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House of Representatives

The House met at 10 a.m. and was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CURBELO of Florida).

DESIGNATION OF SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
September 9, 2015.

I hereby appoint the Honorable CARLOS CURBELO to act as Speaker pro tempore on this day.

JOHN A. BOEHNER,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

MORNING-HOUR DEBATE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House of January 6, 2015, the Chair will now recognize Members from lists submitted by the majority and minority leaders for morning-hour debate.

The Chair will alternate recognition between the parties, with each party limited to 1 hour and each Member other than the majority and minority leaders and the minority whip limited to 5 minutes, but in no event shall debate continue beyond 11:50 a.m.

IRAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Oregon (Mr. BLUMENAUER) for 5 minutes.

Mr. BLUMENAUER. Mr. Speaker, our vote on the nuclear agreement with Iran will be the most important decision I have made in Congress since voting against the disastrous Iraq war.

I am under no illusions that the clerics and military that run Iran are friends of the United States. To the contrary, they are engaged in activities that are opposed to the United States interests and those of many of our friends and allies.

This agreement does not resolve all our differences, change Iranian behaviors, or provide greater freedom for its people. What it does do is give the world 15 years of security to prevent Iran from developing nuclear weapons.

It also demonstrates our ability to work with our international partners—France, Great Britain, Germany, especially Russia and China—to bring Iran to the negotiating table, to force them to make important concessions, and to retain the ability to re-impose crippling sanctions if they violate the agreement.

It has a strong mechanism for surveillance and snapping back sanctions to give us confidence that it is strongly in the Iranians' interest to comply.

Fifteen years is not forever. But taking the current nuclear breakout time of less than 15 weeks for Iran to a minimum of a year and having assurance for 15 years is a remarkable achievement.

The alternative is not "a better deal." There is no evidence that there is something beyond this agreement that the Iranians would agree with or, most critically, that has the support of the other five countries that made this agreement possible in the first place.

The alternative is for the United States to lose the support of our allies so that Iran gets access to its money anyway, the partnership dissolves, and this important moment is lost.

The United States still retains the ability to walk away from the deal if it is rejected or violated by Iran. This puts us in a much stronger position to re-impose sanctions with more leverage going forward.

In the final analysis, the United States or Israel, for that matter, can always resort to military force. But it is far better, however, to make this agreement work, to monitor and enforce it, and build on this unique international partnership.

Our work will not be done in the Middle East with Iran, even if this agree-

ment is adopted and Iran abides by it. We still must be prepared to confront Iran where they are involved with aggressive action against other countries, especially our allies.

We must be prepared to support our friends in the Middle East, like Israel and Saudi Arabia. We must be prepared to make the diplomatic efforts and demonstrate commitment and resolve wherever it is necessary.

Those who would resort to force in the first instance will always retain that option.

We risk little trying to make diplomacy with rigorous inspections work and to strengthen the partnership with countries that made this agreement possible, to redouble our ongoing efforts to stabilize this deeply troubled Middle East region.

The agreement doesn't solve our problems, but it simplifies one of the greatest threats to the Middle East, not just Iranian nuclear weapons, but a potential nuclear arms race with potentially catastrophic results.

I am comfortable being in agreement with some of the most distinguished leaders of past American administrations, both Republican and Democratic, who have agreed, notwithstanding their reservations and cautions, that the acceptance of this agreement is the best path forward for the United States and world peace.

It is sad that, for the very first time, a critical American foreign policy decision has become so partisan in Congress. But the weight of evidence is for the agreement to be adopted, and we should do so.

APOLOGY TO THE VICTIMS OF THE "IRANIAN NUCLEAR ATTACK"

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. JOHNSON) for 5 minutes.

Mr. JOHNSON of Ohio. Mr. Speaker, because speeches made here on the

□ This symbol represents the time of day during the House proceedings, e.g., □ 1407 is 2:07 p.m.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.



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