

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

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. BARR), who is my good friend and Mr. Bowling's Congressman from Lexington.

Mr. BARR. Mr. Speaker, I thank Chairman ROE for his tireless leadership as a veteran himself, as a physician, and for his exceptional leadership on veterans issues as chairman of the committee.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 4533, to designate the healthcare system of the Department of Veterans Affairs in Lexington, Kentucky, my hometown, as the Lexington VA Health Care System and to individually designate medical facilities located at 1101 Veterans Drive in Lexington, Kentucky, as the Troy Bowling Campus, a campus where my own grandfather, a World War II veteran, spent his final days; and to designate the Department of Veterans Affairs Healthcare Center located at 2250 Leestown Road in Lexington, Kentucky, as the Franklin R. Sousley Campus.

Born in Hilltop, Kentucky, Marine Private First Class Franklin R. Sousley landed on Iwo Jima on Friday, February 19, 1945, and he actively fought in the battle for the islands. During these intense fighting moments, members of the United States Armed Forces secured Mount Suribachi and hoisted a United States flag on top of the summit.

On February 23, 1945, Private First Class Sousley, alongside five other brave U.S. servicemen, raised a larger U.S. flag so it could be seen over the island. The iconic photograph taken of these six marines while they raised the U.S. flag attached to a heavy Japanese pipe soon became the immortalized symbol of American bravery, perseverance, and sacrifice endured by members of the United States Armed Forces during the intense battles of World War II.

Tragically, Private First Class Sousley was killed in combat by a Japanese sniper around Cayetano Point on March 21, 1945, and was finally laid to rest at the Elizaville Cemetery in Fleming County, Kentucky. I have been to that grave site many times. The VFW in Fleming County always, on an annual basis, goes out there to pay their respects to the Sousley family right at that grave site.

Private Troy Bowling bravely fought at Iwo Jima. While attempting to secure Mount Suribachi, his unit came under intense and concentrated fire, as was previously said, completely overwhelming his unit. Two projectiles struck Private Bowling in the chest and leg, leaving him critically wounded on the battlefield. At that moment, Bowling said: "As I lay bleeding on the black sands of Iwo Jima, I looked to the heavens, promising that, if I survived, I would serve mankind for the rest of my life."

Troy's unit received the Presidential Unit Citation, and he received the Purple Heart. In keeping faith with his commitment to God made during that battle, Private Bowling, whom I had the honor of meeting on several occasions, devoted the next 66 years of his life by giving over 78,000 hours of volunteer service to others at the Lexington VA Medical Center, and he rose through the ranks within the Disabled American Veterans organization, holding nearly every position, including state commander.

He also received a Lifetime Service Achievement Award from the Department of Veterans Affairs and was nominated and selected to be inducted into the Kentucky Veterans Hall of Fame for his lifetime of service to veterans.

These two deserving veterans, Franklin Sousley and Troy Bowling, embody the best of American ideals, values, and commitment to serving others, never abandoning the marine motto of "semper fidelis," always faithful. Therefore, it is fitting that we rename the Lexington VA Medical Center campuses during the 73rd anniversary of the landing of the U.S. forces on the beaches of Iwo Jima and honor these two servicemen for their service and sacrifice to our country and to our veterans.

I would like to thank the members of the Sixth Congressional District Veterans Coalition for bringing the idea for this legislation to my attention. I would also like to thank my colleagues in the Kentucky congressional delegation—Leader MITCH MCCONNELL, Senator RAND PAUL, Congressman HAL ROGERS, Congressman JOHN YARMUTH, Congressman BRETT GUTHRIE, Congressman THOMAS MASSIE, and Congressman JAMES COMER—for their support as well.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I urge my colleagues in the House to support the passage of this meaningful legislation honoring veterans in Kentucky.

Mr. TAKANO. Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I urge my colleagues to join me in passing this meaningful piece of legislation.

