

# *Democratic Boycott of Netanyahu Speech to U.S. Congress Grows*

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Washington, February 26 (RHC)-- The number of American lawmakers expressing opposition against Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu's planned speech to the U.S. Congress is increasing. Top Obama administration officials and members of the Democratic Party are angry at Netanyahu over his acceptance of an invitation by House of Representatives Speaker John Boehner to address Congress without the blessing of the White House.

On Wednesday, Democratic Rep. Jan Schakowsky said she would skip Netanyahu's controversial speech to Congress. The nine-term Illinois congresswoman called on Boehner to postpone the speech.

On Tuesday, Steve Cohen, U.S. Democratic congressman from Tennessee, said he would boycott the Israeli prime minister's speech to Congress. Rep. Cohen called the address a "very dangerous game" and "political gamesmanship" by Boehner to undermine President Barack Obama. Cohen, who is Jewish, said the planned speech about Iran's nuclear

program is "high theater" in Netanyahu's re-election campaign.

Netanyahu is set to address the U.S. Congress on March 3rd to persuade American lawmakers to put additional sanctions against Iran while nuclear negotiations are under way. Cohen argued that providing such a forum to Netanyahu, "who is opposing our nation's foreign policy is beyond the pale."

The White House has also denounced the invitation of Netanyahu to Congress as a "breach of protocol" that could derail the nuclear talks with Iran.

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