With regard to our policy

toward Iran and the recent revelation

of a potential attack involving not just

foreign embassies and ambassadors but

Americans, potentially Senators, being

killed by a plot hatched by the Iranian

Revolutionary Guard and Quds Force,

there should be consequences, not just

concerns expressed from the administration.

We have witnessed a growing

aggressiveness by the Iranian regime

toward the United States and toward

their own people.

For example, recently, an Iranian actress

who appeared uncovered in an

Australian film was then sentenced to

90 lashes for her so-called crime. With

regard to the 330,000 Baha’is, a religious

minority in Iran, first they were

excluded from all public contracting,

then they were told all their children

had to leave Iranian universities, and

then all their home addresses were registered

in secret by the Iranian Interior

Ministry.

I would suggest we have seen this

movie before in a different decade

wearing different uniforms. But this is

the bureaucracy necessary to carry out

a Kristallnacht in Farsi.

We have seen, for example, the Persian

world’s first blogger, Hossein

Ronaghi, who was thrown into jail simply

for expressing tolerance toward

other peoples and other religions. Probably

most emblematic, we saw the

jailing of Nasrin Sotoudeh, a young

mother and a lawyer, whose sole crime

was to represent Shirin Ebadi, a Noble

Prize winner, in the courts of Iran.

We hear and have watched unclassified

reports of an acceleration of uranium

enrichment in Iran. We even have

the irony, according to the International

Monetary Fund, that despite

comprehensive U.N. and U.S. sanctions—

according to the IMF—Iran had

greater economic growth last year

than the United States and the Iranian

indebtedness is only a fraction of U.S.

indebtedness. According to the IMF,

the United States owes about 70 percent

of its GDP in debt held by the

public. For Iran, it is only 5.5 percent.

Now the United States has enacted a

new round of sanctions against Iran.

President Obama signed it into law last

year. There were 410 votes in the

House, and it was unanimous in the

Senate. I worked for many years on a

predecessor to that legislation when I

was a Member of the House. The record

of the administration, and especially

our very able Under Secretary of the

Treasury David Cohen, has been very

good at implementing that bill. He has

been very successful in reducing formal

banking contacts between American,

European and Asian banks and Iran. It

is very important, when we look at the

situation of how to deal with Iran, that

we not see it from Washington’s view,

looking toward Iran, in which we see

an awful lot of banks and an awful lot

of transactions shut down, but look at

it from Tehran’s view, looking back

from the United States, and we will see

a quickly growing Iranian economy, a

growing record of brazen oppression,

actresses sentenced to 90 lashes, Noble

Prize-winning attorneys thrown in jail,

an accelerating nuclear program, and

then a decision by the head of the Iranian

Revolutionary Guard Corps, Quds

Force, to attack the United States.

Long ago, I thought it was a mistake

to have the Drug Enforcement Agency

left outside of the U.S. intelligence

community. Luckily, we reversed that

decision and we brought DEA back into

the intelligence community. It was a

lucky strike that the person who was

contacted by the Quds Force to carry

out an attack on the United States actually

contacted a confidential informant

working for the DEA. It was on

that lucky break that we had the ability

to break this plot. But if we read

Attorney General Holder’s complaint

against the defendant involved, we will

see—I believe it is on page 12—a rendition

of how, if they could not kill the

Ambassador outside the restaurant, it

was perfectly OK with the Quds Force

operator that a bomb go off involving

dozens—if not over 100—of Americans

killed. The bonus, he thought, maybe a

large number of Senators would be involved.

If that was necessary to kill

this Ambassador, all the better.

The Treasury Department has designated,

finally, the head of the Quds

Force under our law. But it is ironic

that when we look at the comprehensive

record of designations, the Europeans,

who actually are not known for

their strong-willed backbone on many

international questions, have a more

far-reaching effect on calling it the

way they see it in Iran. Both Europe

and America now have a regime to

bring forward sanctions and designations

against Iranians who are ‘‘comprehensive

abusers of human rights.’’

Currently, our government has only

designated 11 Iranians, where the European

Union has designated over 60. One

of the people missed by our administration

is the President of Iran, Mahmud

Ahmadinejad, who often talks about

ending the state of Israel. Probably the

only head of state of a member of the

United Nations who regularly talks

about erasing another member of the

United Nations from the planet. We

also have not designated President

Ahmadinejad’s chief of staff. We have

not designated dozens of people that

even the European Union has designated

as comprehensive abusers of

human rights.

So what should we do when we have

uncovered a plot to attack the United

States in which the highest levels of

the Iranian Revolutionary Guard Quds

Force was involved? Thank goodness

for the DEA and the rest of the law enforcement

and intelligence community

of the United States, the plot was

foiled, and so no attack was carried

out. In my mind, we should take the

toughest action possible, short of military

action. Is there consensus in the

Congress behind what that action

should be? I would argue yes.

Senator SCHUMER and I, this summer,

put forward what we feel is one of the

real, most crippling sanctions the

United States could deliver against

Iran; that is, to ensure that any financial

institution that has any contact

with the Central Bank of Iran be excluded

from the U.S. market. Because

the United States is the largest economy

on Earth, we believe nearly every

financial institution on the planet will

cut its ties to the Central Bank of Iran.

That, most likely, would cripple Iran’s

currency and cause chaos within their

economy. You know what. Iran might

actually suffer a recession, which it

currently is not in, and I think that

would be an appropriate price to pay.

When Senator SCHUMER and I reached

out to the Senate to ask for support, I

was very surprised at the answer because

all but eight Senators signed our

letter. There were 92 Republicans and

Democrats who signed the letter stating

it should be the policy of the

United States to collapse the Central

Bank of Iran, to cripple its currency.

After what we learned this week of a

plot to kill Americans and to carry out

terrorist attacks on the Capital City of

the United States, I think that represents

appropriate consequences, not

just concerns.

We heard from the administration

this morning—and while I was encouraged

by the diligent work, especially of

the Treasury Department, I was concerned

about another thing. There are

press reports that the administration

learned about this plot in June and

only revealed it to us the day before

yesterday. So the administration has

had months to understand what this

plot meant and plan for the consequences.

Yet except for minor actions

against a small airline in Iran

called Mahan Air, except for actually

finally designating the head of the Iranian

Revolutionary Guards’ Quds

Force, we have no comprehensive action

by the United States.

My recommendation to this House

and to the administration is we should

take yes for an answer. With 92 Republicans

and Democrats all standing behind

an effort to collapse the Central

Bank of Iran, this is the appropriate

sanction. On top of that, we have the

Menendez bipartisan legislation to

close loopholes in the sanctions already

cosponsored by 76 Senators. This

is a tough time of partisanship in

Washington. We don’t get bipartisan

issues such as this that often. I am surprised,

it having known about this plot

since June, the administration has not

already put forward action, but I would

urge them to do so. This was not a multilateral

attack by a collection of

countries on the United States; therefore,

I don’t think we should wait for

multilateral approval before the

United States acts against the Iranian

Revolutionary Guard Corps and the

highest levels of the Iranian Government.

We should designate the full list

of comprehensive abusers of human

rights the way the EU has done. We

should exclude any financial institution

from the United States that does

business with the Central Bank of Iran.

We should make sure that in the case

of high-level Iranian officials who have

plotted an attack, potentially involving

dozens of American deaths right

here in the Capital City of the United

States, there should be severe consequences,

they should be fairly swift,

and our inaction should not be mistaken

for weakness in the face of what

is one of the most brazen international

acts we have seen in recent times.

I yield the floor.