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

□ 1545

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, once again, I encourage all Members to support this legislation. From this Army veteran, I wish Private Sousley and Private Bowling to rest in peace. Semper fi.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Tennessee (Mr. ROE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4533, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. ROE of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

HAMAS HUMAN SHIELDS PREVENTION ACT

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3542) to impose sanctions against Hamas for gross violations of internationally recognized human rights by reason of the use of civilians as human shields, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3542

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 "Hamas Human Shields Prevention Act".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The international law of armed conflict prohibits, during any armed conflict, the exploitation of the presence of civilians, or movement of civilians, in an effort to impede attack on or otherwise shield lawful targets from attack.

(2) Violation of this obligation is commonly referred to as using persons as "human shields", the unlawful exploitation of civilian persons or property in an attempt to impede attack on or otherwise shield lawful targets from attack.

(3) The international law of armed conflict also prohibits exposing prisoners of war, other detainees, or the wounded and sick to unnecessary risks resulting from the conduct of hostilities, which clearly includes a prohibition against using such personnel in an effort to impede attack on or otherwise shield lawful targets from attack.

(4) Under the international law of armed conflict, the use of human shields is a critical consideration when assessing whether infliction of civilian harm by a party to the conflict was in fact unreasonable under the circumstances.

(5) Throughout the violent takeover of Gaza by Hamas in 2007, the organization engaged in summary executions and torture, and put the lives of civilians at constant risk.

(6) Since that 2007 takeover of Gaza, Hamas forces have repeatedly fired rockets into Israel in an indiscriminate manner, routinely striking civilian population areas that cannot plausibly be considered lawful military targets.

(7) Hamas attacks are routinely launched from firing positions in areas of dense civilian population, often in or near schools, mosques, or hospitals, with no plausible justification based on military necessity.

(8) Unlawful Hamas tactics also include routinely forcing Palestinian civilians to gather on the roofs of their homes to act as human shields.

(9) Because these Hamas tactics cannot be justified by military necessity, they indicate an effort to endanger both Israeli and Palestinian civilians.

(10) The Israel Defense Force, in response to such serious violations by Hamas, has vigorously taken all feasible precautions to

minimize civilian casualties and protect civilian objects, in accordance with the international laws of armed conflict. Such tactics have included providing warnings to civilians when feasible.

(1) Since 2010, Hamas has enlisted children to work as laborers in the tunnel networks between Gaza and Egypt.

(12) On June 9, 2017, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency announced it had discovered Hamas tunnels under two of its schools in the Gaza Strip, adding it was “unacceptable that students and staff are placed at risk in such a way”.

(13) Hamas was designated as a foreign terrorist organization by the Secretary of State on October 8, 1997.

(14) In addition to Hamas, other armed groups, such as Hezbollah, the Islamic State, al-Qa’ida, and al-Shabaab, typically use civilians as human shields.

SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

It shall be the policy of the United States to—

(1) officially and publicly condemn Hamas for violating the international law of armed conflict by exploiting civilians, civilian property, and other specially protected personnel and facilities, in an effort to shield military targets from lawful attack; and

(2) take effective action against those knowingly engaging in, supporting, facilitating, or enabling such undisputed violations of international law through the use of human shields.

SEC. 4. UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL.

The President should direct the United States Permanent Representative to the United Nations to use the voice, vote, and influence of the United States at the United Nations Security Council to secure support for a resolution that would—

(1) impose multilateral sanctions against Hamas for the use of human shields;

(2) require member nations to take specific steps to prevent the use of human shields and impose consequences on those who use human shields;

(3) require the United Nations to track and report the use of human shields in any conflict monitored by an organization or agency of the United Nations; and

(4) specify steps to prevent, and consequences for, the use of United Nations employees as human shields or the use of United Nations facilities or infrastructure to enable the use of civilians as human shields.

SEC. 5. SANCTIONS ON FOREIGN PERSONS RESPONSIBLE FOR GROSS VIOLATIONS OF INTERNATIONALLY RECOGNIZED HUMAN RIGHTS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—The President shall impose sanctions described in subsection (c) with respect to each person on the list required under subsection (b).

