Madam Speaker, I

yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support

of this resolution. The single-most

important action that we will take

today is to ensure that the Iran-Libya

Sanctions Act is not extended. Libya

no longer needs to be subject to such

punitive measures. It is our partner in

the global goal of controlling the

spread of unconventional weapons.

In December 2003, Libya took a bold

and courageous step. It pledged to rid

itself of all weapons of mass destruction.

I was in Tripoli immediately

thereafter in January 2004 to encourage

the leadership of Libya to follow

through with its stated goal. After

that, Libya loaded its nuclear weapons

onto American ships. These weapons,

together with all detailed plans and

programs, are today under lock and

key in Tennessee. As a result, the legislation

now before us removes all references

to Libya from the Iran-Libya

Sanctions Act. ILSA, Madam Speaker,

is dead, and the Iran Sanctions Act will

rise in its place.

The weight of American sanctions

will now be focused exclusively on Iran

because the mullahs in Tehran continue

to pursue blatantly their nuclear

ambitions. The message to Tehran is

simple: follow the Libya model, and we

in Congress are more than prepared to

open a new, constructive and happy

chapter in U.S.-Iranian relations.

Madam Speaker, the Iran Freedom

Support Act will dramatically ratchet

up the economic pressure on Tehran to

abandon its head-long pursuit of nuclear

weapons. If we fail to use both

our economic and our diplomatic tools,

the world will face a nightmare that

knows no end; a despotic, fundamentalist

regime that avidly supports terrorism,

exploiting and threatening to

use the ultimate weapon of terror.

Just yesterday the leader of Iran indicated

that they stand ready to share

their nuclear technology with the Government

of Sudan, which as we speak

here this morning is engaged in genocide

in Darfur. This is the regime that

we are dealing with.

It is very naive, Madam Speaker, to

expect that we can convince Iran to

end its nuclear program voluntarily

based on reason. We can only hope to

inflict economic pain at the highest

levels in Tehran and starve the Iranian

leadership of the resources it needs to

fund a costly nuclear program. And

that is the purpose of our legislation.

Some argue that this legislation

might undermine our relations with

European allies which invest in Iran,

but who have also helped lead an important

diplomatic effort to bring the

Iranian nuclear issue to the U.N. Security

Council. But that argument,

Madam Speaker, is a pure and simple

misreading of the contents of our bill.

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 ayatollahs’ nuclear plans.

At the same time, our legislation

does not put the President in a straitjacket.

If a verifiable deal to eliminate

Iran’s nuclear program can be negotiated,

or if certain sanctions will undermine

the national security of our

own Nation, the President may waive

implementation of our law.

But, Madam Speaker, let me be clear

on one point: Congress will no longer

tolerate lax enforcement of American

sanctions against Iran. For over a decade

both Democratic and Republican

administrations failed to implement

the Iran-Libya Sanctions Act measures

that we do have in place. Meanwhile,

Iran’s nuclear program has marched

forward at a frighteningly rapid pace.

Our legislation will extend the Iran

Sanctions Act indefinitely. It will dramatically

boost congressional oversight

over its implementation. The administration

will have to enforce the

law fully. Ignoring the law will no

longer be an option.

I commend the administration for

convincing the International Atomic

Energy Agency in Vienna to send its

Iran file to the U.N. Security Council.

Unfortunately, the Russians have already

made clear that the Security

Council action will be impeded by

them. Just last week, the Russian Foreign

Minister announced that Moscow

would only consider U.N. sanctions on

Iran if it were shown what it called

concrete proof of Iran’s nonpeaceful intentions.

Madam Speaker, what gall. As we all

know, there is no shortage of proof to

be found in the numerous International

Atomic Energy Agency reports over recent

years. These reports demonstrate

conclusively that for two decades, for

two decades, Iran has run a clandestine

nuclear program in violation of its

commitments under the treaty of the

nonproliferation of nuclear weapons.

I can’t help but wonder what the Russians

require as proof. Perhaps Iran parading

a nuclear device through the

streets of Tehran, or Israel being wiped

off the map, as the Iranian President

has declared.

The leadership in Moscow ought to

know that support for terrorists is not

a policy that the United States or

other civilized nations will accept, especially

from a country that expects to

be treated as a member of the G–8 nations,

seven of which are a true democracy.

Russia clearly is not.

Madam Speaker, I would be delighted

if our legislation were rendered redundant

by serious Security Council action,

but the attitudes shown by Russia

and China thus far show that that is a

most unlikely development. In the

meantime, we cannot shirk our responsibility

to employ every peaceful

means possible to undermine Iran’s

ugly nuclear ambitions. That, in essence,

is the reason for the urgency of

passing H.R. 282 today.

Madam Speaker, I strongly support

this bill for the sake of staving off a

looming, long-term nuclear threat, and

I urge all of my colleagues to do as

well.

Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous

consent that the balance of my time be

controlled by my good friend, our colleague

from New York (Mr. CROWLEY)

since I have responsibilities in the

International Relations Committee.