

Knowing of your interest in foreign affairs, I wanted to bring to your attention a report released last week by the International Atomic Energy Agency indicating that Iran now possesses enough uranium to make, with added purification, one nuclear bomb. The report further noted that Iran had understated the amount of low-enriched uranium they had produced by one-third, or 460 pounds.

I am deeply troubled about the findings of this report. It is now clear that Iran has the capacity to make a nuclear bomb, a development that would have potentially catastrophic implications in the volatile Middle East. Iran supports and arms terrorists, including Hamas, has repeatedly tried to undermine our nation's mission in Iraq, and seeks to greatly expand their power in the region. Considering the country's extremist religious leadership and irrational president, Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, a nuclear Iran would represent a serious threat to our allies in the Middle East and U.S. security interests in the region and here at home.

It is true that Iran would need to enrich the uranium further and develop an effective warhead to produce a deliverable nuclear weapon. But I believe the United States and the international community should operate under the strong likelihood that Iran is seeking nuclear weapons and could develop or acquire a fully operational warhead sooner rather than later. While I appreciate the sincerity of President Obama's intention to negotiate directly with Iran's radical leadership, I do not believe we should be under any pretense that diplomatic talks alone will result in the termination of their nuclear program. As the new Administration develops our nation's policy toward Iran, I will continue to urge a strong and united international response that condemns Iran's activities and pressures the regime to completely and permanently stop their nuclear program. As part of this pressure, I believe we must keep all options on the table.