(b) LIST.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall transmit to the appropriate congressional committees a list of the following:

(A) Each foreign person that the President determines—

(i) is a member of Hamas or is acting on behalf of Hamas; and

(ii) on or after the date of the enactment of this Act, knowingly orders, controls, or otherwise directs or is complicit in, any unlawful attempt to use civilians, civilian property, or other protected persons to shield military objectives from lawful attack.

(B) Each foreign person, or each agency or instrumentality of a foreign state, that the President determines has knowingly, on or after the date of the enactment of this Act—

(i) significantly facilitated, directly or indirectly, any act described in subparagraph

(A)(ii) by a person described in subparagraph (A)(i); or

(ii) attempted to facilitate or support any such person.

(2) UPDATES.—The President shall transmit to the appropriate congressional committees an update of the list required under paragraph (1)—

(A) not later than one year after the date of transmission of such list, and annually thereafter for 3 years; and

(B) as new information becomes available.

(c) SANCTIONS DESCRIBED.—The sanctions to be imposed on a foreign person or an agency or instrumentality of a foreign state on the list required under subsection (b) are the following:

(1) BLOCKING OF PROPERTY.—The President shall exercise all of the powers granted to the President under the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) to the extent necessary to block and prohibit all transactions in property and interests in property of the foreign person or of such agency or instrumentality of a foreign state if such property or interests in property are in the United States, come within the United States, or are or come within the possession or control of a United States person.

(2) ALIENS INELIGIBLE FOR VISAS, ADMISSION, OR PAROLE.—

(A) VISAS, ADMISSION, OR PAROLE.—An alien who the Secretary of State or the Secretary of Homeland Security (or a designee of either such Secretary) determines is a foreign person on the list required under subsection (b) is—

(i) inadmissible to the United States;

(ii) ineligible to receive a visa or other documentation to enter the United States; and

(iii) otherwise ineligible to be admitted or paroled into the United States or to receive any other benefit under the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101 et seq.).

(B) CURRENT VISAS REVOKED.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Any visa or other documentation issued to an alien who is a foreign person on the list required under subsection (b), regardless of when such visa or other documentation was issued, shall be revoked and such alien shall be denied admission to the United States.

(ii) EFFECT OF REVOCATION.—A revocation under clause (i)—

(I) shall take effect immediately; and

(II) shall automatically cancel any other valid visa or documentation that is in the possession of the alien who is the subject of such revocation.

(C) EXCEPTION TO COMPLY WITH UNITED NATIONS HEADQUARTERS AGREEMENT.—The sanctions under this paragraph shall not be imposed on an individual if admitting such individual to the United States is necessary to permit the United States to comply with the Agreement regarding the Headquarters of the United Nations, signed at Lake Success June 26, 1947, and entered into force November 21, 1947, between the United Nations and the United States, or with other applicable international agreements.

(d) WAIVER.—The President may, on a case-by-case basis, waive the application of a sanction under this section with respect to a person or an agency or instrumentality of a foreign state for periods not longer than 180 days if the President certifies to the appropriate congressional committees that such waiver is in the national security interest of the United States.

(e) PENALTIES.—The penalties provided for in subsections (b) and (c) of section 206 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1705) shall apply to any person that violates, attempts to violate, conspires to violate, or causes a violation of any regulation promulgated to carry out this section

to the same extent that such penalties apply to a person that commits an unlawful act described in section 206(a) of such Act.

(f) REGULATIONS.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—The President may exercise all authorities provided to the President under sections 203 and 205 of the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1702 and 1704) for purposes of carrying out this section.

(2) ISSUANCE OF REGULATIONS.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the President shall prescribe such regulations as may be necessary to implement this section.

(g) RULE OF CONSTRUCTION.—Nothing in this section may be construed—

(1) to limit the authorities of the President pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.) or any other relevant provision of law; or

(2) to apply with respect to any activity subject to the reporting requirements under title V of the National Security Act of 1947 (50 U.S.C. 3091 et seq.), or to any authorized intelligence activities of the United States.

