



For Immediate Release
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Contact: Carol Guthrie
202-224-4515

**Hearing Statement of Senator Max Baucus (D-Mont.)
Regarding The Iran Counter-Proliferation Act of 2007**

Earl Mountbatten said: “If the Third World War is fought with nuclear weapons, the fourth will be fought with bows and arrows.”

Few goals can be as momentous as preventing that Third World War. And central to that end is containing the proliferation of nuclear weapons to unstable or provocative regimes in strategic regions. Just such a regime is that of the Islamic Republic of Iran.

Today, we will address S. 970, the Iran Counter-Proliferation Act of 2007. This bill takes action to achieve the worthy end of a nuclear-free Iran.

S. 970 seeks this end by tightening and expanding economic sanctions against Iran. And it seeks to deter foreign countries from cooperating with Iran.

But S. 970 has its critics. Some argue that the bill will not achieve its goal. Some believe the potential negative consequences of the bill outweigh its benefits. Others argue that America should not impose unilateral sanctions on any country. Still others have expressed concerns about the potential humanitarian effects of the bill. And others — including this Senator — hope to address some WTO questions that the bill raises.

These are valid concerns. But we cannot fail to act because we have concerns. Rather, we must address and resolve the concerns.

Today, we will hear from both supporters and critics of the bill. We will seek to have a frank discussion about the effect of the bill on promoting a nuclear-free Iran. We will closely examine the trade and economic effects of this bill, including its WTO implications. And we will analyze the bill’s effect on American businesses, to be sure that we are not punishing ourselves in our efforts to deter Iran.

We will also look at the role that this bill plays in a broader multilateral sanctions regime. America is a leader in the international community. As such, we are often called upon to take tough actions to ensure the safety and security of ourselves and our allies.

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But time and experience have shown that multilateral sanctions are more effective. We should ensure that any actions that we take can be used as building blocks for broader international action to deter Iran from its nuclear ambitions.

Finally, we will examine the humanitarian effects of this bill. We must make sure that this bill does not undermine our humanitarian goals. We seek to heighten pressure on the Iranian government, not lower the living standards of the Iranian people.

I thank today's witnesses for helping us to consider the implications of this bill. I hope that they will give us their ideas about the benefits and consequences of this bill, the role of this bill in a broader multilateral sanctions regime, and the humanitarian effects of this bill.

So let us learn what S. 970 can do to help to prevent the proliferation of nuclear weapons. Let us learn what this bill means for America, our allies, and the people of Iran. And let us work to find the most effective means to lessen the threat of a nuclear-armed Iran.

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