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House Foreign Affairs Committee Markup

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey...Mr. Speaker, as we heard yesterday in testimony from General Wald, the Iran deal “places Iran on a trajectory to become as intractable a challenge as North Korea is today—and very possibly worse.” The general noted that “while Pyongyang’s relentless pursuit of nuclear weapons has only deepened its isolation and driven it toward bankruptcy, the JCPOA is doing the opposite for Iran.”

It was clear from the beginning that this deal was deeply flawed. It was clear that it was based on a fundamentally misguided premise: that Iran’s manifest desire for a nuclear weapon could be considered separate from its development of a delivery capacity for that weapon or from the rest of Iran’s violent campaign for regional hegemony. It should be self-evident that a nuclear warhead without a delivery vehicle is not going very far very fast. Iran’s ballistic missile program is inseparable from its desire to impose nuclear blackmail on the U.S., Israel, and other regional allies.

Iran also exports its extremist revolution through proliferation of conventional weapons to terrorist proxies. The deal gave Iran an infusion of an estimated \$115 billion dollars in unfrozen assets—and as John Kerry said in an interview that was

carried by CNN, we don’t know where that money is going and it will probably wind up in the terrorists’ hands— not to mention other financial sweeteners like the \$1.7 billion in small bills. As we heard yesterday, this money has helped Iran extend its malign influence to an unprecedented extent across the region—in Syria, Iraq, Lebanon, and Yemen.

I’d like to thank Chairman ROYCE for his leadership on Iran these past several years, of which yesterday’s hearing was but one example. Today we are considering one key measure, the Chairman’s H.R. 1698, the Iran Ballistic Missiles and International Sanctions Enforcement Act, which enjoys broad support in the House with 320 co-sponsors. This bill expands sanctions against organizations and individuals that facilitate Iran’s ballistic missile program as well as its trade in conventional weapons. This bill is critical to our national security and that of our allies in the region, especially our good friend and ally Israel. It’s time we start turning the tide back against Iran to guarantee that it never realizes its genocidal designs on the Jewish State or the other freedom-loving peoples of the region.

We help do that by passing H.R. 1698 out of committee. It is a bill I have cosponsored and I strongly support. I also strongly support the Taiwan Travel Act (H.R. 535) and commend Chairman CHABOT for introducing this legislation, of which I am a cosponsor.

The Communist Party leadership in China has tried to isolate democratic Taiwan, pressuring countries to break diplomatic relations and bullying the UN and multi-lateral agencies, such as the World Health Organization and INTERPOL, to exclude Taiwan from membership. These actions have created needless blind spots in global anti-terrorism cooperation and hampered coordination on key global health issues.

Just this March, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) confirmed the first human fatality from the H7N9 avian flu in Taiwan. This is a pressing global concern, as we know that SARS virus spread from Mainland China and Taiwan in past.

The U.S. and Taiwan are cooperating in containing H7N9 virus, as we did 14 years ago to contain SARS. As such, China's actions to exclude Taiwan from the WHO and other international bodies is dangerous and unacceptable. Taiwan should be allowed to join the WHO. It is not only an interest of Taiwan, it is in the interest of global public health.

Restrictions on the travel of Taiwanese officials to the U.S. and on high-level U.S. officials to Taiwan are self-imposed rules intended to placate Mainland China. In the current strategic climate, these rules are now counterproductive and the policy should be changed.

We should be expanding cooperation with Taiwan on a number of fronts, particularly now that Communist China has stepped up efforts to isolate and bully democratic

Taiwan. If China persists in its efforts to exclude Taiwan from international bodies like Interpol and

WHO and the International Civilian Aviation

Organization, the U.S. should be sending cabinet level officials from HHS, Transportation, and the Justice Department to consult with Taiwanese officials—and to host their counterparts here in Washington. Such meetings will advance and protect American interests.

Under Xi Jinping's leadership, China has become more repressive domestically, more protectionist in its trade policies, and more assertive globally. As documented by the Congressional-Executive Commission on China (CECC), which I cochair with Senator MARCO RUBIO, China's domestic repression is the fuel for its international aggression, threatening American jobs and security, including in the South China Sea, in the Taiwan Straits, and in Hong Kong, where the "one country, two system" model is fast eroding. China has also imprisoned Taiwanese citizen and democracy advocate Lee Ming-che, whose wife Lee Ching-yu, sat in this very room in July at a hearing I chaired and asked the international community to work for her husband's release.

China will never be happy with U.S.-Taiwan policy or the Taiwan Relations Act. Communist China will never be placated by our self-imposed restrictions on travel and consultations. We should not try. As China squeezes Taiwan's international space and openly threatens it militarily, the U.S. must have consultations with democratic Taiwan, not less.