SEC. 6. DEFINITIONS.

In this Act:

(1) ADMITTED; ALIEN.—The terms “admitted” and “alien” have the meanings given such terms in section 101 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1101).

(2) AGENCY OR INSTRUMENTALITY OF A FOREIGN STATE.—The term “agency or instrumentality of a foreign state” has the meaning given such term in section 1603(b) of title 28, United States Code.

(3) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—The term “appropriate congressional committees” means—

(A) the Committee on Financial Services, the Committee on Ways and Means, the Committee on the Judiciary and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives; and

(B) the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs, the Committee on the Judiciary, and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate.

(4) FOREIGN PERSON.—The term “foreign person” has the meaning given such term in section 594.304 of title 31, Code of Federal Regulations, as in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

(5) HAMAS.—The term “Hamas” means—

(A) the entity known as Hamas and designated by the Secretary of State as a foreign terrorist organization pursuant to section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1189); or

(B) any person identified as an agent, instrumentality, or affiliate of Hamas on the list of specially designated nationals and blocked persons maintained by the Office of Foreign Asset Control of the Department of Treasury, the property or interests in property of which are blocked pursuant to the International Emergency Economic Powers Act (50 U.S.C. 1701 et seq.).

(6) UNITED STATES PERSON.—The term “United States person” has the meaning given such term in section 594.315 of title 31, Code of Federal Regulations, as in effect on the date of the enactment of this Act.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MOONEY of West Virginia). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) and the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from South Carolina.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative

days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on this measure.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am grateful for the co-author of this legislation and a good friend, Congressman SETH MOULTON from Massachusetts, a valued Iraq veteran; as well as the original cosponsors, Congresswoman ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN and Congressman TED DEUTCH. I also appreciate Chairman ED ROYCE and the House Foreign Affairs Committee for allowing it to proceed to a floor vote.

H.R. 3542, the Hamas Human Shields Prevention Act, will sanction Hamas for violating human rights standards by using civilians as human shields.

For far too long, Hamas has taken shelter and launched offenses against Israel from civilian areas, including schools, hospitals, and mosques. Their cowardly actions knowingly and carelessly put innocent lives at risk and are a gross violation of human rights and international law.

Last June, the United Nations Relief and Works Agency, UNRWA, discovered Hamas tunnels under two of its schools in Gaza, demonstrating how they knowingly integrate terrorist operations with children in civilian areas.

Sadly, the Iranians and Hamas are willing to fight to the last Palestinian man, woman, and child in their quest to annihilate the people of Israel. Yet neither Hamas nor Iran have been properly held accountable by responsible nations for their crimes against humanity. Unfortunately, the prior U.S. administration never raised this as a serious issue with the Iranians. The cowardly Iranians and Hamas sacrifice innocent Palestinians for their self-destructive ideology.

The world must face the threat of Hamas as it continues to perpetrate atrocities against civilians by using them as human shields. This legislation imposes direct sanctions against any Hamas terrorist who is responsible for using human shields.

This bill, Hamas Human Shields Prevention Act, encourages the U.S. Permanent Representative to the United Nations to secure a U.N. Security Council multilateral resolution imposing sanctions against Hamas for the use of human shields. It would also sanction foreign governments and individuals who provide material and financial support to Hamas, which would cut off the resources that allow Hamas to terrorize civilians.

I appreciate that Ambassador Nikki Haley has been outspoken against the murderous terrorists in the global war on terrorism. I believe this legislation will promote working to ensure that lives of innocent civilians of the citizens of Gaza are spared by proactively

imposing strong sanctions against Hamas and their murderous actions.

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

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY,
Washington, DC, February 7, 2018.

