

of Northwest Indiana's unions, these individuals have committed themselves to making a significant contribution to the growth and development of the economy of the First Congressional District, and I am very proud to represent them in Washington, DC.

PALESTINIAN ANTI-TERRORISM
ACT OF 2006

SPEECH OF
HON. JAMES P. MORAN
OF VIRGINIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 22, 2006

Mr. MORAN of Virginia. Madam Speaker, I rise today to voice my opposition to the Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act of 2006.

Madam Speaker, this bill claims that its goal is to ensure that no United States funding goes to support Hamaas, a foreign terrorist organization that has terrorized thousands and seeks the destruction of Israel. Were this what the bill in fact does, I would support it. However, the bill before us today goes much further than what is needed to achieve its stated goal.

First, H.R. 4681 severely restricts U.S. funding to the many non-governmental organizations that provide critical aid and services to the Palestinian people, and allows for such funding without a presidential waiver for the most basic of services, such as food and shelter. This serves no good purpose. Limiting NGO funding in this manner will only increase the hardship of the Palestinian people. Yes, it is possible that this increased hardship may drive Palestinians to turn against the Hamas-controlled Palestinian government. At the same time, however, the cause of this additional hardship—the termination in U.S. humanitarian aid—will provide a ready excuse to Hamas, allowing it to blame the United States, and others, for its failure. This is not in our interest.

We must not give this “out” to Hamas. Instead, we must ensure that, when Hamas fails in its attempt to govern, as it certainly will, it will not be able to blame the United States or any other party for its inability to deliver what the Palestinian people expected.

Second, restricting United States aid to NGOs in this manner will hurt the very people we should be assisting. The Palestinian people are facing an economic crisis that goes beyond basic food and shelter, and includes education, public health, economic development and physical infrastructure. It is in the United States' interest to provide such assistance if we are in fact in support of a two-state solution and peace in the Middle East.

Third, placing tight restrictions and sanctions on those parts of the Palestinian Authority that are not controlled by Hamas is a serious mistake, for it precludes our executive branch from working with governmental officials who may be viable options to Hamas. Other provisions in the bill—restricting the ability of all Palestinian Authority representatives to travel in the United States, interfering with the participation of Palestinian Authority representatives in international organizations, and refusing assistance to the Palestinian judiciary—are petty actions that will not, in any way, advance peace in the Middle East.

There is a high likelihood that as a result of this bill, Hamas and the Palestinian Authority

will turn around and seek the support from wealthy Arab and Muslim states, as well as extremist governments, like Iran and Syria. The message that this bill sends will push the Palestinian people away from us and quite possibly, the peace process. It will isolate them and force them to become more dependent on Hamas and their extremist supporters. This is not in our interest.

Madam Speaker, it is clear that the purpose of our every response to the Hamas electoral victory and to the fact that it now controls the Palestinian Authority must be (i) to deny any form of direct assistance until Hamas renounces its terrorist traditions and policy, (ii) to assist in the delivery of humanitarian aid and relief to the Palestinian people, and (iii) at least for as long as Hamas does not actively engage in or support violence, to refrain from any actions that will deepen the divide between the Palestinian people and this country, thereby allowing some room for progress to occur. The bill under consideration fails to meet two of these criteria. For these reasons, I will not support it.

PALESTINIAN ANTI-TERRORISM
ACT OF 2006

SPEECH OF
HON. AL GREEN

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 22, 2006

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4681, The Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act of 2006. This legislation promotes the development of democratic institutions in areas under the administrative control of the Palestinian Authority. It comes at a time when the demand for responsible democratic leadership is needed more than ever before in the Middle East. I am proud that I was one of 295 members to co-sponsor this legislation, which would restrict aid to the Hamas-controlled Palestinian Authority until Hamas meets a series of conditions, including renouncing terrorism and accepting Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state.

This legislation explicitly states that it shall be U.S. policy that no U.S. Government officer or employee shall negotiate or have substantive contacts with members or official representatives of Hamas, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, the Popular Front for the Liberation of Palestine, al-Aqsa Martyrs Brigade, or any other Palestinian terrorist organization, until such organization recognizes Israel's right to exist, and renounces the use of terrorism. Additionally, any Palestinian government must recognize and accept all previous Israel-PLO agreements and understandings.

Having taken over the government of the Palestinian Authority, PA, Hamas has reiterated its commitment to violence and the destruction of Israel by endorsing suicide attacks on Israelis and appointing a man connected to the murder of Americans in Gaza as the new PA Interior Minister. Hamas' continued dedication to terrorism has already prompted the United States and its allies to end nearly all aid to the PA, with exceptions for humanitarian assistance. However, this bill permits certain assistance to Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas in recognition of his commitment to a non-violent resolution of the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

The internationally backed Roadmap for Peace requires that the Palestinian Authority launch “sustained, targeted, and effective operations aimed at confronting all those engaged in terror.” The Palestinian Authority cannot call for the destruction of Israel if it is ever to be a serious partner for peace.

