

COAL COALITION OF AFRICAN AMERICAN LEADERS COMMENTARY

COAL Commends Sen. Durbin's Support of the Iran Nuclear Agreement

CHICAGO, Illinois August 10, 2015 –

The Coalition of African American Leaders (COAL) strongly commends the senior senator from Illinois, U.S. Senator Dick Durbin, for his full-throated support of the recently completed Iran Nuclear Deal, negotiated over two years, between the U.S. (by President Obama's team), along with four other permanent members of the U.N. Security Council (Britain, France, China, Russia) plus Germany - the P5 + 1 - and Iran, to stop Iran's march towards the development of a nuclear weapon.



Congress passed legislation this past April, the Iran Nuclear Agreement Review Act of 2015, which stipulated that any deal with Iran had to be approved by vote of Congress after a review period of sixty days from the date of the final agreement. Many believe that this was done by Republicans (with the support of some Democrats) as a means of blocking an historic foreign policy victory for the President, to support the Republicans more hawkish middle east policies, as well as to demonstrate support for Israel which denounced the deal prior to actually knowing the details of the agreement.

Congress is currently in this review period. Based on an honest assessment of what is happening, beyond the expected political-speak - Republicans appear to have approached this from a strongly partisan position (i.e. they were against the deal as it was being negotiated), while democrats have taken the stance that they must review the deal in detail to determine where they stand and how they will vote.

Senator Durbin was the first high-ranking member of the Senate stepping out in support of the agreement and has emerged as the chief organizer, White House liaison and public champion for this diplomatic solution to stopping Iran from building nuclear weapons. According to reporting by Sam Stein, "[Durbin] has organized briefings, taken his case to the airwaves and meticulously encouraged the fence-sitting senators. The administration considers him its most valuable ally in the upper chamber on the deal, while colleagues describe his work as tireless and deft".

COAL has been particularly impressed with Senator Durbin's clear articulation of why he supports the deal as he has made the rounds of morning and weekend political talk shows, countering the usual talking points used by the opposition, including the prime minister of Israel (who has inserted himself into American foreign policy and politics in, what can only be described as, historically partisan and unprecedented ways).

Some analysts feel that the Senate may not be needed to keep this signature foreign policy achievement of the President alive. If Congress passes legislation to reject the deal, the president will veto it. At that point, two-thirds of each chamber will have to override the veto, and it is widely expected that the votes won't be there in the House (since Nancy Pelosi has

proven herself extremely capable of keeping her caucus focused when it comes to serious legislation and the President's signature policies and programs).

That being said, **Sen. Dick Durbin is doing his part in strongly supporting the President and the coalition of world leaders giving this diplomatic solution a chance to stop Iran from getting a nuclear weapon, versus the alternative** (Gen Martin E Dempsey told the Senate Armed Services Committee that although the nuclear deal with Iran will not prevent all dangers, it is still the best way to relieve risk of military conflict between US and Iran) **which is war.**

COAL strongly commends Senator Dick Durbin for taking this stance and following this with substantive action.

