

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MCCAUL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H. Res. 90, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

ENCOURAGING THE EXPANSION AND STRENGTHENING OF THE ABRAHAM ACCORDS TO URGE OTHER NATIONS TO NORMALIZE RELATIONS WITH ISRAEL AND ENSURE THAT EXISTING AGREEMENTS REAP TANGIBLE SECURITY AND ECONOMIC BENEFITS FOR THE CITIZENS OF THOSE COUNTRIES AND ALL PEOPLES IN THE REGION

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H. Res. 311) encouraging the expansion and strengthening of the Abraham Accords to urge other nations to normalize relations with Israel and ensure that existing agreements reap tangible security and economic benefits for the citizens of those countries and all peoples in the region.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H. RES. 311

Whereas May 14, 2023, marks the 75th anniversary of the establishment of the State of Israel;

Whereas, on May 14, 1948, the United States officially recognized Israel as a State;

Whereas Israel has been designated by the United States Government as a major non-NATO ally;

Whereas, in 2014, Congress designated Israel as a “major strategic partner”;

Whereas the United States and Israel have a close and robust bilateral relationship marked by strong people-to-people ties and close cooperation on a wide range of issues including defense, diplomacy, energy, cybersecurity, agriculture, science, and space;

Whereas the United States and Israel have signed three 10-year memoranda of understanding, in which the United States committed to provide \$26,700,000,000 between fiscal year 1999 and fiscal year 2008, \$30,000,000,000 between fiscal year 2009 and fiscal year 2018, and \$38,000,000,000 between fiscal year 2019 and fiscal year 2028;

Whereas Congress has appropriated amounts in accordance with such memoranda of understanding, reflecting the two countries’ shared priorities in the region;

Whereas, in late 2020 and early 2021, Israel reached agreements, known collectively as the Abraham Accords, to improve or normalize its relations with the United Arab Emirates, Bahrain, Morocco, and Sudan; and

Whereas these agreements build upon the decades-long leadership of the United States and other governments in supporting efforts to broker peace treaties between Israel and Egypt and Israel and Jordan: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) encourages the United States and Israel to continue to deepen and expand bilateral cooperation across the full spectrum of economic, security, and civilian issues;

(2) encourages the expansion and strengthening of the Abraham Accords to urge other nations to normalize relations with Israel and ensure that existing agreements reap tangible security and economic benefits for the citizens of those countries and all peoples in the region;

(3) expresses continued support for security assistance to Israel as outlined in the United States-Israel Memorandum of Understanding to ensure that Israel can defend itself by itself; and

(4) supports Israel’s robust involvement as an active member of the community of nations to benefit Israel and the United States as partners who share common values and a commitment to democracy.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MCCAUL) and the gentlewoman from North Carolina (Ms. MANNING) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on this measure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this week we are marking an incredible milestone, 75 years since the establishment of the State of Israel.

Since the day Israel was founded, it faced numerous existential threats, and yet today, Israel is a thriving democracy with a robust economy and one of the world’s most capable militaries. Most importantly, the United States and Israel have stood shoulder to shoulder together since day one.

Over seven-and-a-half decades, we have worked as friends and partners, and we will continue to work together to overcome shared challenges and reach new triumphs.

The United States has long supported Israel’s right and ability to defend herself against threats. Our long-term commitment to Israel’s security includes the \$3.3 billion per year in foreign military financing assistance and support for defense technology development. One of the great successes of this support is the Iron Dome air defense system.

□ 1645

In May of 2021 when Hamas and Palestinian Islamic Jihad launched more than 4,000 rockets toward Israel, it was the Iron Dome that shot those weapons out of the sky, greatly limiting the number of casualties in this terrifying conflict.

After this escalation, Congress voted overwhelmingly to resupply the Iron

Dome to help Israel keep its citizens safe.

The United States will always stand with Israel in its fight against terrorism. Our close partner is also vital to combating the global threat posed by Iran’s nuclear program, ballistic missile arsenal, armed UAV attacks, as well as Iran’s support for international terrorism, hostage-taking, and human rights abuses.

Simply put, a nuclear Iran is unacceptable, both for the United States, our ally Israel, and for the world.

We are also in full agreement that the IRGC is a foreign terrorist organization, and this designation should remain in place.

We are seeing Iran’s malign influence spread well beyond the Middle East. Iran is orchestrating terror plots against Americans on U.S. soil.

