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## **Members of Congress Introduce “No Russian Olympics in 2014” Resolution**

*Washington, D.C.* – Congressman Bill Shuster and Representative Allyson Schwartz (D-Pa), the Co-chairs of the House Georgia Caucus, introduced a resolution calling on the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to strip Russia of the 2014 Winter Olympics, which are scheduled to be held in Sochi, Russia, and to find a more suitable alternative location.

The resolution, H.Con.Res.421 “No Russian Olympics in 2014” outlines how Russia’s invasion of Georgia, a sovereign and democratic nation, makes it an unacceptable host for the 2014 winter games. The resolution goes on to state that the 2014 Olympic location of Sochi is only twenty miles away from the conflict zone, making it on a practical level an unacceptable location for the Olympics, and that had the (IOC) been aware of these circumstances at the time of awarding the games to Sochi that they would not have selected it as an Olympic venue.

Russia invaded Georgia on August 8, 2008, on the eve of the 2008 Summer Olympics held in China. On September 8, Russia promised the international community that it would withdraw forces from areas that its troops currently occupy outside South Ossetia and Abkhazia no less than 10 days after international monitors are in place.

“Russia’s invasion of the sovereign, democratic nation of Georgia gives the global community serious pause,” Rep. Shuster said. “Russia’s belligerent interference in dealing with regional disputes and the inner-workings of its close neighbors proves that it is not a worthy host for the Olympic Games.”

“The September 8<sup>th</sup> agreement is a positive development, but rest assured that if Russia does not abide by this agreement that we will consider potential consequences such as this resolution,” Rep. Schwartz said. “Breaking their promise would run counter to international spirit and responsibility of hosting the Olympic Games.”

"The Olympics are really the only event that enables the nations of the world to put their differences aside for a common goal. The purity of sport and the cooperation of participating nations, despite their differences, is the hallmark of the Games. Russia's

blatant violation of the long respected 'Olympic truce' should be more than enough for the IOC to join with us in choosing a more worthy venue for the 2014 Winter Olympics," Shuster added.

The resolution is starting to attract strong bipartisan support in Congress. Other members of Congress who have signed on to support the resolution include, Jim Gerlach, Thaddeus McCotter, Scott Garrett, Steve King, Phil Gingrey, Joe Pitts, Artur Davis, and Daniel Lipinski.

**The full text of the resolution follows below.**

*Calling on the International Olympic Committee to designate a new venue for the 2014 Winter Olympic Games.*

*Whereas, in July 2007, the City of Sochi in the Russian Federation was narrowly selected as the host site for the 2014 Winter Olympic Games;*

*Whereas the City of Sochi lies approximately 20 miles from the border between the Russian Federation and the Republic of Georgia;*

*Whereas, on August 8, 2008, only 400 days after the Russian Federation was selected as the host country for the 2014 Games, military forces of the Russian Federation invaded the Republic of Georgia in contravention of international law, the United Nations Charter, the principles of the Olympic Charter, and the Sochi Agreement of 1992, which governs the conduct of Russian peacekeepers in the region of South Ossetia;*

*Whereas the invasion of the Republic of Georgia by the Russian Federation coincided with the opening ceremonies of the 2008 Summer Olympic Games in Beijing, China, contributing to the perception that the occasion of the Olympics was utilized to divert international attention away from the invasion of the Republic of Georgia;*

*Whereas military forces of the Russian Federation have advanced into and attacked the territory of the Republic of Georgia, grossly exceeding any mandate of Russian peacekeepers in South Ossetia, and officials of the Government of the Russian Federation have sought to oust the democratically elected Government of the Republic of Georgia;*

*Whereas the actions of the Government of the Russian Federation contravene the principles of the Olympic Charter, which states that one of the Fundamental Principles of Olympism is to use sport toward "the harmonious development of man, with a view to promoting a peaceful society";*

*Whereas it is politically, economically, and practically untenable to hold the modern Olympic Games in close proximity to a zone of conflict;*

*Whereas the actions of the Government of the Russian Federation have created a zone of conflict less than 20 miles from the City of Sochi, the proposed site of the 2014 Winter Olympic Games;*

*Whereas there are other excellent venues available to host the 2014 Winter Olympic Games, including the cities of Salzburg, Austria, and PyeongChang, South Korea, both of which were selected as finalists to host the 2010 Winter Olympic Games and the 2014 Winter Olympic Games;*

*Whereas the cities of Jaca, Spain, Almaty, Kazakhstan, Sofia, Bulgaria, and Borjomi, Georgia, also submitted bids to the International Olympic Committee to host the 2014 Winter Olympic Games; and*

*Whereas there is still sufficient time to designate a new host city for the 2014 Winter Olympic Games and to allow the new host city adequate time to prepare to host a successful Olympics: Now, therefore, be it*

*That it is the sense of Congress that—*

*(1) the failure of the Government of the Russian Federation to respect the sovereignty and territorial borders of its neighbors has rendered the country an unacceptable host for the 2014 Winter Olympic Games;*

*(2) it is practically and financially untenable to hold the 2014 Winter Olympic Games less than 20 miles from a zone of conflict, particularly when the prospective host country has played a significant role in the escalation of that conflict;*

*(3) the International Olympic Committee would not have selected Sochi as the host city for the 2014 Winter Olympic Games if its members had anticipated that the Russian Federation would invade the Republic of Georgia; and*

*(4) the International Olympic Committee should move immediately to designate a new host city for the 2014 Winter Olympic Games.*

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