
BUSINESS MEETING

Tuesday, May 20, 2014

UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON
FOREIGN RELATIONS
113TH Congress, Second Session

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U.S. SENATE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS
WASHINGTON, D.C.

1 The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 2:22 p.m., in Room S-116, The Capitol,
2 Hon. Robert Menendez, chairman of the committee, presiding.

3 **PRESENT:** Senators Menendez [presiding], Boxer, Cardin, Shaheen, Coons,
4 Durbin, Udall, Murphy, Kaine, Markey, Corker, Rubio, Johnson, and Barrasso.

OPENING STATEMENT OF HON. ROBERT MENENDEZ, U.S. SENATOR FROM NEW JERSEY

5 **THE CHAIRMAN.** This business meeting of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee
6 will come to order.

7 Let me move to the agenda for the meeting. We have five legislative items and
8 11 nominations on the agenda. I know that there has been a request in writing that the
9 nomination for Noah Mamet, for Argentina, be held over to the next business meeting,
10 which I will honor.

11 I also understand that, in conjunction with the Ranking Member, that the
12 nomination of Mark Sobel has been agreed to, to be added to the agenda, the U.S.
13 Executive Director for the IMF, for a term of 2 years. So, I would ask unanimous
14 consent that that be order of business.

15 Is there objection?

16 [No response.]

17 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Without objection, he will be ordered added to the list of
18 nominations.

1 The first order of business is S. 2142, the Venezuela Defense of Human Rights
2 and Civil Society Act. It is a legislation that establishes, in no uncertain terms, that the
3 state-sanctioned violence of the Maduro regime demands a vigorous and swift
4 response, and it is a sharp warning to members of Venezuela's government, security
5 forces, and armed civilian groups involved in violence that the U.S. does not tolerate
6 this conduct and will respond accordingly to help strengthen Venezuelan civil society
7 while applying targeted sanctions against those responsible.

8 I have a manager's amendment that I am proposing that incorporates some
9 helpful amendments proposed by Senators Flake and Johnson. And I also want to
10 recognize Senator Rubio for a great deal of effort in this regard and for his strong
11 advocacy to get it to this point.

12 I appreciate the cooperation of the Ranking Member to get us to this point. And I
13 would like to call on the Ranking Member for any comments he may have on this
14 particular legislation.

15 **SENATOR CORKER.** If you want to go ahead and let —

16 **SENATOR RUBIO.** I just want to thank both of you for bringing this on the agenda
17 and for all of the members that are going to be supporting it today, and just to point
18 out, Mr. Chairman, there is no need to — I had an amendment today which I am not
19 going to pursue, given the progress that has been made on a separate piece of
20 legislation that would target corruption and the ties of those that are corrupt to regimes
21 around the world. And I think that is perhaps the better way to approach it. But, I do
22 think that is a very significant issue here, is — there are these individuals that are
23 directly linked to this tyranny, who are profiting from this tyranny, and who — quite
24 frankly, have strong links to U.S. banking and other business interests. And I hope that
25 is something that we will consider forthwith. And I know that you and Senator Cardin
26 and others are working very hard on pursuing that legislation.

1 And so, I am not going to offer that amendment today. I just want to thank you
2 for bringing this issue up.

3 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Thank you. And I appreciate your willingness to work with
4 Senator Cardin and Senator McCain and others on a global Magnitsky bill that will
5 allow us to sanction both individuals who conduct human rights violations and those
6 are responsible for significant corruption in their countries. I appreciate your
7 willingness to hold off on that, because I think it will make our legislation on Venezuela
8 a lot more expeditious.

9 Senator Cardin?

10 **SENATOR CARDIN.** Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I think you have covered
11 the point I wanted to make, but let me just put a spotlight on it.

