Madam President, I

understand that Senator BALDWIN is on

her way to make her maiden speech,

and I promise I will stop talking the

moment she enters the Chamber. I

thank my colleague from Colorado.

Later today, the Senate will vote on

a resolution that has been introduced

by Senators MENENDEZ and GRAHAM. I

am pleased to join my Senate colleagues

in cosponsoring this resolution,

which reaffirms our commitment to a

strong U.S.-Israeli relationship and to

preventing Iran from becoming a nuclear

power.

At this time in our history, it is more

important than ever that we demonstrate

a firm commitment to our allies—

even if the neighborhood they are

in looks more like a tinderbox than it

has in decades. This resolution reaffirms

that the United States will be a

reliable friend and a determined ally,

even in dangerous times—indeed, especially

in dangerous times.

We are at a critical juncture in our

efforts to prevent Iran from obtaining

a nuclear weapons capability. During

my time in the Senate, I have repeatedly

supported legislation imposes

sanctions on Iran and puts pressure on

the regime to change course. I worked

with my good friend former-Senator

Lieberman to pass legislation which

ensures that organizations that inspect

commercial ships for the U.S. government

are not also providing services to

governments like Iran that sponsor

terrorism.

This resolution reiterates the significance

that we place on keeping the full

force of sanctions on Iran.

In the face of an existential threat to

our country, the American people

would expect the U.S. to take action.

This resolution says that we will support

Israel’s right to do the same.

Let me read the powerful language in

the resolution. Congress ‘‘declares that

the United States has a vital national

interest in, and unbreakable commitment

to, ensuring the existence, survival,

and security of the State of

Israel, and reaffirms United States support

for Israel’s right to self-defense.’’

Congress ‘‘urges that, if the Government

of Israel is compelled to take

military action in legitimate self-defense

against Iran’s nuclear weapons

program, the United States Government

should stand with Israel and provide,

in accordance with United States

law and the constitutional responsibility

of Congress to authorize the use

of military force, diplomatic, military,

and economic support to the Government

of Israel in its defense of its territory,

people, and existence.’’

I look forward to continuing to work

with my colleagues in the United

States Senate as well as with President

Obama to close the loopholes in current

sanctions legislation and to ensure

that the cooperation that has existed

between the United States and

the State of Israel for over 60 years remains

steadfast and unshakeable.