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

DEAR CHAIRMAN ROYCE: I write with respect to H.R. 3542, the "Hamas Human Shields Prevention Act." As a result of your having consulted with us on provisions within H.R. 3542 that fall within the Rule X jurisdiction of the Committee on the Judiciary, I forego any further consideration of this bill so that it may proceed expeditiously to the House floor for consideration.

The Judiciary Committee takes this action with our mutual understanding that by foregoing consideration of H.R. 3542 at this time, we do not waive any jurisdiction over subject matter contained in this or similar legislation and that our committee will be appropriately consulted and involved as this bill or similar legislation moves forward so that we may address any remaining issues in our jurisdiction. Our committee also reserves the right to seek appointment of an appropriate number of conferees to any House-Senate conference involving this or similar legislation and asks that you support any such request.

I would appreciate a response to this letter confirming this understanding with respect to H.R. 3542 and would ask that a copy of our exchange of letters on this matter be included in the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill.

Sincerely,

BOB GOODLATTE,
Chairman.

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC, February 7, 2018.

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

DEAR CHAIRMAN GOODLATTE: Thank you for consulting with the Foreign Affairs Committee and agreeing to be discharged from further consideration of H.R. 3542, the Hamas Human Shields Prevention Act, so that the bill may proceed expeditiously to the House floor.

I agree that your forgoing further action on this measure does not in any way diminish or alter the jurisdiction of your committee, 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 from your committee to any House-Senate conference on this legislation.

I will seek to place our letters on H.R. 3542 into the Congressional Record during floor consideration of the bill. I appreciate your cooperation regarding this legislation and look forward to continuing to work together as this measure moves through the legislative process.

Sincerely,

EDWARD R. ROYCE,
Chairman.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 3542, the Hamas Human Shields Prevention Act.

Mr. Speaker, this is an act that came before our committee and was adopted unanimously by voice vote. I was there. My hearing has been tested recently, and there was not one dis-

senting voice. I thank Representatives WILSON and MOULTON for their leadership in authoring the Hamas Human Shields Prevention Act, and I am proud to be a cosponsor.

This legislation calls out the cowardly use of human shields by Hamas and the Palestinian Islamic Jihad. It sanctions anyone who supports or takes part in this horrific practice.

Let us be perfectly clear about what is at stake. There are designated terrorist entities using innocent civilians, even innocent children, as a means to camouflage their arsenals. Every time Hamas does this, every time it is done by Palestinian Islamic Jihad, the leadership is making a horrific statement: they put a higher value on their efforts to kill Israeli civilians than they do on the lives of Gaza's civilians.

Keep in mind, this practice is a violation of the Geneva Conventions and the rules and laws of war. It is a war crime and should, indeed, be sanctioned by the United Nations.

First and foremost, this is an issue of basic human rights. Hamas has forced civilians to gather on the roofs of their homes so they can hide terrorist military leaders and weapons below. Hamas has even built their tunnels that they use to move weapons and fighters right under civilian infrastructure. This puts hospitals, schools, mosques, markets, and innocent Palestinians at great risk.

It doesn't stop there. Hamas purposely puts rockets in U.N. facilities, compelling the U.N. to launch daily inspections of each of their facilities during times of heightened tension and putting international personnel in harm's way.

Hamas' use of human shields also raises important national security concerns for Israel. Unlike Palestinian terrorist groups—groups that seek to kill as many Israeli civilians as possible—in contrast with that, the Israeli Defense Forces are not blind and cannot be blind to the plight of innocent civilians.

That is why the Israeli Government has tried to warn Palestinian civilians of upcoming strikes, including evacuation notices, text messages and calls, and even low-explosive warning "knocks." These warnings don't just give innocent civilians the opportunity to evacuate. They also put the terrorists on notice that strikes are imminent, giving them an opportunity to escape.

The Israeli Government has made an explicit decision. They care enough about warning and saving the lives of Palestinian civilians that they are willing to give an advantage to terrorist groups—groups who are trying to kill as many Israeli civilians as they possibly can.