12 And that is, I support this legislation. I think we should be passing legislation
13 dealing with Venezuela. But, however, I think we should have uniform sanction
14 legislation to deal with these types of issues. What this legislation does is use the
15 Magnitsky-type sanctions for Venezuela. And that is appropriate, and that is fine, and I
16 support that. I think it would be better to have a global Magnitsky bill that would have
17 the standard language rather than having separate sanctions for Venezuela, for Ukraine,
18 for Russia, all of which are very similar, as far as the language, but it would be better to
19 have a global bill that could be used in circumstances like this that do not await action
20 by Congress for the administration to be able to take action, but allows for the initiation
21 by Congress, in the event that people leave or the administration is moving too slow.
22 That would, I think, be a much more effective way to deal with circumstances like
23 Venezuela than having to wait until we get legislation enacted and signed by the
24 President.

1 I know the Chairman's working with us to get this legislation to go forward, as is
2 the Ranking Member. And I would just hope that we could move the global bill as soon
3 as possible.

4 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Well, I appreciate the Senator's views and concerns. As he knows,
5 I am a strong supporter of the effort for a global Magnitsky bill, and look forward to
6 working with the Ranking Member to get to a point where we can bring it to a business
7 meeting for a committee vote.

8 Senator Corker.

9 **SENATOR CORKER.** Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you and Senator Rubio and
10 others who have worked on this. And I especially thank you for having the hearing
11 that you had regarding Venezuela, which I think was very damning, relative to the
12 abuses that are occurring in Venezuela.

13 I want to also thank you for — every occasion we have the opportunity to, we do
14 things in a very bipartisan way. And Senator Rubio, I think, his passion combined with
15 yours around this issue was exemplary. I thought the hearing was outstanding. And I
16 know that, in many ways, Senator Rubio and you both are much closer to this issue.

17 I am going to vote against these sanctions. And I know this bill is going to pass,
18 and I reserve the right, as this moves along on the floor, to alter the position.

19 As I look at the situation in Venezuela, there is no question that incredible human
20 rights abuses are taking place. But, what I understand to be occurring there, and think
21 is occurring, is the opposition is very divided right now. And I fear that this sanctions
22 process, without a strategy from the administration that I can discern — a situation that
23 we find ourselves in, in so many instances — I fear that the sanctions process actually
24 plays into the hands of the Maduro administration by giving them the opportunity to
25 blame Venezuela's economic problems on these sanctions. I fear that this actually aids
26 the very people that are abusing people massively throughout the country.

1 So, I would have felt a little bit better about it — as I realize the administration is
2 probably going to be implementing some limited sanctions in the near future. And
3 again, as things develop, I want to say, I want to continue to pay attention and observe.
4 I am not going to vote for this bill today, but that in no way takes away from my
5 tremendous respect for the way both Senator Rubio and yourself have conducted
6 yourself, having the hearing, allowing us to have a real debate. And I realize that, on
7 some issues, we are not necessarily going to agree, or at least agree at the moment, that
8 something is coming through.

9 So, I want to thank you both and thank all that have been involved.

10 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Any other members seeking —
11 Senator Udall.

12 **SENATOR UDALL.** Chairman Menendez, I have a question more for you and Senator
13 Rubio and the sponsors. I mean, I do not have any doubt — and, in a sense, I am
14 coming a little bit from where Senator Corker is — that there are serious human rights
15 violations. And I think that our hearing showed that. But, apparently, on the ground
16 there is a Vatican-led mediation negotiation trying to pull all the parties together. And
17 there is some suggestion out there that this sanctions legislation might undermine that.
18 And I am just wondering what the response of the folks that are pushing this forward is
19 to that. Do you think that is a danger? Do you think that is a problem? I mean, is that
20 — is it totally unfounded?

21 **THE CHAIRMAN.** I appreciate the Senator's concern. Let me say two things. Number
22 one is, you know, there was a little, let me call it, miscommunication at the hearing,
23 which was subsequently revised in the record by Assistant Secretary Roberta Jacobson,
24 in which a line of questioning was — has the opposition that is engaged, including those
25 who are engaged in the conversation, opposed the effort to sanction for human rights
26 violations? And the record now reflects that the opposition is not against pursuing

1 sanctions, and, since the hearing, have actually come out verbally in support, including
2 those who were engaged in the negotiations.

