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Joint Session of Congress Welcoming Israeli Prime Minister

**Unequivocal Support for Israel –
And No Illusions About Iran’s Murderous Intentions**

*U.S. Rep. Chris Smith (NJ-04)
Chairman of the House Global Human Rights Subcommittee
& Senior Member of the Foreign Affairs Committee
Chairman of the Congressional Human Trafficking Caucus
Statement on the Congressional Record, March 2, 2015*

Mr. Speaker, I’d like to thank my colleague, Mr. Stewart, for reserving this time to send a message of vigorous, unequivocal, and unflinching U.S. support for Israel.

Mr. Speaker, on the eve of Prime Minister Netanyahu’s historic address, we have to join his efforts to set the focus on the existential, genocidal threat Iran poses to Israel.

We have to be realistic about Iranian President Rouhani because many in the media – and some in the administration – have been reluctant to do that. Rouhani has a long history of murderous anti-Semitism and anti-Americanism. The corpses are all over the globe.

Rouhani chaired Iran’s National Security Council from 1989 to 2005 – the years when Iran plotted the 1994 bombing of the AMIA Jewish cultural center, which killed 85 people in Buenos Aires. The 1996 attack on the Khobar Towers was also under his tenure – this one killed 19 U.S. servicemen in Saudi Arabia. He continues to support the global terrorism of Hezbollah.

Likewise, Rouhani’s defense minister, Hossein Dehghan, participated in plotting the 1983 U.S. Marine barracks bombing in Beirut – this crime took the lives of 241 Americans, including Paul Innocenzi from my district. His Justice Minister, Mostafa Pour-Mohammadi, played a role in 1988 and 1998 in the summary executions of Iranian political prisoners and killings of intellectuals, as well as assassinations abroad.

Mr. Speaker, this is the man that our government and Prime Minister Netanyahu are dealing with. For 16 years Rouhani ran Iran's nuclear program. He has boasted openly of his success in using negotiations as a tool to buy time to advance his program.

The question before us is whether the agreement President Obama is trying to close with Rouhani is yet another deal favorable to the Iranian government, allowing it to move the hand on the nuclear clock yet closer to midnight.

There are many signs that this is the case. Most reports on the negotiations are that the administration is not trying to prevent a nuclear Iran, but only to preserve some "breakout time" - yet will not require the kind of transparency to make even that a remotely reliable measure. Even worse, it seems the administration is prepared to accept a "sunset clause" - a date after which Iranian nuclear arms would be completely legitimated. And the deal being crafted reportedly ignores Iran's ballistic missile program.

All this amounts to a potential catastrophe. Unfortunately, the administration seems to have telegraphed its determination to get a deal with Rouhani - almost any deal - and to shut Congress out. This is why I am concerned, and why we in Congress and the American people need to hear all the more from Prime Minister Netanyahu.

Let's let the Prime Minister know that Congress and the American people stand with Israel, without any 'ifs,' or 'buts,' or 'so long as,' or any other qualifiers, and without any illusions about the murderous and manipulative intentions of Rouhani. I'd like to close by thanking Speaker Boehner for inviting Prime Minister Netanyahu.