Finally, the members of the Palestinian Authority must assure us that they are focused on a better future for the Palestinian people and in order to do so, they must take steps to recognize Israel and its right to exist. The Palestinian Authority must be pressured to realize, that a government that fails to condemn terrorism, or, states its commitment to eliminate a fellow member of the community of nations is a government that cannot be considered a serious partner for peace.

I strongly encourage my colleagues, to vote in support of H.R. 4681, The Palestinian Anti-Terrorism Act of 2006.

PALESTINIAN ANTI-TERRORISM
ACT OF 2006

SPEECH OF

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 22, 2006

Mr. STARK. Madam Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.R. 4681 because it inappropriately uses a blunt instrument to clumsily attempt to achieve Middle East peace. If this carelessly written and unnecessary legislation becomes law, it will set the Israeli-Palestinian peace process back further and result in additional Israeli and Palestinian deaths.

H.R. 4681 weakens moderate pro-peace Palestinians. This legislation does not discriminate in imposing sanctions against both Hamas and non-Hamas controlled elements and officials of the Palestinian Authority, PA. H.R. 4681 bans all aid to the Palestinian Legislative Council, PLC, and PA agencies and instrumentalities, including those not controlled by Hamas. Among the officials this bill prohibits from receiving assistance is Palestinian President Mahmoud Abbas, who has been instrumental in counterbalancing Hamas and working toward a peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

This legislation undermines diplomatic efforts to achieve a lasting peace in the Middle East. This bill prohibits all members of the PA regardless of their affiliation or non-affiliation with Hamas—from obtaining visas necessary for diplomatic travel. This ill-advised rule will prevent the United States from fully engaging and bolstering moderate Palestinian leaders who recognize and support peace with Israel.

Even as the United Nations reports of an impending humanitarian disaster in the West Bank and Gaza Strip, this bill imposes unnecessarily strict sanctions on providing aid to Palestinian groups and non-government organizations not affiliated with Hamas. Under this legislation, the Palestinian people could receive essential medicine, but funds for democracy assistance, economic development, and sanitation infrastructure would be prohibited. This legislation therefore makes more likely a humanitarian crisis that will increase support for extremism, thereby endangering Israel and further destabilizing the region.

H.R. 4681 also ties the President's hands in dealing with emergency security and humanitarian crises. The bill limits the President's

ability to waive financial sanctions and travel prohibitions. It onerously requires the President to obtain congressional approval for every waiver on a case-by-case basis, complicating and delaying an American response to, for example, new Palestinian elections or a natural disaster.

Moreover, this legislation is unnecessary. Current U.S. law already forbids members of Hamas and other foreign terrorist organizations from obtaining visas or having diplomatic relations with the United States. According to the Bush Administration, the executive branch already has ample authority to impose all of the bill's restrictions. It is a rare but notable occurrence for me to agree with this Administration.

While I believe, that America should not provide aid to Hamas, I oppose this bill's reckless approach to the Middle East peace process. I voted for S. Con. Res. 79, that states that the U.S. should not provide assistance directly to the PA if any representative political party holding a majority of parliamentary seats within the PA maintains a position calling for the destruction of Israel. Unlike the bill before us today, however, that resolution provided the executive branch the flexibility necessary to work with moderate Palestinian groups and permitted foreign aid to go to nongovernmental organizations.

I urge my colleagues to vote against this harmful legislation and to consider a more thoughtful approach to achieving peace in the Middle East.

IN RECOGNITION OF THE
BROWARD COUNTY 23RD ANNUAL
SENIOR HALL OF FAME BREAK-
FAST

HON. E. CLAY SHAW, JR.

OF FLORIDA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Tuesday, May 23, 2006

Mr. SHAW. Mr. Speaker, on Thursday, May 25, 2006, 11 outstanding Broward elders will be honored at the Annual Senior Hall of Fame Breakfast. These 11 seniors being honored have volunteered in their communities and have contributed countless hours to helping others. Their outstanding character and compassion have truly set them apart. Those being honored are Judith Armstrong, Frieda Kramer, Reverend James Gooden, Helen Landers, Marie Long, Robert Millikan, June Sragow, Shirley Strassler, Jean Thompson, Mayor Joe Varsallone and Sunny Wein.

Judith Armstrong of Fort Lauderdale volunteers with the MediVan Health and Community Services' MediVan Project, providing critically needed primary medical care and prescription medicines to Broward's uninsured, low-income, elderly community. Ms. Armstrong is active on many different senior committees and manages multiple worthwhile projects, making her an incredible asset to the community of Fort Lauderdale.

Frieda Kramer of Coral Springs has dedicated over 20 years of service as a volunteer. She worked as a Medicare counselor with the Jewish Family Service at the Coral Springs Medical Center and with the SHINE (Serving Health Insurance Needs of Elders) Program as a counselor. Frieda's dedication to helping the elderly with Medicare and medical needs

goes above and beyond the call of duty. Her contributions of time, talent and energy have inspired all.