3 The second thing is that those negotiations, as I understand it, the opposition has
4 walked away from the negotiations you just described and, from all apparent views, is
5 in its final stage; if not, it is, for all intents and purposes, dissipated.

6 So, I think that there is nothing that we are doing, both listening to the voices of
7 civil society — those voices who were sitting at the table with the Vatican -- who have
8 now walked away and who have voiced that they actually support the efforts,
9 particularly on human rights abuses.

10 **SENATOR RUBIO.** Can I just add, Mr. Chairman, a couple of points?

11 First, I think that that argument could be applied to virtually anytime we pursue
12 sanctions anywhere in the world for human rights violations. As you know, these are
13 not sanctions against their economic sector, but, in fact, are sanctions against individuals
14 responsible for human rights violations. So, for example, we have taken sanctions with
15 regards to Russia and Ukraine, and one could argue that Putin has used that and the
16 invasion to increase his popularity within Russia. And yet, we never doubted that was
17 the right thing to do, because, irrespective of its political implications, I think it is policy
18 — should be the policy of this country, and I believe it is the policy of the majority of the
19 members of this — if not all the members of this committee, that human rights
20 violations deserve to be sanctioned. People deserve to be named and shamed for what
21 they are doing.

22 The second point I was going to make is the one the Chairman made, which is,
23 that Secretary Jacobson had come to a couple of days later and clarified that she had
24 been confused — in her words, not mine — about that, and that, in fact, no one in the
25 opposition had asked her not to pursue this.

1 And third, I would just say that I think that — different from perhaps some other
2 societies – in Venezuela there is a clear understanding of what is occurring. They still
3 do have access to CNN International. I assure you, based on my Twitter feed and other
4 social media outlets, that they are well aware of this vote here today, on the ground, in
5 the street, and that the people of Venezuela will see this for what it is, and that is, the
6 people of the United States of America are on their side, on the side of their aspirations.
7 And I think that is very important, now and for the future, as well.

8 So, I would hope that would persuade the members of the committee to support
9 this measure here today.

10 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Is there anyone else who seeks to comment?

11 Yes, Senator Johnson.

12 **SENATOR JOHNSON.** I just want to say I appreciate the fact that you included my
13 amendment to really provide information, trying to combat the propaganda, you know,
14 particularly in this situation in Venezuela. I think that might help the situation we are
15 talking about here. I am equally concerned, I notice, that the Venezuelan government is
16 going to complain to the United Nations. And they are always going to do that, no
17 matter what we do. When we do nothing, they are going to accuse the United States.
18 So, it just shows how incredibly important it is that we actually engage in a far more
19 robust fashion in providing information, whether it is Venezuela, whether it is Ukraine,
20 because we are seeing that propaganda has been incredibly successful in eastern
21 Ukraine, in Crimea.

22 So, again, I just appreciated that you included that in this package, and — having
23 the same reservations as Senator Corker, I guess I come down on the other side.

24 And my only other concern about this bill is that we do authorize \$15 million
25 more spending that is not offset. CBO's not scoring it. I am not exactly quite sure what

1 that is. But, I would encourage, certainly when this thing comes to the Senate floor, that
2 we just seek \$15 million in repurposing.

3 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Well, I — first of all, I appreciate your efforts on getting more
4 information into Venezuela and other parts of the world. And that is why I was happy
5 to include your effort into the manager's amendment.

6 On the question of the CBO, let me just say, according to our conversations with
7 CBO, the authorization provisions do not increase the deficit and do not impact direct
8 spending or revenue. So, I will look forward to continuing the work with members
9 who may have a concern about that as we move to the floor.

10 Is there any other member who wishes to speak on the bill?

11 **SENATOR CORKER.** I just want to say one other thing.

12 I really do appreciate this process, and I am glad that you have set the tone for us
13 to actually have debates in this committee. We actually have them.

