

America is unconscionable. These national emergency economic authorities are scoped solely to economic sanctions authorities and are effective in preventing terrorists from accessing the financial networks they need to carry out atrocities against Americans and our allies.

American veterans of service in Iraq should be appreciated for their success in liberating the people of Iraq from a murderous dictator who was appropriately executed. This is a message toward criminal Putin that his invasion of Ukraine, totally unprovoked, will result in justice for his conduct of mass murder.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to oppose this resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Pursuant to order of the House of July 13th, 2023, the previous question is ordered.

The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the joint resolution.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on passage of the joint resolution.

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

Mr. CRANE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

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

RELATING TO A NATIONAL EMERGENCY DECLARED BY THE PRESIDENT ON MAY 11, 2004

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, pursuant to the order of the House of July 17, 2023, I call up the joint resolution (H.J. Res. 79) relating to a national emergency declared by the President on May 11, 2004, and ask for its immediate consideration in the House.

The Clerk read the title of the joint resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the order of the House on July 17, 2023, the joint resolution is considered read.

The text of the joint resolution is as follows:

H.J. RES. 79

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled. That pursuant to section 202 of the National Emergencies Act (50 U.S.C. 1622), the national emergency declared by the finding of the President on May 11, 2004, in Executive Order 13338, is hereby terminated.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The joint resolution shall be debatable for 30 minutes equally divided among and controlled by Representative MCCAUL of Texas, Representative MEEKS of New

York, and Representative GAETZ of Florida, or their respective designees.

The gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON), the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PHILLIPS), and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. GAETZ) each will control 10 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 in which to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on the measure under consideration.

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 rise in opposition to this resolution. The Syria National Emergency is the basis for sanctions against the regime of the murderous dictator Assad and his comrades.

For over a decade, the Assad regime, war criminal Putin, and the terrorist regime in Tehran have committed brutal atrocities against the people of Syria. The civilian mass murder in Aleppo should never be forgotten, which was facilitated by war criminal Putin.

In the last 5 years, sanctions issued pursuant to this authority have prevented over \$100 million from reaching more than 100 dangerous entities and individuals affiliated with the Assad regime and its backers, including ISIS middlemen.

This murderous regime has supported international terrorism, committed innumerable atrocities against civilians, assisted with the manufacture of ballistic missiles, and developed weapons of mass destruction.

Let me be clear: Some of the people sanctioned under this national emergency quite literally developed chemical weapons, and we know when President Donald Trump determined that chemical weapons were used, he immediately responded with a direct attack on the Assad regime.

If we overturn this national emergency, those sanctions will automatically and immediately disappear. The criminals behind Assad's weapons of mass destruction program should not be able to access credit cards to do business with Americans.

These sanctions are more than just an essential tool in countering the war criminal Bashar Al Assad. As previously mentioned, most of the proceeds from violations of the sanctions, including these sanctions on Syria, go directly to the U.S. Victims of State Sponsored Terrorism fund, which benefits American victims of terrorism, including our Nation's 9/11 families.

In addition, this resolution would terminate sanctions on people like George Haswani, who the U.S. Treasury

has named, and I quote: "A Syrian businessman who serves as a middleman for oil purchases by the Syrian regime from ISIL."

It would also lift sanctions on a number of Assad officials who support Hezbollah terrorists who threaten daily the people of Israel from Lebanon.

Today, Assad is not only a war criminal, but also the head of a narco-state. His regime spreads both the malign influence of his Iranian puppet masters and the scourge of drugs throughout the region.

The Assad regime is a critical player in the growth of regional and global trade of the narcotic Captagon. Removing these sanctions would be a gift to Assad, Putin, and the Iranian regime, as the civilized world confronts the unprovoked attacks on democracies which have rule of law being attacked by the dictators with rule of gun.

