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2D Session

H. R. 3783

To provide for a comprehensive strategy to counter Iran’s growing presence and hostile activity in the Western Hemisphere, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 18, 2012

Mr. Duncan of South Carolina (for himself, Mr. Higgins, Mr. Mack, Mr. McCaul, Mrs. Myrick, Ms. Hochul, Mr. Meehan, Mr. Canseco, Mr. King of Iowa, Mr. Hultgren, Mr. Franks of Arizona, Mr. Walsh of Illinois, Mr. Hunter, Mr. Royce, Mr. Pitts, Mrs. Blackburn, Mrs. Lummis, Mr. Austria, Mr. DesJarlais, Mr. Quayle, Mr. Culberson, Mr. Calvert, Mr. Burton of Indiana, Mr. Poe of Texas, Mr. Bilirakis, and Mr. Lamborn) introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To provide for a comprehensive strategy to counter Iran’s growing presence and hostile activity in the Western Hemisphere, and for other purposes.

1 Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-
2 tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

3 SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

4 This Act may be cited as the “Countering Iran in
5 the Western Hemisphere Act of 2012”.

6 SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

7 Congress finds the following:
(1) The United States has vital political, economic, and security interests in the Western Hemisphere.

(2) Iran is pursuing cooperation with Latin American countries by signing economic and security agreements in order to create a network of diplomatic and economic relationships to lessen the blow of international sanctions and oppose Western attempts to constrict its ambitions.

(3) According to the Department of State, Hezbollah, with Iran as its state sponsor, is considered the “most technically capable terrorist group in the world” with “thousands of supporters, several thousand members, and a few hundred terrorist operatives”, and officials from Iran’s IRGC’s Qods Force have been working in concert with Hezbollah since the 1990s.

(4) The IRGC’s Qods Force has a long history of supporting Hezbollah’s military, paramilitary, and terrorist activities, providing it with guidance, funding, weapons, intelligence, and logistical support, and in 2007, the Department of the Treasury placed sanctions on the IRGC and its Qods Force for their support of terrorism and proliferation activities.
(5) The IRGC’s Qods Force stations operatives in foreign embassies, charities, and religious and cultural institutions to foster relationships, often building on existing socio-economic ties with the well-established Shia Diaspora, and recent years have witnessed an increased presence in Latin America.

(6) According to the Department of Defense, the IRGC and its Qods Force were involved in or behind some of the deadliest terrorist attacks of the past two decades, including the 1994 attack on the AMIA Jewish Community Center in Buenos Aires, by generally directing or supporting the groups that actually executed the attacks.

(7) Reports of Iranian intelligence agents being implicated in Hezbollah-linked activities since the early 1990s suggest direct Iranian government support of Hezbollah activities in the Tri-Border Area of Argentina, Brazil, and Paraguay, and in the past decade, Iran has dramatically increased its diplomatic missions to Venezuela, Bolivia, Nicaragua, Ecuador, Argentina, and Brazil. Iran has built 17 cultural centers in Latin America, and it currently maintains 11 embassies, up from six in 2005.

(8) Iran has used its proxies in Latin America to raise revenues through illicit activities, including
drug and arms trafficking, counterfeiting, money
laundering, forging travel documents, pirating soft-
ware and music, and providing haven and assistance
to other terrorists transiting the region.

(9) According to the Department of Defense,
Iran provides support for Hamas despite ideological
differences, and there is concern that Hamas is ac-
tive in the Western Hemisphere, most notably in Ca-
racas.

(10) Bolivia, Cuba, Ecuador, Nicaragua, and
Venezuela expressed their intention to assist Iran in
breaking international sanctions signing a statement
supporting Iran’s nuclear activities and announcing
at a 2010 joint press conference in Tehran their de-
termination to “continue and expand their economic
ties to Iran” with confidence that “Iran can give a
crushing response to the threats and sanctions im-
posed by the West and imperialism”.

(11) Sophisticated narco-tunneling reportedly
resembling the types used by Hezbollah in Lebanon
have been discovered along the United States-Mexico
border, and arrested Mexican gang members enter-
ing the United States allegedly with Farsi tattoos
have led to concerns about Hezbollah’s ability to co-
operate with Mexican drug cartels to utilize smug-
gling techniques and routes in order to transport

drugs and people into the United States.