14 You know, I ask my staff, at the end of debates that we have internally a lot, "Is
15 this something that advances our country's interest, or is this something that just makes
16 us feel good?" I will tell you that voting for this bill today would make me feel really
17 good after the damning testimony that we had in our committee. And again, I may well
18 get there at some point. I just am concerned about — we have got an administration
19 that is on their heels, the country is at low, low lows. And I just, you know, want to see
20 this solved, just like everyone else here. I have the concerns that I have mentioned,
21 though, about this actually having the opposite effect that we like to have. But, I know
22 that well-meaning, thoughtful, very intelligent people have a different point of view at
23 this point, and I appreciate the debate that we have had, and I look forward to the vote
24 and thank you, again, for the way you have set these up, where we can actually debate
25 these issues.

26 **SENATOR BOXER.** Chairman Menendez, can I just speak on this for 30 seconds?

1 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Of course. Senator Boxer.

2 **SENATOR BOXER.** Thank you so much.

3 You know, Senator, I so know that debate you have within yourself.

4 **SENATOR CORKER.** Yeah.

5 **SENATOR BOXER.** But, I want you to know that I had that same attitude with the
6 Soviet movement, when some colleagues said, "Go over there, shine the light on this."
7 And I said, "Well, would it not make it worse for the people because they will be
8 highlighted, and then, you know, the Soviets will crack down?" And the answer that
9 came back from the people who were under the most duress is, "Please, please shine a
10 light on it." At the end of the day, it is what Senator Rubio said, "Shine a light on it,"
11 because then they cannot run and hide away.

12 So, I know what you are going through, because I, believe me, made that
13 transformation on many occasions.

14 **SENATOR CORKER.** Thank you.

15 **THE CHAIRMAN.** If there are no other members seeking to comment on this
16 legislation, let me move that we consider the manager's amendment.

17 All in favor of the manager's amendment, say aye.

18 [A chorus of ayes.]

19 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Opposed, say no.

20 [No response.]

21 **THE CHAIRMAN.** The ayes have it, and the manager's amendment is agreed to.

22 The question is now on S. 2142, as amended. All in favor, say aye.

23 [A chorus of ayes.]

24 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Opposed, say no.

25 (A chorus of nays.)

26 **THE CHAIRMAN.** The ayes have it, and S. 2142, as amended, is agreed to.

1 **SENATOR CORKER.** If I could recorded as a no.

2 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Senator Corker will be recorded as a no.

3 **SENATOR JOHNSON.** Please record me as a no, Mr. Chairman.

4 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Senator Johnson will also be recorded as a no.

5 **SENATOR UDALL.** Please record me as a no, Mr. Chairman.

6 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Senator Udall will be recorded as a no, as well.

7 Let me turn, while we still have a quorum here, to all of the nominees. I would
8 ask that all of the nominees be considered en bloc. Is there objection to that?

9 [No response.]

10 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Without objection, all those in favor will say aye.

11 [A chorus of ayes.]

12 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Opposed will say no.

13 [No response.]

14 **THE CHAIRMAN.** The ayes have it, and the nominations are agreed to.

15 Let me turn to S. Res. 412, Freedom of Navigation, which is a resolution that I
16 introduced to make it clear that the strong support of the United States for freedom of
17 navigation and other internationally lawful uses of sea and airspace in the Asia-Pacific
18 region, and for the peaceful diplomatic resolution of outstanding territorial and
19 maritime claims and disputes. I am pleased to have worked on this resolution and the
20 technical amendments that I am offering in a bipartisan manner with Senators Rubio,
21 Cardin, McCain, and Risch. And I know that Senator Corker, even though he is not
22 listed as a cosponsor, helped to contribute to make this a strong piece of legislation.

23 Senator Corker, do you wish to speak on this?

24 **SENATOR CORKER.** Yes. Again, thank you.

25 There are two amendments that I think have been added that try to do
26 something that is not bad. I think we are going to vote on them in just a second.

1 I just want to mention to the Chairman that, in both cases, the Law of the Sea is
2 mentioned as part of the amendment process. I know this committee has not yet
3 spoken on the Law of the Sea. And so, what you are going to have is probably some
4 people who vote no on the amendment as a result, not because of what they are trying
5 to achieve, but just the fact that we have not, as a body, said grace over the Law of the
6 Sea yet. And therefore, people are withholding support for amendments that actually
7 mention them, because that has not been done. I just want to point that out. It is not —
8 it is because of those terms being used both, I think, in your amendment and in Senator
9 Cardin's amendment.