Terminating this national emergency would immediately terminate sanctions on hundreds of Assad cronies and financiers, developers of Syria's chemical weapons, terrorist-supporting middlemen who threaten America and Israel, and drug traffickers involved in the Captagon trade.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to oppose the Assad regime, its dictatorship, and support the people of Syria to oppose this resolution.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to H.J. Res. 79, which terminates the national emergency pertaining to actions and policies that have existed for years, enjoyed bipartisan consensus, and underpinned a significant portion of the U.S.-Syria sanctions architecture.

More specifically, this measure targets an executive order that was issued based on legislation that Congress passed with broad bipartisan consensus: The Syria Accountability and Lebanese Sovereignty Restoration Act, which over 400 Members of the House, including 200 Republicans, voted in support of.

For over 12 years, Syria's Assad regime has perpetrated a heinous campaign of genocide and unrelenting violence against the Syrian people, who rose up for their basic rights and freedoms after years and years of oppression.

This unceasing campaign of brutality has been aided and abetted by Assad supporters in Tehran and Moscow, and amounted to countless war crimes and the most egregious violations of international humanitarian law of which I am aware.

Relevant to this legislation, the Assad regime has served as a fertile and pliant jurisdiction for Hezbollah and other Iranian proxies to shuttle arms throughout the region, as well as grow in numbers and capabilities in support of the Assad regime's actions against the Syrian people.

At the same time, actors ranging from the remnants of ISIS to other violent extremist organizations like al-Qaida-affiliate Hurras al Din, and others continue to terrorize civilians, and threaten to reconstitute and, again, use Syria as a launchpad for attacks into Europe and the rest of the world.

Active U.S. efforts to counter and degrade these very groups and support networks—those targeted by the sanctions—would be undermined by abruptly repealing and stripping away such important authorities. Preemptively abandoning these policy tools and sanctions authorities through a rushed, poorly conceived legislative effort undermines our national security interests and those of our closest partners.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to join me in opposition to this measure, and I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1530

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

Mr. Speaker, I brought a war powers resolution to the floor this Congress to get U.S. troops out of Syria, arguing that the United States, being excessively entangled in a great power competition in Syria wasn't making life better for Syrians, it wasn't playing out to our benefit in the sphere of great power competition, and that it left U.S. servicemembers and contractors as sitting ducks.

Following that vote, which I lost overwhelmingly in a bipartisan fashion, sadly, there were casualties; there was the death of an American, because we have now become the neighborhood crime watch of certain areas in Syria where there are oil rigs. That is what it is all about.

I now come to the floor with this resolution to repeal a 2004 emergency vis-a-vis Syria. Now, it is supposed to be voted on by Congress every 6 months thereafter, but we have been derelict in our duty in doing so.

I am glad that today we are bringing forward a number of these emergency resolutions that have been dormant slush funds, spending untold sums of money with no transparency as to how much is going into the Syrian emergency.

How about this rule for how the House thinks about emergencies: Nothing is allowed to be an emergency for 20 years. If it were really an emergency, there probably would have been some cataclysmic event of Biblical proportion before the 20 years. If it is still an emergency 20 years later, it is a chronic condition, and the United States cannot be the world's policeman and we cannot be the world's piggy bank.

Now, if the principal argument against my resolution is that my resolution is soft on Assad, well, the logic that undergirds that is that somehow the 2004 resolution was this great anti-Assad tool that we must have, that we must maintain, to beat Assad.

Look around, Mr. Speaker. Assad has never been stronger. So if this 2004 resolution was Assad kryptonite, it has been the worst Assad kryptonite you can ever imagine. It has malfunctioned.

I think we ought to repeal this emergency. We have sought transparency to see how much money has been going pursuant to it. We don't know the answer to that question.

To the extent that there are sanctions that we still want to maintain, whether there are the other national emergencies that exist targeted at terrorism generally, at Russia, at Iran, we have the Magnitsky Act and there are all kinds of other authorities for the President, the Secretary of the Treasury, the Secretary of the Department of Commerce, even the DOD weighs in, and the State Department, regarding sanctions regimes.