Reverend James Gooden of Fort Lauderdale has contributed countless hours to the Broward Schools Bi-racial Committee, the City of Fort Lauderdale Redevelopment Committee, and the Planning Committee for the North Broward Hospital District's Seventh Avenue Family Health Center. Reverend James Gooden is truly dedicated to helping those less fortunate and his love for humanity is demonstrated through all of his actions.

Helen Landers of Fort Lauderdale has dedicated her life's work to improving the status of women in our Nation's history. As chair of the Florida Education and Employment Council for Women and Girls, Ms. Landers has helped improved the status of all females. She is not only an outstanding advocate for women, but also for the environment. Ms. Landers is a Florida and Broward County Women's Hall of Fame Award Member and a valued historian.

Marie Long of Coral Springs is a very youthful 90-year-old volunteer at the Coral Springs Medical Center. Ms. Long has totaled more than 8,000 volunteer hours and has assisted her community through her passion for the latest computer technology. Marie's positive outlook and motivation support her life motto, "Youth is in the mind, not the age." These words come from an inspirational and well respected lady who leaves a legacy everyday in her community.

Robert Millikan of Coconut Creek is the face of the Breakfast Club at the Northwest Focal Point Senior Center. The center is a congregate lunch site, however, thanks to Robert participants have enjoyed breakfast, as well, for 8 years. Robert is beloved by both seniors and staff for his humble service and friendship. His kind heart has been a gift to everyone who has known him.

June Sragow of Hollywood is a retired educator who devotes her time and teaching skills to improving the lives of her peers. For over 8 years she has volunteered at Southeast Focal Point Senior Center teaching American History and Current Affairs, as well as tutoring non-English speaking seniors in the English language. June devotes her free time to Hospice of Southeast Florida. June's enthusiasm and desire to give back are evident by her visible presence in the community.

Shirley Strassler of Tamarac recently celebrated her 96th birthday, making her the hardest and oldest working volunteer. Ms. Strassler averages over 300 hours of service a year. Her work has involved: collecting canned goods, shopping for food and getting clothing to those in need during the holidays, and helping the senior program with various activities. Shirley won Volunteer of the Month in January 2003 for her outstanding dedication and inspiration to South Floridians she has touched along the way.

Jean Thompson of Fort Lauderdale has given countless hours of her time, since 1982, serving the less fortunate and homeless. Jean volunteers her time providing food, clothing, and medical supplies to the homeless of all ages. Jean has given hope to those who have lost their way and changes lives with her unconditional love.

Joe Varsallone of Margate has diligently served the city of Margate as mayor, vice mayor, and commissioner for more than 20 years. Mayor Varsallone continues to assure

that the needs of Broward's senior population are met by voting to appropriate funding to the Aging and Disability Resource Center. Joe Varsallone's generosity and grand presence within the community gives Broward County seniors the ability to live in their accustomed environments, without losing their independence.

Sunny Wein of Tamarac has volunteered with the city of Tamarac for approximately 26 years. Ms. Wein began calling and coordinating volunteer drivers to pick up elderly residents for medical and shopping appointments. She also assisted Hall of Famer Helen Sobel in collecting clothing, food and other items for needy families in Tamarac. Sunny is a hard working, dedicated volunteer who loves interacting with people and enjoys helping others.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to again congratulate these 11 outstanding Broward County citizens who are being honored at the Annual Senior Hall of Fame, and thank them for their years of service to their fellow Floridians.

PALESTINIAN ANTI-TERRORISM
ACT OF 2006

SPEECH OF

HON. ROY BLUNT

OF MISSOURI

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Monday, May 22, 2006

Mr. BLUNT. Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my friend from Florida, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, for bringing this legislation to the floor. I would also like to thank my other friends, Chairman HENRY HYDE and TOM LANTOS, for their hard work on this bill.

As many of my colleagues have already stated, the need for this bill could not be clearer. In January of this year, the people of the Palestinian Authority elected Hamas, a terrorist entity with decades of experience in killing and maiming Jews, to govern the Palestinian Authority. When we pass this bill, the United States House of Representatives will tell the world that no terrorist organization can expect any support from the American taxpayer.

Some of my colleagues have complained that existing U.S. laws already provide the tools needed to combat Hamas effectively. But the fact is that none of us, during the process of passing those laws already on the books, believed that Hamas, one of the most dangerous groups in the world, would actually seize the reins of power in the Palestinian Authority. The Palestinians must understand that American assistance to others is not an entitlement.

I trust President Bush's instincts on his commitment to Israel. I view this bill as supporting those instincts. I believe, as the President does, that the Hamas government must either completely change its view of Israel and the existence of the Jewish state, or it must fail. Today, the House is acting to say this: Until Hamas changes or it is relieved of its authority to govern by the Palestinian people, American taxpayer dollars will not be used to support it either directly or indirectly. No general waiver authority is needed, in my opinion, to advance this goal.

Of course none of us here want to see the Palestinian people suffer needlessly. This bill does not cut off the stream of humanitarian