10 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Senator Cardin, do you want to speak to the —

11 **SENATOR CARDIN.** Well, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I think it is very important that
12 we act on this today. The Shangri-La Security Conference will be next week in
13 Singapore, and maritime security will be one of the principal issues discussed among
14 the regional countries, including the United States. And we will be represented with
15 Secretary Hagel, who will be present. And I can assure you that maritime security is a
16 key issue.

17 Since the drafting of the resolution, there was a major incident between China
18 and Vietnam. And the Chairman's amendment brings the resolution that was filed up
19 to date. And I have, I think, a clarifying amendment to that.

20 In regards to the reference to the Law of the Sea, we are not a claimant in this
21 dispute. We do not take a position as to the merits on the territory. But, China and
22 Vietnam have ratified the Treaty of the Sea. So, they are bound by it. So, our reference
23 to it is only referring to the fact that China is trying to use the treaty as justification and
24 the fact that there is no justification in the treaty with reference to these actions. So, it is
25 not really our acknowledgment of the merits or demerits of the treaty, although I hope

1 we can ratify it. It is a reference to the dispute between the two principal countries
2 involved, and the reference that they make to the Treaty of the Sea.

3 **SENATOR CORKER.** Mr. Chairman, with your permission, I think that what you are
4 pointing to is one of the reasons why people have had concerns with the treaty in the
5 first place, not to say that it is not, at some point, possibly going to be ratified. But, it is
6 that very point you are making, is that there seems to be a lot of ambiguity over this
7 treaty, and people referencing what it means or does not mean.

8 Would you agree, for the purposes of your amendment, just to strike reference to
9 the Law of the Sea Treaty and keep everything else in place? And I think we have
10 tremendous approval. Probably going to pass it anyway, I understand. But, would that
11 be something that you would be willing to do?

12 **SENATOR CARDIN.** Well, I think we probably could work out language that
13 accomplishes the same thing without reference, and maybe that is something to look at.
14 I think if we leave it out, there is just a void that has been used as justification for action
15 by China. So, I do not want to appear to be weaker on China than we are right now. On
16 the other hand, I want to make it clear we are not taking a position on the territorial
17 claims.

18 So, the answer is, I am more than happy to try to work on specific language that
19 would deal with that, because I think we could probably work out this issue.

20 **SENATOR CORKER.** If I could, Mr. Chairman —

21 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Yes.

22 **SENATOR CORKER.** — I believe you have the votes to pass it, so — and I think there
23 are some recorded votes that are going to be asked for on the amendment itself. But,
24 why do not we try to work together before it goes to the floor, because my guess is, you
25 are going to want to try to hotline this at some point. Okay?

26 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Anyone else who wishes to speak to the resolution?

1 [No response.]

2 **THE CHAIRMAN.** If not, I would ask that we move the three amendments to S. 412
3 by voice vote, offered by myself and Senator Cardin. Is there objection?

4 [No response.]

5 **SENATOR CORKER.** You want separate votes on both.

6 **SENATOR CARDIN.** The Treaty of the Sea is mentioned in both the amendments. I
7 do not think it makes any difference how we vote on it. It was in the original Menendez
8 amendment, and it is in the Cardin amendment, in a somewhat different position. So, it
9 seems to me you protect yourself by voting on them en bloc.

10 **THE CHAIRMAN.** You can vote no on both.

11 **SENATOR CORKER.** Yeah, let us do that.

12 **THE CHAIRMAN.** So, we will consider all three amendments en bloc.

13 **SENATOR RUBIO.** Can I just ask a clarifying question —

14 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Yes.

15 **SENATOR RUBIO.** — of Senator Cardin?

16 As I understand your argument, your amendment simply raises Law of the Sea
17 for purposes of saying the Chinese are making their claims under the Law of the Sea.
18 But, even under that treaty that they have signed on to that they have ratified that they
19 claim that these rights are not legitimate.

20 **SENATOR CARDIN.** That is exactly right.

