This week, Congress

is considering two pieces of legislation

relating to Iran. The first undermines a

diplomatic solution with Iran and lowers

the bar for war. The second authorizes

a war of choice against Iran and

begins military preparations for it.

With respect to H. Res. 568, which

eliminates the most viable alternative

to war, the House is expected to vote

on this. I would urge Members to read

the resolution because section 6 rejects

any U.S. policy that would rely on efforts

to contain a nuclear weapons capable

Iran. Section 7 urges the President

to reaffirm the unacceptability of

an Iran with a nuclear weapons capability,

and opposition to any policy

that would rely on containment as an

option in response to Iranian enrichment.

This language represents a significant

shift in U.S. policy, and would

guarantee that talks with Iran currently

scheduled for May 23 would fail.

Current U.S. policy is that Iran cannot

acquire nuclear weapons. Instead, H.

Res. 568 draws the red line for military

action at Iran achieving a nuclear

weapons capability—capability—a nebulous

and undefined term that would

include a civilian nuclear program.

Indeed, it’s likely that a negotiated

deal to prevent a nuclear-armed Iran

and to prevent war would provide for

uranium enrichment for peaceful purposes

under the framework of the nonproliferation

of nuclear weapons treaty,

with strict safeguards and inspections.

This language in this bill makes

such a negotiated settlement impossible.

At the same time, the language

lowers the threshold for attacking

Iran. Countries with nuclear weapons

capability could include many other

countries like Japan or Brazil. It is an

unrealistic threshold.

An associate of former Secretary of

State Colin Powell stated:

Now, H.R. 4310, the National Defense

Authorization Act, authorizes war

against Iran and preparing the military

for it. I want to point out how this happens.

While H. Res. 568 undermines our

diplomatic efforts and lowers the bar

for war, H.R. 4310, the NDAA, begins

military preparations for war. Members

ought to read this. Section 1221

makes military action against Iran a

U.S. policy. Section 1222 directs our

Armed Forces to prepare for war. Now

if you read these sections, you’ll see

that what I’m saying is true.

Now, under subsection A, it says that

Iran may soon attain a nuclear weapons

capability, a development that

would threaten the United States interests,

destabilize the region, encourage

nuclear proliferation, and further

empower and embolden Iran, and on

and on. But the International Atomic

Energy Agency, as well as the U.S. and

Israeli intelligence, have all agreed

that Iran does not currently have a nuclear

bomb, is not building a nuclear

weapon, and does not have any plans to

do so. Both U.S. and Israeli officials

also agree that a strike on Iran would

only delay their nuclear program and

actually encourage them to pursue nuclear

weapons.

Sustained diplomatic engagement

with Iran is the only way to ensure

transparency and to prevent a nucleararmed

Iran. Rejecting or thwarting any

inspections-based deal we are currently

seeking with Iran, even when analysts

are expressing guarded optimism that a

near-term deal is achievable, makes

preemptive military action against

Iran more likely.

Now I just want to cite some provisions

right from the bill.

In order to prevent Iran from developing

nuclear weapons, which they’re

not doing, the United States, in cooperation

with its allies, must utilize

all elements of national power, including

diplomacy, robust economic sanctions,

and credible—get this—‘‘visible

preparations for a military option.’’

Under section 1222 where they talk

about U.S. military preparedness, it

talks of pre-positioning sufficient supplies

of aircraft, munitions, fuel, and

other materials for both air- and seabased

missions. Under subsection B it

talks about maintaining sufficient

Naval assets in the region—get this—to

launch a sustained sea and air campaign

against a range of Iranian nuclear

and military targets.

Now come on, we’re getting ready for

war against Iran. Why? I mean, we

ought to have a broad debate about

this other than just burying this section

of a bill in the National Defense

Authorization Act. We have plenty of

evidence there is no reason to go to

war against Iran. We made the mistake

in Iraq. Let’s not make another one

with Iran and set off World War III.