Iran continues to supply Russia with lethal drones and other forms of support for its war of aggression in Ukraine.

Moreover, Iran is deepening its cooperation with Communist China who continues to threaten the global balance of power through their malign activities around the globe and hostility toward Taiwan.

Responding to Iran’s global threat and its unholy alliance with Russia and China will be a generational challenge, but the United States and Israel are prepared to respond.

It is clear that others have taken note of how much the United States and Israel accomplish when we work together.

That is why in 2020, President Trump and his team succeeded in brokering the first normalization agreements between Israel and its neighbors in over 25 years.

The Abraham Accords are transformational for the Middle East. I was proud to be at the White House for the signing ceremony of these historic agreements. Now the UAE, Bahrain, and Morocco join Egypt and Jordan in having full diplomatic relations with Israel.

The accords open the door to important cooperation, including to address the shared threat posed by Iran that is making the Middle East and North Africa safer and more prosperous.

These countries are working together on free trade, energy, water, and, of course, defense cooperation, like the Middle East Air Defense Alliance, now that Israel is a part of Central Command.

This is a generational shift in the Middle East and one that promotes peace and prosperity in the region. That is why we need to invest in the positive progress of growing and deepening the Abraham Accords as this resolution outlines.

We need to put our diplomatic might into trying to achieve the kinds of big breakthroughs that created the Abraham Accords almost 3 years ago.

I was pleased to see Oman and Saudi Arabia begin allowing overflights of

Israeli planes. It is a huge step forward, but we need to keep thinking bigger until we get to the game changer that would be full diplomatic relations between Saudi Arabia and Israel.

On behalf of the American people, I congratulate our Israeli friends on everything they have accomplished in their first 75 years.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. MANNING. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, 75 years ago, the State of Israel joined the community of nations when it declared its independence from the British Empire.

In the wake of World War II and the Holocaust, for the first time in modern history, the Jews would have a land and a military of their own that would allow them to overcome centuries of anti-Semitism, persecution, and attempts at elimination.

The State of Israel rests on land that has been uniquely bound to the Jewish people for thousands of years.

From the Exodus from Egypt to the First and Second Temples all the way to today's modern age, there has always been a Jewish presence between the Mediterranean and the Jordan River.

Over the last 75 years, Israelis have made the desert bloom, transforming the country into a modern, industrialized democracy.

Israel is a leader in technology, business, and agriculture. The country's innovative technologies have greatly benefited the United States military and other government agencies.

Israel shares the democratic and human rights values we treasure here in the United States. The recent Abraham Accords represent yet another milestone in Israel's development.

Normalization of Israel's relationships with the UAE, Bahrain, and Morocco are already enhancing regional diplomacy, security, and communication and will serve as an incubator for increased regional stability, prosperity, and peace.

These agreements come on top of already realized peace agreements with Israel's neighbors, Egypt and Jordan, and demonstrate the power of diplomacy and compromise.

As a proud, lifelong supporter of a strong bipartisan U.S.-Israel relationship, I also support a two-state solution which preserves Israel's fundamental character as a Jewish and a democratic state.

This has been the longstanding policy of the United States through both Republican and Democratic administrations.

A two-state solution is the only way Israel can remain both Jewish and democratic into the future, and it is the only way to meet the aspirations of the Palestinian people.

I would like to see the bipartisan consensus on two states be maintained

in the future for the benefit of the United States, Israel, the Palestinians, and the wider region and world.

Mr. Speaker, it is a great honor to be on the floor of the House of Representatives honoring Israel's 75th anniversary as well as the Abraham Accords.

Modern Israel is truly a miracle, and its existence is an asset to our great country. I encourage my colleagues to support this bipartisan resolution that I was proud to help introduce with my colleagues on the House Foreign Affairs Committee: Representatives ANN WAGNER, BRAD SCHNEIDER, and Chairman MIKE MCCAUL.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. MANNING. Mr. Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to my friend from Illinois (Mr. SCHNEIDER).

Mr. SCHNEIDER. Mr. Speaker, 25 years ago, I proudly joined many fellow Chicagoans in Kiryat Gat, Israel, celebrating the 50th jubilee anniversary of the establishment of the Jewish State in the land of the Jewish people.

Today, I proudly stand in the well of the House of Representatives marking the 75th anniversary of that remarkable event.