21 **SENATOR RUBIO.** Okay.

22 **SENATOR CARDIN.** That is exactly right.

23 **THE CHAIRMAN.** All right. All those in favor will say aye.

24 [A chorus of ayes.]

25 **THE CHAIRMAN.** All those opposed will say no.

26 (A chorus of nays.)

1 **THE CHAIRMAN.** The ayes have it, and the amendment is agree to.

2 The question is now on final passage of S. Res. 412, as amended. All those in
3 favor will say aye.

4 [A chorus of ayes.]

5 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Opposed, no.

6 [No response.]

7 **THE CHAIRMAN.** The ayes have it, and the resolution, as amended, is agreed to.

8 **SENATOR CORKER.** And if you could, if some members could record their votes on
9 the amendment —

10 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Any member who wishes to be recorded officially as a yes or a nay
11 will be able to do so.

12 The next order of business is S. Res. 421, a resolution expressing the gratitude
13 and appreciation of the Senate for the acts of heroism and military achievement of the
14 members of the U.S. Armed Forces who participated in the landing at Normandy on D-
15 Day of June 6th, 1944. They were and always will be our greatest generation.

16 Is there anyone who wishes to speak to this?

17 [No response.]

18 **THE CHAIRMAN.** If not, I will move the resolution be approved. All those in favor
19 will say aye.

20 [A chorus of ayes.]

21 **THE CHAIRMAN.** All those opposed will say no.

22 [No response.]

23 **THE CHAIRMAN.** The ayes have it, and the resolution is agreed to.

24 Next is a resolution supporting — S. Res. 426 — supporting of goals and ideals of
25 World Malaria Day, introduced by Senator Coons.

26 Senator Coons, do you want to speak to it?

1 **SENATOR COONS.** Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

2 I have two minor technical amendments that reflect changes requested by
3 Senator Corker. I introduce this jointly with Senator Wicker, with whom I co-chair the
4 Malaria and Neglected Tropical Conference. I introduced the resolution, with Senator
5 Wicker, on World Malaria Day. It is important to highlight the role the U.S. has played
6 in the fight to eradicate malaria, a preventable disease from which no one should be
7 dying in the 21st century. We have to keep working with the international community
8 to do more to eradicate and prevent malaria. I would appreciate the support of the
9 amendment.

10 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Senator Corker.

11 **SENATOR CORKER.** Well, thank you for your work. And I think your caucus
12 meetings can be very interesting.

13 **SENATOR COONS.** They are. I would welcome you anytime you would like to
14 attend.

15 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Is there anyone else wishing to speak on the resolution?

16 [No response.]

17 **THE CHAIRMAN.** If not, I move that we consider Senator Coons' amendments to S.
18 Res. 426 by voice vote. Without objection. All those in favor will say aye.

19 [A chorus of ayes.]

20 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Opposed will say no.

21 [No response.]

22 **THE CHAIRMAN.** The ayes have it, and the amendments are agreed to.

23 The question is now on final passage of S. Res. 426, as amended. All those in
24 favor will say aye.

25 [A chorus of ayes.]

26 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Opposed will say no.

1 [No response.]

2 **THE CHAIRMAN.** The ayes have it, the resolution, as amended, is agreed to.

3 S. Res. 451, 25th-year anniversary of Tiananmen Square, a resolution offered by
4 Senator Barrasso recalling the Government of China's forcible dispersion of those
5 peaceably assembled in Tiananmen Square 25 years ago.

6 Senator Barrasso?

7 **SENATOR BARRASSO.** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Thank you, Senator Corker, for
8 working with me to bring this, I think, very important issue to the committee today. I
9 also want to thank Senator Rubio for his co-sponsorship and for some thoughtful
10 additions that he has made to the resolution. I just recommend support.

11 Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

12 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Senator Corker?

13 **SENATOR CORKER.** Thank all of you for the way you have worked together on this.

14 **SENATOR DURBIN:** Mr. Chairman, I ask consent to be added as a cosponsor.

15 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Senator Durbin will be added, without objection.