(12) Since the fall of 2008, at least 111 sus-
pects of a Hezbollah-linked international network of
drug traffickers and money launderers have been ar-
rested in Drug Enforcement Administration oper-
ations.

(13) In October 2011, the United States
charged two men, including Iranian-American
Manssor Arbabsiar, a member of the IRGC’s Qods
Force, on conspiracy to murder a foreign official
using a weapon of mass destruction in an act of ter-
rorism. Arbabsiar traveled to Mexico with the ex-
press intent to hire “someone in the narcotics busi-
ness” to carry out the assassination of the Saudi
Arabian Ambassador in the United States.

(14) The Obama Administration’s 2011 Strat-
egy for Counterterrorism does not adequately ad-
dress Iran’s growing influence and operations in the
Western Hemisphere.

SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

It shall be the policy of the United States to use all
elements of national power to counter Iran’s growing pres-
ence and hostile activity in the Western Hemisphere.
SEC. 4. REQUIREMENT OF A STRATEGY TO ADDRESS IRAN'S GROWING PRESENCE AND ACTIVITY IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate a strategy to address Iran’s growing presence and activity in the Western Hemisphere that—

(1) defines and outlines the presence and activities of Iran, the IRGC, its Qods Force, Hezbollah, and Hamas in the Western Hemisphere, including information about their leaders, goals, objectives, and areas of influence;

(2) provides an assessment of the terrain, population, ports, foreign firms, airports, borders, media outlets, financial centers, foreign embassies, charities, religious and cultural centers, and income-generating activities in the Western Hemisphere utilized by Iran, the IRGC, its Qods Force, Hezbollah, and Hamas;

(3) details operations of Iran, the IRGC, its Qods Force, Hezbollah, and Hamas within the United States, including information on financial networks, trafficking activities, and safe havens;
(4) documents the relationship of Iran, the IRGC, its Qods Force, Hezbollah, and Hamas with transnational criminal organizations and other terrorist organizations in the Western Hemisphere;

(5) describes the relationship of Iran, the IRGC, its Qods Force, Hezbollah, and Hamas with the governments in the Western Hemisphere, including military-to-military relations and diplomatic, economic, and security partnerships;

(6) assesses the Federal law enforcement capabilities, military forces, state and local government institutions, and other critical elements, such as nongovernmental organizations, of the governments in the Western Hemisphere that may organize to counter the threat posed by Iran, the IRGC, its Qods Force, Hezbollah, and Hamas;

(7) details operations of Iran, the IRGC, its Qods Force, Hezbollah, and Hamas at the United States-Mexico border and other international borders within the Western Hemisphere, including operations related to drug, human, and arms trafficking, human support networks, financial support, and technological advancements; and

(8) includes—
(A) with respect to the United States–Mexico border, in coordination with the Government of Mexico and the Secretary of Homeland Security, a plan to address resources, technology, and infrastructure to create a secure Southwest Border and prevent operatives from Iran, the IRGC, its Qods Force, Hezbollah, or Hamas from entering the United States;

(B) within Latin American countries, a multi-agency action plan including the development of strong rule-of-law institutions to provide security for the people and businesses of such countries, a counterterrorism and counter-radicalization plan within communities to isolate Iran, the IRGC, its Qods Force, Hezbollah, and Hamas from their sources of financial support, and combat terrorist activity; and

(C) incorporation of all of the elements of national power, including diplomatic, economic, and security elements, designed to counter Iran’s growing presence and hostile activity in the Western Hemisphere.

(b) DEVELOPMENT.—In developing the strategy under this section, the Secretary of State shall consult with the heads of all appropriate United States depart-
ments and agencies, including the Secretary of Defense, the Director of National Intelligence, the Secretary of Homeland Security, the Secretary of the Treasury, and the Attorney General.

(c) Form.—The strategy under this section shall be submitted in unclassified form but may include a classified annex.

SEC. 5. REPORT.

Not later than one year after the submission of the strategy required under section 4, the Secretary of State shall submit to the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives and the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate a report on the progress made toward the implementation of the strategy and a description and evaluation toward achieving the policy objective described in section 3.

SEC. 6. FUNDING FOR DEVELOPMENT AND IMPLEMENTATION OF STRATEGY TO COUNTER IRAN IN THE WESTERN HEMISPHERE.

Notwithstanding any other provision of law, funds made available to any office or bureau of the Department of State for counter-terrorism programs are authorized to be made available to carry out this Act.