The contrast, therefore, is astounding. While Israel has made bold investments in early warning apps on Israeli phones and developed the Iron Dome, along with the United States, to protect Israeli civilians from incoming

missiles, Hamas makes no effort to protect Gaza civilians and engages in activities designed to cause Gaza civilians to be killed.

Hamas puts innocent civilians in the line of fire. They hide their weapons and their leadership beneath schools and hospitals. Then, when Gaza children die, when innocent men and women are blown apart, Hamas' leadership cheers quietly at what they perceive as a propaganda coup against the Israeli Defense Forces.

That is why I support sanctions against Hamas and any of its supporting organizations and individuals that facilitate the use of human shields.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN), who chairs the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Middle East and North Africa.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I thank Mr. WILSON for presenting this bill before us today, and I rise in strong support of his bill, the Hamas Human Shields Prevention Act. I was proud to join Mr. WILSON and others as an original cosponsor.

Three years ago, the House and Senate both unanimously passed a concurrent resolution that I authored which denounced the use of human shields by Hamas and, indeed, any other terror group.

Using human shields is an unconscionable practice. It is a gross violation of international laws and norms. Yet, invariably, the use of human shields ends up being a winning strategy for Hamas. Why?

Because the international community falls for its deadly ploy. This is despite the fact that Israel is unmatched in its efforts to avoid civilian casualties.

We know Hamas forces Palestinians into becoming human shields, and the terror group is known for firing on Israeli targets from heavily populated areas or from places like schools or mosques. They do this on purpose.

This disgusting practice underscores the fact that Hamas doesn't care at all about the well-being of the Palestinian people, and the sole purpose of Hamas is to try to force Israel into a situation in which it may harm civilians, hoping to turn the public sentiment against the Jewish State.

Mr. WILSON's bill, therefore, puts down an important marker, Mr. Speaker. It builds upon our previous efforts by adding punitive measures identifying and then sanctioning anyone affiliated with Hamas who uses human shields.

Responsible nations must not allow Hamas to continue to use this cynical ploy, and we in the United States have a responsibility to lead and to ensure that this gruesome tactic is ended once and for all.

I thank Mr. WILSON from South Carolina for this initiative, and I urge my colleagues to join us in supporting this important and much-needed measure before us today. I thank Mr. WILSON for, once again, highlighting this cynical, deadly, and disgusting ploy being used by Hamas.

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), chairman of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa, Global Health, Global Human Rights, and International Organizations.

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Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my good friend for yielding, and I rise in strong support of H.R. 3542, the Hamas Human Shields Prevention Act, introduced, sponsored, and authored by my good friend and colleague JOE WILSON; and we are all very grateful he has brought this important legislation to the floor.

H.R. 3542 is a critical and common-sense measure that addresses Hamas' cynical and well-documented practice of endangering civilian lives for the sake of its terror campaign against the State of Israel.

Many independent observers attest to the Palestinian terrorist group's strategy of locating military equipment and installations amidst civilian infrastructure. A 2015 Amnesty International report, Mr. Speaker, entitled, "Unlawful and Deadly," exposed this reprehensible conduct by the Palestinian terrorist groups during Israel's 2014 Operation Protective Edge in the Gaza Strip. The report documented examples of "attacks launched from the vicinity of civilian buildings or from residential areas" in addition to the use of "civilian buildings and facilities for other military purposes, such as storing munitions."

In one instance chronicled in this report, a foreign journalist captured footage of a rocket launcher "located some 50 meters from a hotel frequented by international correspondents, 100 meters away from a U.N. building, and very near several civilian homes." The footage additionally showed "children playing next to the rocket launcher."

Amnesty further documented the discovery of "Palestinian munitions in three . . . vacant"—UNRWA—"schools in the Gaza Strip" during the conflict. One of these schools, although vacant, had "two UNRWA schools on either side of it"—that—"were each hosting around 1,500 displaced civilians."

