Madam President, all

of us know the United States is facing

many challenges at home and abroad

today. We are in the middle of an economic

crisis. Many Americans are losing

their jobs. We are also being tested

by our enemies and potential enemies

all around the world. We have certainly

seen Iran continue its nuclear weapons

program. It snubbed its nose at the

international community as the international

community asked it to halt.

Recently, perhaps the most alarming

threat to our security has come from

North Korea. We have seen them fire

test missiles over the last year, actually

test a very powerful nuclear weapon,

and now they are telling us they

are going to test a rocket that is capable

of reaching our shores. In the middle

of this, they kidnapped two Americans

and sentenced them to, I think, 12

years in a labor camp.

Throughout all this, America has

talked tough, but I am afraid North

Korea believes we are all talk.

The problem with our position with

North Korea at this point is there are

other rogue nations looking at what is

happening and seeing that they can basically

ignore the United States and

the international community and continue

to be a growing threat to all of

us.

It is very important that the United

States not reward this behavior as we

have done for North Korea. The Democratic

People’s Republic of Korea was

added to the State Department’s

‘‘State Sponsors of Terrorism’’ list in

1988 for activities ranging from the protection

of Japanese terrorists to its

role in the bombing of a Korean airliner.

Since that time, North Korea has

remained, as a matter of documented

fact, a sponsor of terrorism.

Last June, President Bush announced

his intention to remove North Korea

from the list. At no time before or

since has anyone said that North Korea

ceased to be a state sponsor of terror.

The delisting of North Korea was a carrot

waved in front of Kim Jong Il as

part of a well-meaning but extremely

dangerous attempt to deal diplomatically

with the urgent problem of North

Korea’s illegal nuclear programs. Secretary

of State Clinton acknowledges

that North Korea was delisted only in

exchange for North Korea’s commitment

to abandon its nuclear weapons

program and submit to outside verification.

Since then, I think as most of us

know, North Korea has gone further in

its campaign of militant destabilization

of the world than ever before. It

has detonated a large nuclear bomb. It

has launched missiles capable of hitting

our allies. It has withdrawn from

the six-party talks. It has reprocessed

spent fuel rods. It has withdrawn from

the United Nation’s treaty that ended

the Korean war over 50 years ago. It

has announced its intention to launch

a ballistic missile capable of hitting

the Western United States.

In response to these threats, I and

seven of my colleagues wrote Secretary

Clinton asking that she relist North

Korea as a state sponsor of terrorism.

In addition, Senator BROWNBACK and I

authored amendments that have been

endorsed by 15 Senators directing Secretary

Clinton to redesignate North

Korea. The response thus far has fallen

short. Secretary Clinton says relisting

is being considered but as part of an

ongoing diplomatic process. President

Obama has offered strong words, but

we have yet to see action.

North Korea has proven that it is immune

to talk, whether that talk be

sweet or tough. The President gave a

speech last week saying that good relationships

require speaking ‘‘clearly and

. . . plainly’’ about international controversies.

Relisting North Korea will

speak clearly and plainly about the

true nature of North Korea’s regime. It

will send a strong signal to our allies

in the Pacific.

It is now clear that President Bush’s

diplomatic gamble, which many opposed

last year, has failed. North Korea

has exploited its newfound flexibility

and respectability and used it to

threaten Asia and the United States.

They have tapped unfrozen assets to

fund their mischief, and they remain a

supplier to both Hezbollah in Lebanon

and the Iranian Revolutionary Guard.

Secretary Clinton’s statement over

the weekend that she wants ‘‘to see recent

evidence of [North Korea’s] support

for international terrorism’’

misses the point. North Korea was not

delisted because it ceased assisting in

sponsoring terror. If a convicted arsonist

is released on parole, he does not

have to burn down a house to go back

to prison. Any crime will do. That is

where we are with North Korea today.

They are not operating in the spirit or

letter of their agreements, and without

a shred of good faith. They have not reformed

and cannot be trusted. They are

a state sponsor of terror and should be

recognized for it.

Once relisted, North Korea will suffer

consequences for its aggressive provocations.

There will be trade restrictions,

there will be sanctions and the

refreezing of assets to limit North Korea’s

ability to fund its weapons program.

Relisting North Korea as a state

sponsor of terrorism will let them and

the world know that the United States

is serious—something this administration

has yet to do.

I yield the floor, and I suggest the absence

of a quorum.