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Madame Speaker,

I am pleased that the House recently considered and passed H.R. 7112, a bill that expands the Iran Sanctions Act and authorizes state and local governments to divest from certain companies that hold Iranian assets.

The timing of this legislation could not be more appropriate. This past week, the president of Iran visited the United Nations in New York City and gave two addresses. Not surprisingly, he took advantage of the platform and condemned “a small but deceitful number of people called Zionists” for using their influence in Europe and the U.S. in “a deceitful, complex, and furtive manner.” He also referred to “Zionist murders” and accused Jews of having an “underhanded” role in the crisis in Georgia.

But President Ahmadinejad didn’t limit his attacks to Israelis. He boasted that “the American empire...is reaching the end of the road.” Clearly, Tehran has malicious intentions and especially detests the United States and Israel. That’s why H.R. 7112 is critical to improving our national security and stability. While Iran points out alleged flaws in American and Israeli policy, it continues to defy the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty, numerous U.N. Security Council resolutions, and International Atomic Energy Agency inspections.

Of course, Iran claims to be enriching uranium for energy use, but U.N. inspectors have found elements that are constructive only in weapons. If Iran did indeed develop a nuclear bomb, the repercussions would be felt throughout the region, including in Iraq, India, Pakistan, Turkey, and Israel, as well as in the U.S. Since Iran is already supplying weapons to terrorist organizations like Hezbollah and Hamas, it is important that we act now to prevent the sale of sensitive material to Tehran.

Finally, I would also like to mention another bill that recently passed the House: H.Res. 1361. While this Resolution rightly condemns the anti-Semitic language of the 2001 Durban Conference (Durban I), I urge my fellow Members to take the next step and support my legislation, H.R. 5847 or the United Nations Durban Review Conference (Durban II) Funding Prohibition Act.

Scott Garrett
Member of Congress