Mr. Speaker, Hamas' perverse practice of using U.N. installations to shield military infrastructure has not abated since the 2014 Gaza war. UNRWA discovers military infrastructure in the immediate environs of its school on an alarmingly regular basis. Last year alone, the agency reported discovering two militant tunnels lo-

cated under its schools in the Gaza Strip.

Of course, human rights reports and UNRWA statements account only for a limited scope of violations that are observed and documented by international organizations, media correspondents, and credible NGOs. The real scope of Hamas' human shield policy is almost certainly far greater. Israeli authorities, for example, reported that out of 3,600 Palestinian rockets launched in the first month and a half of Operation Protective Edge, 1,600 of those rockets, nearly 45 percent, were fired from civilian areas.

H.R. 3542 rightfully calls on the administration to use its voice and vote in the United Nations Security Council to impose multilateral sanctions on Hamas for this disgraceful pattern of exploiting innocent civilians, including women and children, so that it can rain indiscriminate rockets on innocent Israelis with greater impunity. This bill would also impose U.S. visa bans and asset freezes on individuals and entities that direct or facilitate Hamas' use of human shields.

By supporting this measure, Mr. Speaker, this House can advance the cause of civilian protection for Israelis and Palestinians alike.

Again, I want to thank Mr. WILSON for this excellent bill.

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

I have no other speakers on this side, so I will make a few remarks in closing. Mr. Speaker, I want to put this legislation in the broader context of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. A Palestinian state will never be born as a result of the use of human shields. No country can make peace with a group that uses its own women and children in that manner, and no country can build peace with an entity that makes the violation of the Geneva Conventions and the international rules of law established military policy.

I am a firm believer in a two-state solution that results in a secure Jewish State of Israel and a peaceful Palestinian state by its side. I hope that this legislation will help move toward that end because it seeks to empower those who want to make peace and sanctions those who cheapen human life and violate international law.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, which passed in our committee without a dissenting voice.

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

First, I would like to thank Congressman SHERMAN for his leadership in this bipartisan legislation, which will make a difference on behalf of the people of Gaza and on behalf of the people of Israel.

The terrorists of Hamas hide behind school children, hospital patients, and other vulnerable civilians. This cowardly use of human shields is a grave

human rights abuse that must be stopped, which sacrifices the lives of innocent Palestinians.

I again want to thank the bipartisan sponsors of the Hamas Human Shields Prevention Act, which deserves our unanimous support, and, in particular, I point out the cosponsorship by the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MOULTON).

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

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, international law of armed conflict prohibits the use of innocent men, women and children to deter an attack. This cowardly and disgraceful strategy is known as using human shields. And it's rightly deemed a war crime.

Yet since the violent takeover of Gaza in 2007, Hamas has repeatedly put the lives of Palestinian civilians at risk by brutally using them as human shields. Hamas also terrorizes Palestinians—the very people they claim to represent—with summary executions and torture in Gaza.

Hamas regularly launches indiscriminate attacks on civilian populations in Israel from densely populated positions in Gaza, often in or near schools, mosques or hospitals. Hamas also routinely forces Palestinian civilians to gather on the roofs of their homes to act as human shields.

This means that every time Hamas fires a rocket, it is committing not one, but two, war crimes: targeting civilians in Israel while shamelessly using human shields in Gaza. Today, the Gaza Strip is a terrorist sanctuary on Israel's borders.

The legislation we are considering today, H.R. 3542, appropriately holds Hamas responsible for its repeated use of human shields—as well as their enablers, like the Iranian regime. It imposes targeted sanctions and calls for action at the United Nations Security Council to put an end to this heinous practice.

The world cannot let terrorists embed forces among civilian populations, using them as human shields, without taking action.