16 Are there any other members who wishes to address the resolution?

17 [No response.]

18 **THE CHAIRMAN.** If not, I move that we consider S. Res. 451 by voice. All those in
19 favor will say aye.

20 [A chorus of ayes.]

21 **THE CHAIRMAN.** All those opposed will say no.

22 [No response.]

23 **THE CHAIRMAN.** The ayes have it, the resolution is agreed to.

24 I ask unanimous consent that staff be authorized to make technical and
25 conforming amendments, as needed. Without objection, so ordered.

26 The Clerk is ordered to favorably report the items agreed to.

1 Is there any other member — Senator Boxer?

2 **SENATOR BOXER.** Yes, Mr. Chairman.

3 Mr. Chairman, before we technically leave, I wanted to talk for a moment about a
4 bill that we were not able to bring up today. And Senator Corker's and my best efforts
5 did not work. And the reason I mention this, we are going to try to hotline this bill. It is
6 the United States-Israel Strategic Partnership Act. Very important. I introduced it a year
7 ago with Senator Blunt. We had some issues on the visa waiver program. We worked
8 those out. We now have 61 cosponsors.

9 What happened — and it is a very important bill — I will not go into all the
10 details. But, it accentuates this very important partnership we have that works both
11 ways between America and Israel. But, what happened is, there were Senators who felt
12 it was the perfect vehicle to amend with some language about the Iran nuclear
13 negotiations that are ongoing. My own view was, I did not want this to be the vehicle
14 to open yet another fierce debate on the timing of this. Some of us feel the Congress
15 already has the ability, if there is an agreement, to just work at the sanctions, that we do
16 not need any other legislation. Others felt they did need it. It was a standoff.

17 I am just disappointed, but I totally respect where Senator Corker was coming
18 from, but I feel so disappointed, after working for a year. So, I hope we can all work
19 together and get this bill hotlined and get it done, because obviously I am not going to
20 subject that bill to a major debate on a totally unrelated issue.

21 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Any other member wishing to speak to the —
22 Senator —

23 **SENATOR CORKER.** Yes. I had not planned to speak to it, but I do appreciate very
24 much the calls we had on both Friday and Monday. If you are going to have a strategic
25 partnership with Israel, it seems to me that the one issue that my friends in Israel
26 continually talk to me about is the issue of law. And so, we can strike an amendment,

1 which, by the way, in no way interferes with the process of the administration
2 negotiating it. Matter of fact, it was the most watered-down amendment I think that
3 has ever been offered on Iran. And what it did was, is — it gave Congress the ability to
4 — after an arrangement is made with Iran, to actually vote on that on the Senate and
5 House floor, a resolution of disapproval, one that did not in any way — let us say it
6 passed — it does not undermine the administration's ability to actually carry it out.
7 And it gave the Congress the ability to weigh in, and I think also caused the
8 administration to at seek input from Congress, relative to what they are doing.

9 So, I am sorry that we were unable to even be able to weigh in, in that way. I did
10 think it was a very good vehicle for that to occur. But, I just want to thank the Senator
11 from California in the way she has dealt with me and the way she has worked on this.
12 And I know we have worked together on a number of other issues, and maybe on this
13 one at some point we will, also.

14 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Senator Kaine.

15 **SENATOR KAINE.** I just wanted to thank Senator Boxer for her work on this bill. I
16 was not originally a cosponsor, because of the complexities of the visa waiver issue, and
17 I think that you guys did a great job of really working out an accommodation on that. I
18 have asked to be listed now as a cosponsor to the bill, and I thank you for working on
19 that.

20 **SENATOR BOXER.** Well, if I could just —

21 **SENATOR KAINE.** And I hope we can get to it —

22 **SENATOR BOXER.** If I could just close, just say, again, this is a bilateral bill. It does
23 — if you can bring in 100 different issues that affect Israel and America, you could talk
24 about Syria, you could talk about Iran, you could talk about, you know, the world. We
25 are trying to keep this straightforward. You know, the bilateral relationship, how we
26 strategically work together, keep it just that.

