Mr. Speaker, I want

to thank the gentleman from Massachusetts

and express appreciation for

his leadership. I seldom find myself in

disagreement with the gentleman from

Massachusetts, but I want to take exception

to this particular legislation.

In 1996, Congress passed the Iran-

Libya Sanctions Act, which sanctioned

foreign investment in Iran’s energy

sector. There are those who have said

that there was not that much accomplished

from that particular sanction

act, and there are those who are saying

now that if we move forward with sanctions,

that it will be actually undermining

the business interests of people

on the Security Council that the

United States needs to work with to

try to bring Iran into the international

community in a way that promotes

international security, and that would

be China and Russia.

The fact is that U.S. policy towards

Iran for the last three decades has consisted

of pressure primarily in economic

sanctions, threats, and isolationism.

While U.S. economic sanctions have

hurt Iran’s economy, U.S. policy over

the last 30 years has not created any

meaningful change in the behavior of

the Iranian Government. On October

1st, there was a change. For the first

time in the recent past, high level delegations

from Iran and the U.S. and

other industrialized nations sat down

to diplomatic talks. There was significant

progress.

Among the steps forward was an

agreement by Iran to allow access by

the International Atomic Energy Agency

to the recently revealed planned enrichment

facility. Yet, with signs of

progress in these highly sensitive

talks, we’re proposing to set the stage

to punish Iran. I think we should be

doing everything we can to ensure that

diplomacy and that President Obama’s

efforts here succeed.

I think when we talk about sanctions,

we’re saying sanctions before the

talks, sanctions before any hope for

agreements. I don’t think the sanctions

are going to help with the talks. I don’t

think sanctions are going to assist us

in our efforts to try to bring Iran into

a new position in the world community.

I reluctantly oppose this bill, and I’m

hopeful that our nuclear posture review

will come to an understanding

that the United States cannot be in a

position of picking nuclear winners and

losers. Ultimately, we are going to

have to get everyone involved in nuclear

abolition.