I thank the gentleman from South Carolina, Representative WILSON, for authoring this legislation and urge my colleagues to support it.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3542, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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

CALLING ON GOVERNMENTS TO INTENSIFY EFFORTS TO INVESTIGATE, RECOVER, AND IDENTIFY ALL MISSING AND UNACCOUNTED-FOR PERSONNEL OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules

and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 129) calling on the Department of Defense, other elements of the Federal Government, and foreign governments to intensify efforts to investigate, recover, and identify all missing and unaccounted-for personnel of the United States, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 129

Whereas according to the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency of the Department of Defense, more than 82,000 United States personnel are still unaccounted-for from past wars and conflicts around the world;

Whereas, though recognizing that an estimated 48,000 of these personnel were presumed lost at sea and are unlikely to be recovered, tens of thousands of families and friends have waited decades for the accounting of their loved ones and comrades in arms;

Whereas the families of these brave Americans deserve our Nation's best efforts to achieve the fullest possible accounting for their missing loved ones;

Whereas the National League of POW/MIA Families, and their iconic POW/MIA flag, pioneered the Vietnam War accounting effort since 1970 and has been joined in this humanitarian quest for answers by Korean War, Cold War, and World War II families, fully supported by the American Legion, the Veterans of Foreign Wars, the Disabled American Veterans, Jewish War Veterans, AMVETS, Vietnam Veterans of America, Special Forces Association, Special Operations Association, Rolling Thunder, and other more recently formed groups, and tens of thousands of families and veterans are yearning and advocating for answers concerning the fates of their loved ones and comrades in arms;

Whereas the mission of the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency of the Department of Defense is to provide the fullest possible accounting for missing members of the Armed Forces of the United States, designated civilians of the Department, and other designated personnel; and

Whereas the recovery and investigation teams of the Department of Defense deploy to countries around the world to account as fully as possible for these unaccounted-for United States personnel: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) calls upon the Defense POW/MIA Accounting Agency and other elements of the Department of Defense, other appropriate elements of the Federal Government, and all foreign governments to resolutely continue efforts to investigate, recover, identify, and account as fully as possible for all United States personnel designated as unaccounted-for from past wars and conflicts around the world; and

(2) calls upon all foreign governments with information on United States personnel designated as unaccounted-for from past wars and conflicts, or with such personnel within their territories, to cooperate fully with the Government of the United States to provide the fullest possible accounting for those American lives.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) and the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on this measure.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of H. Res. 129, which recommitts us to the sacred task of accounting fully for our troops who are still missing and unaccounted for in past wars and conflicts.

From World War II onward, more than 82,000 U.S. personnel have not come home and are not accounted for. That means that for tens of thousands of American families, friends, and comrades in arms, the pain of uncertainty continues to this very day.

This resolution also calls upon foreign nations to fully cooperate and to provide the Defense POW-MIA Accounting Agency with all information on our missing personnel that those countries may have. It is especially appropriate that we are considering this resolution this week, which marks the 45th anniversary of Operation Homecoming, which secured the return of more than 550 American prisoners of war from Vietnam.

This group that left Hanoi on February 12, 1973, included an American fighter pilot whose F-4 had been shot down over North Vietnam in 1966. When he ejected from his plane, he had suffered a broken arm, a broken back, and a dislocated shoulder, but that was only the start of his ordeal.

This pilot spent nearly 7 years as a prisoner of war, enduring torture, abuse, and an incomprehensible 3 years in solitary confinement. For 18 months, he shared a cell with Senator JOHN MCCAIN at the infamous "Hanoi Hilton."

For his service and heroism, he was awarded two Silver Stars, two Legions of Merit, the Distinguished Flying Cross, one Bronze Star with Valor, two Purple Hearts, and numerous other deserved awards.

After that pilot returned home, he stated: "The freedoms that most Americans take for granted are, in fact, real and must be preserved. I have returned to a great nation, and our sacrifices have been well worth the effort. I pledge to continue to serve and fight to protect the freedoms and ideals that the United States stands for."

Well, we know that that pilot did continue to serve, not only in the military. He is a former combat warrior and prisoner of war, an American hero, and a Member of Congress. His name is SAM JOHNSON, and we are honored by his presence in the Chamber today.

I want to thank Congressman JOHNSON for introducing this resolution. But even more, we all, every American, want to thank him for his life of valor and service.