Mr. Speaker, I rise

today to express my growing concern

regarding the events unfolding in

Syria. President Assad has repeatedly

refused to usher in democratic reforms

for his people and instead has chosen to

continue his indiscriminate killings of

innocent men, women, and children.

His ruthless campaign of brutality has

now shifted to northern Syria, where

Syrian security forces led by President

Assad’s brother have instilled fear in

the residents. Many of those innocently

protesting for reform and freedom

have been gunned down and many

more have fled their homes, leaving all

belongings and possessions behind.

With a complete ban on the entry of

foreign journalists into the country, it

is nearly impossible to determine just

how dire the circumstances are. However,

with the thousands of Syrians

fleeing the violence into nearby Turkey,

it is clear that conditions both in

Syria and on the Turkish-Syrian border

are deteriorating.

I therefore urge President Assad to

allow humanitarian aid groups access

into Syria. By refusing entry, President

Assad has forced his own people to

not only live under deplorable conditions

but he has forced them to live in

a constant state of fear. Aid groups

must be allowed in to provide the vital

care. If the Syrian regime has any compassion,

it will do so.