Mr. President, I

rise to support the Iran Missile Sanctions

Act. I am a cosponsor of this legislation,

and I hope the Senate will approve

it without delay.

This legislation will impose sanctions

against entities—individuals,

companies, and research facilities—

that have provided Iran with the technology

and materials required to develop

ballistic missiles. Those identified

as assisting Iran —or as attempting

to do so at least once—will be subject

to sanctions for two years. These

entities will be ineligible for export licenses

for arms or controlled goods and

technology. Additionally, they will not

be eligible to receive U.S. assistance.

The President would be authorized to

waive sanctions if he determines that

it would be in the U.S. national security

interest to do so or if additional

information which demonstrates that

the alleged acts were not committed by

the sanctioned person is available.

The need for this legislation is clear.

There is growing evidence that Russian

companies and research facilities continue

to provide Iran with the technological

assistance and the materials

necessary to develop ballistic missiles

capable of reaching U.S. forces in the

Middle East and our stalwart ally

Israel. According to public reports,

with the help of Russian entities, U.S.

officials estimate that Iran could deploy

the medium range Shahab 3 missile

within 12 to 18 months. That missile

is capable of targeting Israel, other

Arab countries in the Middle East, and

U.S. troops in the region. According to

public sources, Iran could also deploy

the Shahab 4 missile within three

years. That missile reportedly would be

able to reach targets in Europe.

The Russians are not building these

missiles for the Iranians. Rather, Mr.

President, they are providing the material

and training necessary for the Iranians

to develop an indigenous capability.

Make no mistake about it. The development

of these Iranian missiles

will be very destabilizing in the Middle

East.

Mr. President, to its credit, the Administration

has made the transfer of

missile technology a very high priority

in dealings with Russian officials, including

the recent talks between Vice

President Gore and former Prime Minister

Viktor Chernomyrdin. Special

Envoy Wisner has worked on this issue

aggressively, and the State Department’s

Robert Galluci has been doing

the same. I commend them for the attention

they have focused on this very

sensitive matter and the effort they

have made to persuade Russia to clamp

down on exporters.

Clearly, some progress has been

made. On January 22, Prime Minister

Chernomyrdin issued an Executive

Order stating the Russian government’s

intention to set policies that

will more effectively control the exports

of technology to Iran. Nonetheless,

public reports indicate that the

cooperation is ongoing and that the

transfers continue.

Because the stakes are so high, we

don’t have the luxury of time. And

while I hope the Administration’s efforts

will succeed in persuading the

Russians to clamp down on these technology

transfers, this Senator believes

time is running out. The missiles being

developed by the Iranians are capable

of delivering chemical weapons

throughout the Middle East. They are

lethal. They threaten U.S. troops. They

threaten our ally Israel. And in the

long run, they will threaten our European

allies. America needs to use every

appropriate tool in its arsenal to prevent

the Iranians from developing

these missiles which will threaten our

interests in the region. And we need to

use those tools now.

Mr. President, the sanctions in this

legislation provide another tool. They

are appropriately targeted against the

entities—the companies, individuals,

and institutes—that are cooperating

with the Iranians. They are not targeted

at the Russian government. If

used effectively, these sanctions—or

the threat of these sanctions—can help

the Administration in its efforts to

clamp down on those entities that are

cooperating with the Iranian government.

For the stake of promoting stability

in the Middle East, I urge my colleagues

to approve this legislation.