I am beyond proud that the United States was the first Nation to recognize the nascent State of Israel in 1948.

In the 3 score and 15 years since, our shared values have been the bedrock of an extraordinary relationship, strengthening our ties along cultural, economic, technological, and security lines, and in so many more ways, as well.

Throughout my life, I have prayed for a just and lasting peace for Israel and all the people of the region.

I have joyously celebrated each of the peace agreements between Israel and Egypt, Israel and Jordan, and the Abraham Accords between the UAE, Bahrain, and Morocco.

I know in my heart that peace can one day be achieved with the Palestinians with a negotiated two-state solution that would give us a Jewish democratic Israel and a demilitarized democratic Palestinian state living side by side in peace, security, and prosperity.

Again, we celebrate with Israel 75 years of independence; 75 years of partnership; 75 years of scientific and medical research and innovation that gave us cell phones, Waze directions, the PillCam, and drip irrigation, revolutionizing agriculture around the world. We celebrate with Israel 75 years of cultural exchange; 75 years of economic growth with a start-up nation; 75 years of security cooperation. We celebrate 75 years together of pursuing peace; peace with Egypt in 1979, Jordan in 1994, and with the Abraham Accords, again, UAE, Bahrain, and Morocco.

Mr. Speaker, I wish the Israelis and the Israel people, the State of Israel, congratulations on 75 years, and we all look forward to building together toward a better future for Israel and the region for years to come.

Ms. MANNING. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Missouri (Mrs. WAGNER), the author of this resolution, who made it just in the nick of time.

Mrs. WAGNER. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend, the chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, for yielding, and I am glad that I made it.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 311, which I did introduce, to honor 75 years of friendship between the United States and Israel.

The decades-long partnership between our nations underpins security in the Middle East and promotes economic growth throughout the region.

Tonight marks the beginning of Israel's 75th Independence Day, a remarkable milestone that celebrates the establishment of a democratic Jewish homeland.

I have had the privilege to travel to Israel several times as a Member of Congress; from Jerusalem to the West Bank.

I met so many wonderful and welcoming people there: parents and businesspeople who simply yearn for peace in their region. Being on the ground in the Holy Land was among the most moving experiences of my life.

The United States was the very first Nation to stand in recognition of Israel at its founding in 1948, and I am proud of what our countries have accomplished together.

The signing of the Abraham Accords more than 2 years ago heralded an unprecedented opportunity for growth in the Middle East and beyond.

Already, the Abraham Accords have proven to be enduring and fruitful, contributing to regional stability and a sense of kinship between Israel and its neighbors.

As a founding co-chair of the Abraham Accords Caucus, I have been delighted to meet so many young people, entrepreneurs, innovators, and leaders who are working to establish relationships of trust and appreciation and lay the foundations for a prosperous future.

These efforts will have region-wide implications, encouraging sustained economic growth, peace, and stability.

This resolution urges other nations to normalize relations with Israel and ensure that existing agreements continue to reap tangible security and economic benefits for all peoples in the region.

We must all, however, be frank in recognizing the immense security challenges facing Abraham Accords countries.

Iran is closer than ever before to joining the ranks of nuclear powers, a terrifying prospect for us all, but especially so for Israel and its neighbors.

H. Res. 311 calls for continued support for United States security assistance to Israel so that Israel can defend herself.

However, security cooperation must be accompanied by real and sustained progress on eliminating anti-Semitism, an abhorrent ideology that continues to impede expansion of the accords and poison international institutions.

To secure universal acceptance of Israel's inherent right to exist, my resolution calls for Israel's robust participation in the community of nations.

Israel is a force for peace and a beacon of democracy in a challenging region. At a time of heightened anti-Semitism across the globe, it is more important than ever that we maintain our strong connection to this very key ally.

I thank my colleagues, Representatives MANNING, MCCAUL, and SCHNEIDER, for joining together in introducing this resolution.

They are all true champions of the U.S.-Israel alliance, and I have had the pleasure of working with them for many years to advance this essential relationship.

I congratulate the people of Israel on their 75th anniversary of their independence, and I urge each of my colleagues to support H. Res. 311.

□ 1700

Ms. MANNING. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time for the purpose of closing.

