young seventh grade history teacher in Louisiana. In 1984 she chaperoned her