

Statement on Gaza Bill

March 5, 2008

Madam Speaker: I rise in opposition to H. Res. 951. As one who is consistently against war and violence, I obviously do not support the firing of rockets indiscriminately into civilian populations. I believe it is appalling that Palestinians are firing rockets that harm innocent Israelis, just as I believe it is appalling that Israel fires missiles into Palestinian areas where children and other non-combatants are killed and injured.

Unfortunately, legislation such as this is more likely to perpetuate violence in the Middle East than contribute to its abatement. It is our continued involvement and intervention – particularly when it appears to be one-sided – that reduces the incentive for opposing sides to reach a lasting peace agreement.

Additionally, this bill will continue the march toward war with Iran and Syria, as it contains provocative language targeting these countries. The legislation oversimplifies the Israel/Palestine conflict and the larger unrest in the Middle East by simply pointing the finger at Iran and Syria. This is another piece in a steady series of legislation passed in the House that intensifies enmity between the United States and Iran and Syria. My colleagues will recall that we saw a similar steady stream of provocative legislation against Iraq in the years before the US attack on that country.

I strongly believe that we must cease making proclamations involving conflicts that have nothing to do with the United States. We incur the wrath of those who feel slighted while doing very little to slow or stop the violence.