1 And again, deep respect and friend, just disagreement here. But, I hope we can
2 work together on hotlining this bill.

3 Thank you.

4 And thank you, Mr. Chairman, you were in the middle of it. Thank you.

5 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Well, that is why I get paid big bucks here.

6 [Laughter.]

7 **THE CHAIRMAN.** Let me just say — I had no intention of speaking to the record, but
8 since you have created a record, let me just say two things.

9 Number one is, obviously I am very supportive of the legislation and have
10 worked very hard with you, Senator Boxer —

11 **SENATOR BOXER.** Yes, you have.

12 **THE CHAIRMAN.** — and appreciate your leadership — to get to a point where the
13 visa waiver issues and other things have been worked in a way that I think we have a
14 sterling bill. So, lest anybody doubt, I have absolute intentions of being in support of
15 the bill. That is why I originally posted it for a vote.

16 I respect Senator Corker's view, but let me just say, my own view of that
17 amendment, which came rather late in the process, is that that —

18 **SENATOR CORKER.** It came to you as soon as the bill was noticed —

19 **THE CHAIRMAN.** But, that bill has been negotiated for some time, and the intention
20 to offer such amendment or to have such a provision, to my knowledge, was not raised
21 until after the bill was noticed for a vote.

22 But, notwithstanding that, there is one thing that I think my concern is. There is
23 no one in this Senate that I will take a backseat to when it comes to my advocacy about
24 what we need to do in Iran. I actually think that, while the intention is well merited, the
25 results is less than what the Congress presently has. I do not want a nonbinding
26 resolution on what any ultimate deal, if there is a deal to be had, takes place. I believe

1 that the administration will have to come to the Congress to either give sanctions relief
2 or repeal, either one, at the end of the day, and that that is the vote that the Congress
3 will use to say whether or not they believe that any offered deal is worthy of support.
4 And so, to me, that is a very significant vote and a very meaningful vote, versus a vote
5 of — a nonbinding vote of approval or disapproval.

6 So, I think that the Ranking Member's goals and mine are similar. I just do not
7 want to water down what I believe is the stronger of the two elements, at the end of the
8 day.

9 **SENATOR CORKER.** Well, if I could, since we are speaking to it.

10 [Laughter.]

11 **SENATOR CORKER.** I want to start by saying —

12 **SENATOR BOXER.** Who gets the last word?

13 **SENATOR CORKER.** I want to start —

14 **THE CHAIRMAN.** The Chairman does.

15 [Laughter.]

16 **SENATOR CORKER.** I want to start by saying that I had a group of people in my
17 office today, very supportive of this amendment and concerned that the bill was being
18 held down as a result. And, to the Chairman, I want to say, I do not know of anybody
19 in the United States Senate that has been stronger on the issue of sanctions in Iran than
20 you have. And that was my statement to them, that is my statement to the world here
21 today. I think you have shown incredible leadership there.

22 Relative to the vote itself, we actually will have an opportunity, we hope. We
23 hope that there will be a deal consummated, one that we, as a Nation, feel is a good one.

24 The way I understand the sanctions vote may occur is, it might be paired with
25 one piece of the deal. In other words, you take the most favorable piece of the deal that
26 comes from the White House and you pair it with sanctions. And my guess is that

1 people might say, "Well, for that, we might do this." The difference is — and we will
2 hopefully have that vote — this actually gives us an opportunity to weigh in on the deal
3 at large, the whole deal together. And so, I do not think this in any way took away
4 from our rights, if they actually occur, on the sanctions vote. But, I think it actually
5 gave us a broader opportunity to weigh in on the whole deal, the whole consummation
6 of everything that is being discussed.

7 But, I understand we differ. We differ amicably. And I thank you very much,
8 again, for your strong leadership in this —

9 **THE CHAIRMAN.** I appreciate your comments. And let me just say, my view is that
10 any sanctions relief, at the end of the day, will be a statement about the underlying
11 agreement and whether or not we think it is worthy, or not.

12 **SENATOR BOXER.** I agree.

13 **THE CHAIRMAN.** With that colloquy, this hearing — meeting -- is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 2:55 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]