This is not a vote to lift sanctions and then hope for the best with some pretty gnarly Syrians. In fact, it is us standing up to do our job, and that is what we should do in repealing this 2004 resolution.

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PHILLIPS. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN).

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, this is indeed a resolution to roll back sanctions and then hope that maybe we will reimpose them on some other basis not detailed by the gentleman from Florida. This is not some meaningless resolution to feel good about or to message about. It has practical consequences.

How many more people would Assad have been able to kill if he had the chance to cooperate economically with businesses here in the United States? How many other dictators would feel free to develop chemical weapons, would feel free to murder their own people and feel that they would face no economic consequences from the United States?

Our policy has not turned Syria into a garden spot.

What would the world be like if America turned its back on the crimes of Assad? Assad has killed more than half a million of his own people and forced 12 million people to flee.

These particular sanctions are imposed on the Assad regime specifically because of his support for Hamas and Hezbollah. Think of that. We are having the President of Israel come here tomorrow, and what would we greet him with but nothing but a rollback of sanctions against two terrorists organizations who are trying to kill as many Israeli civilians as possible every day of the week.

I think for us to be considering a pro-Israel resolution on this very floor in a few hours, for us to be welcoming the President of Israel tomorrow, and to have a resolution on this floor that

would say it is okay, support Hamas, support Hezbollah, watch them try to kill as many Israelis as possible—they are not always successful, but they are trying—I can't think of a more effective way to insult the President of Israel when he stands on that podium and addresses us tomorrow.

Let us continue to do what we can and remember that these sanctions do not expose a single American serviceman to risk of death or risk of injury. We should at least be willing to use the economic power of the United States to do what we can to rein in Syria and to make it clear to other dictators that chemical weapons, mass murder, and support for terrorism is not something that we will ignore.

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

I would point out, Mr. Speaker, to the gentleman that if he is looking for a more effective way to insult the President of Israel, he need look no further than the remarks of some of his own colleagues in the recent days, which I would deem far more insulting than this policy debate about how to have an effective sanctions regime.

No one here is arguing for sanctions relief vis-a-vis these individuals. What we are saying is that the National Emergencies Act is a very ineffective, inefficient way to administer a sanctions regime. We do have specific authorities with the Magnitsky Act, with the National Emergencies Act vis-a-vis counterterrorism. Treasury has these authorities. State has these authorities. Most importantly, Congress has the authority to impose sanctions.

If you believe that there are people who should be the subject of sanctions by the United States Government, we are the board of directors of the most powerful country on the planet Earth. We can introduce those bills, vote for them, and we can fulfill our constitutional authority.

What I am asking the Congress to do is to repeal a 2004 emergency vis-a-vis Syria when Syria doesn't look anything like it did in 2004.

Mr. Speaker, if you vote to allow this national emergency to continue, what you are doing is gaslighting unaccountable spending by the Biden administration because they never have to make the requisite report regarding the outlays on these matters. The money just moves around, and we never quite see the efficacy of it.

We are all strong supporters of Israel on this side of the aisle, certainly, and I would observe that U.S. policy in Syria has not particularly helped Israel. As a matter of fact, when you had terrorist groups setting up camps in Syria, directed at Israel, you know what the Israelis did? They took them out. They blew them up. That sent a message to Iran, the balance of power was restored, and it did not involve the United States of America becoming the block captain of Syria or anywhere else in the Middle East. If we want to do that, it should be through a war powers

resolution with Congress affirmatively voting to do it, not just having rolling national emergencies.

When the law contemplates a requisite obligation for us to vote to reauthorize these things, we never do it. We don't do our job, then the money goes out the door, and we don't see a safer Israel, a safer Middle East, or a safer Syria. All we see is an empowered Assad. If this is the great tool we had against Assad, we had better be thinking of some different ones, because it hasn't exactly worked out as the proponents of this national emergency would seemingly indicate.

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. PHILLIPS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume for the purpose of closing.

