

*(draft text being circulated in the Senate as of 2/8/12 – not necessarily final text)*

Whereas since at least the late 1980s, the Government of the Islamic Republic of Iran has engaged in a sustained and well-documented pattern of illicit and deceptive activities to acquire a nuclear capability;

Whereas the United Nations Security Council has adopted multiple resolutions since 2006 demanding the full and sustained suspension of all uranium enrichment-related and reprocessing activities by the Iranian government and its full cooperation with the IAEA on all outstanding issues related to its nuclear activities, particularly those concerning the possible military dimensions of its nuclear program;

Whereas on November 8, 2011, the IAEA issued an extensive report documenting "serious concerns regarding possible military dimensions to Iran's nuclear programme" and stating that "Iran has carried out activities relevant to the development of a nuclear device" and that these efforts may be ongoing;

Whereas as of November 2008, Iran had produced approximately 630 kilograms of uranium-235 enriched to 3.5 percent and no uranium-235 enriched to 20 percent, according to the IAEA;

Whereas as of November 2011, Iran had produced nearly 5,000 kilograms of uranium-235 enriched to 3.5 percent and 79.7 kilograms of uranium-235 enriched to 20 percent, according to the IAEA;

Whereas on January 9, 2011, IAEA inspectors confirmed that the Iranian government had begun enrichment activities at the Fordow site, including possibly enrichment of uranium-235 to 20 percent;

Whereas if Iran were successful in acquiring a nuclear weapon capability, it would likely spur other countries in the region to consider developing their own nuclear weapons capabilities;

Whereas on December 6, 2011, Prince Turki al-Faisal of Saudi Arabia stated that if international efforts to prevent Iran from obtaining nuclear weapons fail, "we must, as a duty to our country and people, look into all options we are given, including obtaining these weapons ourselves";

Whereas top Iranian leaders have repeatedly threatened the existence of the State of Israel, pledging to "wipe Israel off the map";

Whereas the U.S. Department of State since 1984 has designated Iran as a "State Sponsor of Terrorism" and has characterized Iran as "the most active state sponsor of terrorism";

Whereas Iran has provided weapons, training, funding, and direction to terrorist groups including Hamas, Hezbollah, and Shiite militias in Iraq that are responsible for the murders of hundreds of American forces and innocent civilians;

Whereas on July 28, 2011, the U.S. Department of the Treasury charged that the Government of Iran had forged a "secret deal" with Al Qaeda to facilitate the movement of al Qaeda fighters and funding through Iranian territory;

Whereas in October 2011, senior leaders of Iran's Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) Quds Force were implicated in a terrorist plot to assassinate Saudi Arabia's Ambassador to the United States on U.S. soil;

Whereas on December 26, 2011, the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution denouncing the serious human rights abuses occurring in the Islamic Republic of Iran, including torture, cruel and degrading treatment in detention, the targeting of human rights defenders, violence against women, and “the systematic and serious restrictions on freedom of peaceful assembly” as well as severe restrictions on the rights “to freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief”;

Whereas President Obama, through the P5+1 process, has made repeated efforts to engage the Iranian government in dialogue about Iran’s nuclear program and its international commitments under the Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty.

Whereas on March 31, 2010, President Obama stated that the “consequences of a nuclear-armed Iran are unacceptable”;

Whereas in his State of the Union Address on January 24, 2012, President Obama stated: “Let there be no doubt: America is determined to prevent Iran from getting a nuclear weapon, and I will take no options off the table to achieve that goal”;

Whereas Secretary of Defense Panetta in December 2011 stated that it was unacceptable for Iran to acquire nuclear weapons, reaffirmed that all options were on the table to thwart Iran’s nuclear weapons efforts, and vowed that if the U.S. gets “intelligence that they are proceeding with developing a nuclear weapon then we will take whatever steps necessary to stop it”;

Whereas the Defense Department’s January 2012 Strategic Guidance stated that U.S. defense efforts in the Middle East would be aimed “to prevent Iran’s development of a nuclear weapons capability and counter its destabilizing policies”;

Resolved that the United States Senate --

- (1) Affirms that it is a vital national interest of the United States to prevent the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapons capability;
- (2) Affirms that it is within the power and capabilities of the United States Government to prevent the government of the Islamic Republic of Iran from acquiring a nuclear weapons capability;
- (3) Warns that time is limited to prevent the Iranian government from acquiring a nuclear weapons capability;
- (4) Urges continued and increasing economic and diplomatic pressure on the Islamic Republic of Iran in the absence of full and sustained suspension of all uranium enrichment-related and reprocessing activities, complete cooperation with the IAEA on all outstanding questions related to Iran’s nuclear activities, including implementation of the NPT Additional Protocol, and the verified end of Iran’s ballistic missile programs”;
- (5) Expresses support for the universal rights and democratic aspirations of the Iranian people;
- (6) Strongly rejects any policy that fails to prevent the Iranian government from acquiring a nuclear weapons capability and that instead would settle for future efforts to "contain" a nuclear weapons capable Iran;

(7) Urges the President to reaffirm the unacceptability of an Iran with nuclear-weapons capability and to oppose any policy that would rely on containment as an option in response to the Iranian nuclear threat.