

Washington, D.C. - Congressman David Price (D-NC) today spoke on the House floor on his resolution condemning the November 6th terrorist bombing in Afghanistan and expressing condolences to the people of Afghanistan and the members of its Parliament.

The bombing killed 6 Members of the Afghan Parliament. As Chairman of the House Democracy Assistance Commission, Price has been working with the Afghan Parliament to help strengthen its capacity to govern. He traveled to the country last November and met with many of the country's leaders, including dozens of parliamentarians.

See video of Congressman Price's speech [here](#). The text of his speech follows as well.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 811, to offer a message of solidarity to the people of Afghanistan.

The House Democracy Assistance Commission, which I chair at present and which our colleague, Mr. Dreier, chaired in the previous Congress, has worked in partnership with the Wolesi Jirga, the Afghan Parliament's equivalent of the House of Representatives, for the last two years. In the course of that partnership, we have had the opportunity to travel to Afghanistan and to meet with a range of Afghan leaders, including dozens of Members of the Wolesi Jirga.

We have been profoundly impressed by the courage and commitment of the Afghan people, who are striving against long odds to radically transform their society. Their nation has been at war or under attack for nearly all of the last thirty years, and yet they have faced down those who would deny them political and personal freedoms and have continued on course, to build a democratic and secure nation.

None have demonstrated this dedication more than the members of the Wolesi Jirga. Afghan

voters have selected individuals representing every aspect of the Afghan culture –Islamic scholars, Western businessmen, former communists, progressive women, and everything in between – for this remarkable assembly.

They have approached their differences in a truly democratic fashion, settling disputes through debate rather than violence. As their Speaker, Yunus Qanooni, likes to say, they now settle differences by holding up voting cards instead of guns. And now they stand together, conservatives and progressives, men and women, Tajiks and Pashtuns – all working for a better Afghanistan.

One week ago today, the Afghan democracy suffered its deadliest terrorist attack since the fall of the brutal Taliban regime. Over 50 Afghan citizens, including schoolchildren, tribal elders, and other bystanders, were killed, and over 100 more were injured.

The main target of the attack was a delegation of members of the Wolesi Jirga: a delegation that strongly represented the new democratic spirit I have described. The 18 members on the delegation represented diverse ethnic groups and religious affiliations, included men and women, and covered the full political spectrum. It was a delegation traveling to Baghlan province to reach out to the constituents that the members have sworn to serve.

After the bombing, six Wolesi Jirga members lay dead: Sayed Mustafa Kazemi, Chair of the Economic Commission of the Wolsi Jirga and former Minister of Commerce; Engineer Abdul Matin, a member from the province of Helmland; Sibgatullah Zaki, a member from the province of Takhar; Haji Sahib Rahman Hemat, a member from the province of Kunar; Nazik Mir Sarferaz, a member from the Kunduz province; and Mohammad Arif Zarif, a member from Kabul.

Many more were injured. Some of the members killed and injured were members that our House Democracy Assistance Commission met with last fall. We offer our deepest sympathies to the families and friends of these members, who died in service to their country. But I rise to say to those behind these attacks that, despite your cowardly actions, Afghanistan's democracy remains strong. And our support for Afghanistan remains unwavering.

The resolution before us condemns this horrific attack and expresses our deep condolences to

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the Afghan people, who have sacrificed so much for the cause of a free and democratic nation. It also calls upon our nation and the international community to redouble our efforts in support of Afghanistan, to turn back the forces within the country and beyond that are capable of the barbarism we witnessed last week.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

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