I agree with my colleague from Florida on a couple points. I abhor war like he does, and I wish Congress would reassert itself, but I must say, we should legislate it, not terminate it.

Abruptly terminating this national emergency will simply undermine U.S. national security interests and those of our allies. The resolution would further destabilize Syria and the entire region, be a gift to the violent and oppressive Assad regime, and create space for terrorist organizations like ISIS to grow in numbers and capabilities.

I strongly oppose H.J. Res. 79 and urge my colleagues to do the same. I hope my colleagues on both sides of the aisle join me in opposing it.

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

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time for closing.

The bipartisan opposition to this resolution is significant. Lifting the national emergency of economic authorities with regard to Syria would immediately line the pockets of chemical weapons manufacturers, terrorists, and drug traffickers who have committed horrific crimes against humanity.

We must work together to oppose the Hezbollah murderers who attack Israel from Lebanon. These economic sanctions keep terrorists from using the financial networks of the free world to enrich themselves and plan attacks against America and our allies.

Democracies must stand together to respond to the dictators' rule of gun opposing democracies' rule of law. The world is in a competition we did not choose. Democracies are under attack by dictators such as war criminal Putin, the Chinese Communist Party, and the regime in Tehran.

Ronald Reagan was absolutely correct, and that is we must have peace through strength.

Mr. Speaker, I urge opposition to this resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MILLER of Ohio). All time for debate has expired.

Pursuant to the order of the House of July 17, 2023, the previous question is ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the engrossment and third reading of the joint resolution.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on passage of the joint resolution.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to 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 question will be postponed.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS SUPPORTING THE STATE OF ISRAEL

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 57) expressing the sense of Congress supporting the State of Israel.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 57

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—

- (1) the State of Israel is not a racist or apartheid state;
- (2) Congress rejects all forms of anti-Semitism and xenophobia; and
- (3) the United States will always be a staunch partner and supporter of Israel.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MCCAUL) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on this measure.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, the President of Israel will address this body in a joint session. It will be a great day in American history as Representatives of one of the greatest democracies are addressed by the head of state of another. Democracy and its shared values are at the very core of the U.S.-Israel relationship.

The beauty of our friendship is that we stand together, shoulder to shoulder, as we defend our freedom and our way of life from threats like Iran, Hezbollah, Hamas, and other forms of terrorism.

□ 1545

Let me be clear. Israel is not a racist country. It is deeply disturbing and concerning to me that some in this body have such a profound misunderstanding of Israel and Israeli society.

The previous government in Israel had Arab parties and Arab ministers serving in the coalition government. What a fantastic achievement for democracy. It is no secret that Israel is a country in a tough neighborhood that is clear-eyed in seeing many threats in its own backyard.

The United States will always support Israel's right to self-defense. We see Israeli citizens being murdered in senseless terrorist attacks. At times, the fallen have been American citizens.

Israel is responsible for protecting the well-being of its citizens. Protecting one's citizens from terrorist attacks is not racism. It is national security. To think otherwise is small-minded, and quite frankly, Mr. Speaker, it is just plain and simply wrong.

A key component of friendship is looking out for one another and standing up for each other. Racism has no place in this body or in public discord, period. I support this resolution rejecting false accusations and repulsive anti-Israel statements. I stand—and I know almost everyone in this Chamber stands—with our friends in Israel.

Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend from Texas (Mr. PFLUGER) for bringing this resolution forward. Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, tomorrow, we welcome Israel's President Herzog to the United States of America.

For my entire career of 25 years in the House, and in recent weeks, I have stood on this floor and spoken on the importance of the State of Israel. The need for Israel to remain both Jewish and democratic is without question.

Mr. Speaker, Israel cannot remain both Jewish and democratic unless we have peace and if it does not live side by side in peace with the Palestinian people. Both sides have to want peace. That is why I stand strongly behind a two-state solution for Israelis and Palestinians.

As the resolution before us states, Israel is not a racist state. I concur.