Mr. Speaker, I yield

myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support

of this legislation. I first want to

thank my good friends ILEANA ROSLEHTINEN

and GARY ACKERMAN for

their tireless work on this critical legislation.

Mr. Speaker, the Iran Freedom Support

Act will dramatically increase the

economic pressure on the regime in

Tehran to abandon its headlong pursuit

of nuclear weapons. If we fail to use the

economic and diplomatic tools available

to us, the world will face a nightmare

that knows no end, a despotic

fundamentalist regime, wedded both to

terrorism and to the most terrifying

weapons known to man.

Iran’s desire, Iran’s determination to

acquire nuclear weapons, is beyond dispute.

For years it lied to the International

Atomic Energy Agency, and

even today it continues to deny access

for IAEA inspectors to sensitive nuclear

sites.

Mr. Speaker, a short while ago I had

an extensive visit to IAEA headquarters

in Vienna where I had discussions

with some of the leaders of countries

that are interested in this issue.

They have no doubt that Iran is determined

to pursue a military nuclear

program.

Tehran has also defied the U.N. Security

Council, which has demanded that

it cease its enrichment of uranium.

And now that Iran has been offered an

incredibly generous package of benefits

by the United States and our European

allies in exchange for suspending uranium

enrichment, the regime in

Tehran is playing its usual cynical

game, stalling for time.

Mr. Speaker, I meet with some frequency

with Middle Eastern leaders,

and there is not one who isn’t deeply

worried by the prospect of Iran’s going

nuclear. A nuclear Iran will touch off a

bone-chilling arms race in the Middle

East. But long before that happens, before

Iran threatens to fire a shot, as it

were, virtually every nation within

reach of Iranian missiles will recalibrate

its foreign policies to make certain

that it doesn’t offend the region’s

new nuclear power, Iran, and that, Mr.

Speaker, would be a disaster for U.S.

foreign policy interests, for the Middle

East and for the entire civilized world.

Some argue that our legislation will

undermine our relations with European

allies who invest in Iran. But that argument,

Mr. Speaker, is simply wrongheaded.

Our legislation is intended to

reinforce diplomacy with economics.

We ask our allies to do what the United

States did over a decade ago, divest

from Iran’s energy sector, the cash cow

of the ayatollah’s nuclear aspirations.

Nor is this legislation, Mr. Speaker,

all stick and no carrot. By removing

Libya from the list of the sanctioned,

this legislation is an implicit invitation

to Iran: mend your ways and your

support of terrorism and your quest for

weapons of mass destruction, and you

will be welcomed back into the family

of nations. Refuse to do so, and you

will suffer accordingly.

The legislation before us will extend

the Iran Sanctions Act for 5 years. It

will boost congressional oversight over

its implementation. The clear message

of this legislation is that the administration

now has to enforce the law

fully.

Mr. Speaker, I would be delighted if

our legislation were rendered redundant

by serious Security Council action

to impose international sanctions

on Iran, but the attitudes shown by

Russia and China thus far strongly suggest

that meaningful U.N.-imposed

sanctions are a most unlikely development.

In the meantime, we cannot shirk

our responsibility to employ every

peaceful means possible to defeat

Iran’s reckless nuclear military ambitions.

That, in essence, is the reason

for the urgency of passing H.R. 6198

today.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this

bill, and for the sake of foiling a looming,

long-term nuclear terrorist threat,

I urge my colleagues to do so as well.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of

my time.