



University of Connecticut Health Center
Department of Pediatrics

March 12, 2012

My name is Leonard Eisenfeld. I submit this testimony today to the Committee for Government Administration and Elections in support House Bill 5464. An Act Prohibiting State Contracts with Entities Making Certain Investments in Iran.

I am a pediatrician here at Connecticut Childrens'. February 25th marked 15 years since my son Matthew was murdered by a Palestinian suicide bomber on a city bus in Jerusalem, Israel. The bombing claimed 26 lives including Matthew and his girlfriend, Sara Duker, a brilliant, young woman from New Jersey. The bombing was carried out by Hamas. The orders for this act of terrorism, training, and funding came from Iran. This information was given to us originally by the State Department of the United States. It was confirmed proudly and unapologetically in a confession by Hassan Salameh, the mastermind behind this particular mission. Salameh is serving multiple life sentences in an Israeli prison since his arrest and conviction of crimes committed.

Matthew had recently graduated from Yale University, and Sara from Barnard. Both were graduate students studying in Israel. In the 15 years since Matthew's and Sara's deaths, our families have experienced a gamut of emotion. But the answer to our loss the way in which we have chosen to commit ourselves to keeping Matthew and Sara's memory alive, and to ensure that their lives continue to make a difference, has been through action. Matthew did not believe in moment of silence.

We have committed untold hours and resources towards working with Congress to ensure punishing legislation that stops Iran from acting as a state sponsor of terrorism. We have taken our case to U.S federal court and successfully sued Iran for damages as we were able to prove their culpability. Currently, Iran continues to bankroll the terrorists who have killed our children and gives support and sanction to those who continue to threaten the future of all our children. Cutting off funds to regimes that sponsor terrorism is an important tool in the fight against them.

When I ponder the devastation of Matt's and Sara's murder to our family, and the bereavement of the families of others' sons and daughters studying abroad or serving in our armed forces, I understand the devastation terrorism or a nuclear holocaust would mean.

House Bill 5464 is a critical step in the right direction. It allows the State of Connecticut to make the important statement that it will not support, finance, or in any way aid a country that endangers or threatens our citizens. It says that Connecticut will not support or help finance a country that sponsors or incites terrorism against citizens anywhere in the world. We urge you to join in this critical work by supporting House Bill 5464.

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