Could I have—

I just snuck in on you.

Thank you. Thank you so much. In the nick of

time, I stopped the inevitable gavel.

As the author of the Syria Accountability Act, I

want to thank Chairman Lugar for his help now. He is very determined

that we have a waiver, the broad waiver. It is in place, and

I think we are ready to go.

I wanted to, because I know there are some who do not favor it,

to lay out why I think it is important very briefly and then ask one

question to you, either of you who wishes to answer.

I have always believed in life that the truth will set you free. You

have to tell the truth. I especially think it is important in foreign

policy. Now, clearly diplomacy means that you tell the truth in the

most sensitive way, and you are the masters of that. I am not good

at that, but you are very good at that, and I really have to say that

our chairman and ranking member are very good at that. I am a

little more to the point, although I think Senator Biden is known

for speaking straight from the shoulder quite often.

But when it comes to Syria, it is about time we just told the

truth. I feel that way about Saudi Arabia, although I do not quite

know what the truth is because we cannot get information that we

really ought to have. But that is another hearing for another time.

So really what we are saying is that the President can impose

sanctions, and I wanted it to be must impose sanctions, but with

the compromise he can impose sanctions, which I think are very

wisely ratcheted up, if Syria does not cease providing support for

international terrorist groups and does not allow terrorist groups

such as Hamas, Hizballah, Palestinian Islamic Jihad, and others to

maintain facilities in territory under their control.

This is a terrible problem. This is a haven for terrorists. You

know, as the President said after 9–11, we cannot have people

shielding terrorists. So we can no longer walk away. I am the

happiest person when Syria helps us in some way or another. I encourage

that. But still in all, you cannot really help us in the long

run if you are allowing these terrorists to be there.

Lebanon occupation, another one. Development and deployment

of long-range ballistic missiles and research into such weapons, and

ceasing all support for terrorist activities inside of Iraq, and I know

others have talked about that.

So what do we do here? We just simply give the President or,

shall we say, we—as Senator Chafee said, the President could do

this anyway, but the Congress will go on record when we finally

pass this act, which I think is long overdue—and I disagreed so

strongly with the administration when Secretary Powell said this

will not helpful, having this act, this will not be helpful. That was

just a few months ago.

Then he went over there and sat with Syria and said: You know,

you have got to watch out for that Congress; they are going to pass

the Syria Accountability Act. Well, I thought that was pretty helpful

of us to have that there.

So you know, I just think when I look at this list: prohibiting export

to Syria of any item on the U.S. munitions list, imposing two

or more of the following sanctions: the export of products of the

U.S. other than food and medicine to Syria; and prohibiting U.S.

business from investing and operating; prohibiting Syrian aircraft

from taking off or landing in the U.S. And it goes on: diplomats in

D.C. can only travel within a 25-mile radius.

That is harsh. It is very harsh. But what they are doing is harsh.

And if we hope to wrap our arms around this terrorism issue, we

have to start telling the truth and putting something behind it.

Frankly, if you were to ask people, I am a person what so hesitates

to move towards war. I am probably the last person, one of the last,

that will vote for war. I have done it, but I do it very rarely.

So why would I support this? Because this is a way to avoid a

military confrontation, because we are sending a very clear signal.

We are not going to surprise someone in the middle of the night

and attack them. We are saying this is bad, this is wrong, this goes

against world norms, and we are ready to push forward with economic

sanctions.

I think that is a way to avoid a confrontation. That is the last

thing we need. It is the last thing we want. We all want a peaceful

world.

So my question, and then I am done, is: What really triggered

the change of the administration on my bill? That is my question.

I am sorry, I am involved with these fires.

So there was not anything specific that changed

your mind that they are doing since the war or anything else? It

is just an accumulation of behavior that all of a sudden you

thought this is the time?

Thank you for your flexibility.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman, very much.

Yes, right.