Mr. Speaker, I express my congratulations to Israel on the 75th anniversary of its independence and express my hope for Israel to find peace with all of its neighbors in the near future. I remind my colleagues and the world that President Truman on behalf of our great Nation was the very first country to recognize the establishment of the State of Israel only 11 minutes after David Ben-Gurion made his historic declaration of the establishment of the Jewish democratic State of Israel.

At this time, with the frightening rise of anti-Semitism we are seeing in our own country and around the world, it is more important than ever that we support the one Jewish country in the world.

Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues will join me in support of this important resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

I thank Ms. MANNING, Mr. SCHNEIDER, and Mrs. WAGNER for leading on this important resolution. On a personal note, I have to thank my own father who fought in World War II and was a bombardier on a B-17 who bombed the Nazis. He participated in 32 bombing missions, including Operation Overlord.

My father's generation liberated Europe from the threats and the horrors of the Nazis and fascism. They liberated the Jewish people from the horrors surrounding the Holocaust, which is unimaginable. That generation brought the State of Israel into existence, and that is our pact with Israel.

Since 1948, Israel has been our best friend and our strongest ally in the

Middle East. Israel has also been a true beacon of hope and democracy in the Middle East.

I look forward to a day, as I know they envisioned at the time of its creation in 1948, that even though these forces still exist today of anti-Semitism in Iran and other nations, that one day we will achieve true peace in the Middle East. I look forward to the day that Israel can coexist peacefully with its surrounding neighbors in the region and with the world.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. LOFGREN. Mr. Speaker, while I will vote in favor of this resolution and support the advancement of the Abraham Accords and normalization of relations with Israel, I am disappointed that the resolution does not mention the longstanding U.S. policy of supporting a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, as past U.S.-Israel relationship anniversary resolutions have. I continue to strongly support a sustainable two-state solution, with a democratic, Jewish state of Israel and a demilitarized, democratic Palestinian state living peacefully side-by-side. This resolution's omission of this policy is concerning given the current far-right Israeli governing coalition under Prime Minister Netanyahu, which has seriously undermined the prospects for a two-state solution.

Further, as hundreds of thousands of Israelis have been protesting in opposition of an anti-democratic judicial overhaul, it's important for U.S. policymakers to recognize that a negotiated two-state solution requires a robust democracy in Israel. America must insist that Israel not only remains committed to the two-state solution but committed to democracy in Israel.

Mr. MCGOVERN. Mr. Speaker, I will be voting to support H. Res. 311 today. We all support our ally Israel and recognize our longstanding alliance on Israel's 75th Anniversary. I cast my vote, however, with some misgivings.

There is nothing particularly problematic about this resolution, but there is a problem with what it does not say. I spent a week in Israel in February, and I saw first-hand the momentous crisis facing Israel—a crisis of democracy, a human rights crisis, and an international crisis.

Israel's democratic crisis, including deliberate attempts to undermine the Supreme Court and an independent judiciary, has brought hundreds of thousands of ordinary Israeli citizens to take to the streets in protest.

The human rights crisis includes the steady deterioration of the basic human rights of Arab Israelis and of the Palestinian people in the West Bank and Gaza brought about by deliberate decisions, policies, and actions by Israeli authorities.

As a result, there is mounting alarm, criticism, and condemnation of Israel in the international community by governments, NGOs, and civil society.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution ignores the reality on the ground.

This resolution ignores the damage that the current extremist government is accelerating inside Israel and in the West Bank and Gaza.

For the first time that I can remember, a resolution celebrating Israel's anniversary is being brought before the House without men-

tion of congressional support for a two-state solution.

I honor Israel's remarkable history on its 75th Anniversary, but unlike this resolution, I cannot be deaf, blind, and mute to the current challenge to Israel's democracy, the suffering of Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza, the terrorism that continues to fester in the region, and the fragility of any remaining possibility for a negotiated two-state solution.

I urge my colleagues, regardless of how they might vote on this resolution, not to abandon a two-state solution and to work together in support of peace, human dignity, and democracy for Israel and the Palestinian people.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MCCAUL) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 311.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 6:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 5 o'clock and 3 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1830

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. STAUBER) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Proceedings will resume on questions previously postponed. Votes will be taken in the following order:

Motions to suspend the rules and agree to:

H. Res. 90; and

H. Res. 311.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Pursuant to clause 9 of rule XX, remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

DEMANDING THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA AND THE COMMUNIST PARTY OF CHINA IMMEDIATELY RELEASE MARK SWIDAN

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and agree to