

PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A  
COMMISSION IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTA-  
TIVES TO ASSIST PARLIAMENTS IN EMERGING  
DEMOCRACIES; THE 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF  
THE CONSTITUTION OF THE REPUBLIC OF  
THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

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MARKUP  
BEFORE THE  
COMMITTEE ON  
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS  
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

ON

**H. Res. 642 and H. Con. Res. 410**

JUNE 17, 2004

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**PROVIDING FOR THE ESTABLISHMENT OF A  
COMMISSION IN THE HOUSE OF REP-  
RESENTATIVES TO ASSIST PARLIAMENTS IN  
EMERGING DEMOCRACIES; THE 25TH ANNI-  
VERSARY OF THE CONSTITUTION OF THE  
REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS**

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**THURSDAY, JUNE 17, 2004**

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,  
*Washington, DC.*

The Committee met, pursuant to call, at 10:33 a.m. in room 2172, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Henry J. Hyde [Chairman of the Committee] presiding.

Chairman HYDE. The business meeting of the Committee will come to order, and without objection, the Chairman is authorized to seek consideration of House Resolution 642, Providing for the establishment of a commission in the House of Representatives to assist parliaments in emerging democracies.

Under suspension of the rules and the Bereuter amendment to that resolution, which all the Members have before them, shall be deemed as adopted.

[H. Res. 642 and the amendment referred to follow:]

108TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. RES. 642

Providing for the establishment of a commission in the House of Representatives to assist parliaments in emerging democracies.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 13, 2004

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina (for himself, Mr. BEREUTER, and Mr. FROST) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

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## RESOLUTION

Providing for the establishment of a commission in the House of Representatives to assist parliaments in emerging democracies.

1 *Resolved,*

2 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

3 This resolution may be cited as the “House Commis-  
4 sion For Assisting Democratic Parliaments Resolution”.

5 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

6 The House of Representatives makes the following  
7 findings:

1           (1) Since its founding, the United States has  
2           championed the development of democracy around  
3           the world.

4           (2) Indeed, beginning with the Continental Con-  
5           gress and continuing through the modern Congress,  
6           representative institutions have served as a critical  
7           component through which the American people have  
8           expressed their views on policy issues and through  
9           which the power of other government branches has  
10          been balanced.

11          (3) Establishing democratic institutions in  
12          other countries is in the national interest of the  
13          United States and constitutes a goal of United  
14          States foreign policy.

15          (4) For democracies to mature and to with-  
16          stand cyclical turnover in government, strong gov-  
17          ernment institutions, particularly national legisla-  
18          tures with appropriate infrastructure, are critical.

19          (5) Furthermore, the legislative branches of  
20          governments of emerging democracies are largely  
21          comprised of new legislators, citizens from many  
22          walks of life, who face the challenges of creating new  
23          democratic systems without the benefit of previous  
24          legislative experience. The legislatures of these fledg-

1     ling democracies lack training, equipment, or re-  
2     sources to carry out their work effectively.

3             (6) Currently, many parliaments do not possess  
4     the necessary technology, such as modern computer  
5     equipment, software, or access to databases and  
6     electronic resources, to facilitate the timely flow of  
7     legislative information to lawmakers and legislative  
8     staff.

9             (7) Parliaments in fledgling democracies also  
10    frequently lack trained staff to provide nonpartisan  
11    policy information, to draft legislation, and to advise  
12    legislators on policy matters.

13            (8) Newly democratic parliaments may lack the  
14    resources to establish internal libraries, reference  
15    materials, and archiving capabilities for use by legis-  
16    lators and staff.

17            (9) From 1990 through 1996, the United  
18    States House of Representatives, in conjunction with  
19    the House Information Systems Office (later known  
20    as House Information Resources) and the Congres-  
21    sional Research Service (CRS) of the Library of  
22    Congress, provided equipment and technical assist-  
23    ance to new parliaments in Central and Eastern Eu-  
24    ropean countries, including Albania, Bulgaria, the  
25    Czech Republic, Estonia, Hungary, Latvia, Lith-



1 uania, Poland, Romania, Russia, Slovakia, and  
2 Ukraine in an effort to develop and strengthen those  
3 institutions.

4 (10) This program, commonly known as the  
5 “Frost-Solomon Task Force”, not only served the  
6 United States foreign policy goal of helping to estab-  
7 lish democratic institutions in other countries, but  
8 also developed significant goodwill in the countries in  
9 which it was implemented. The program was de-  
10 signed to improve the efficiency of parliaments and  
11 the professionalism of its members and staff, as well  
12 as to increase transparency and accountability.

13 (11) A program similar to the Frost-Solomon  
14 Task Force, which strengthens professionalism and  
15 efficiency within parliaments in democratic coun-  
16 tries, continues to be in the national interests of the  
17 United States.

18 **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT OF COMMISSION.**

19 There is established in the House of Representatives  
20 a commission to be known as the House Commission For  
21 Assisting Democratic Parliaments (hereafter in this reso-  
22 lution referred to as the “Commission”).

1 **SEC. 4. MEMBERSHIP OF COMMISSION.**

2 (a) NUMBER AND APPOINTMENT.—The Commission  
3 shall be composed of 9 Members of the House of  
4 Representatives—

5 (1) of which 5 members shall be appointed by  
6 the Speaker of the House of Representatives; and

7 (2) of which 4 members shall be appointed by  
8 the Minority Leader of the House of Representa-  
9 tives.

10 (b) TERMS OF MEMBERS OF THE HOUSE OF REP-  
11 RESENTATIVES.—Each member of the Commission shall  
12 be appointed for a term that is concurrent with the Con-  
13 gress in which the appointment is made. Such a member  
14 may be reappointed for one or more subsequent terms in  
15 accordance with the preceding sentence.

16 (c) CHAIRPERSON.—The Chairperson of the Commis-  
17 sion shall be designated by the Speaker of the House of  
18 Representatives from among the members appointed  
19 under subsection (a)(1).

20 **SEC. 5. STAFF OF COMMISSION.**

21 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall appoint  
22 and fix the pay of such personnel as the Commission con-  
23 siders appropriate.

24 (b) DETAIL OF LEGISLATIVE BRANCH EMPLOY-  
25 EES.—At the request of the Commission, the head of any  
26 office in the legislative branch may detail any of the per-

1 sonnel of that office to the Commission to assist it in car-  
2 rying out its duties under this resolution. Any individual  
3 detailed by an office to the Commission pursuant to this  
4 subsection shall retain the individual's status as an em-  
5 ployee of the office for purposes of pay and benefits.

6 (c) EMPLOYMENT OF CONSULTANTS.—The Commis-  
7 sion may employ consultants to assist in carrying out its  
8 duties as described in section 6, including individuals with  
9 expertise in development of democratic parliaments, legis-  
10 lative systems management, legislative research, par-  
11 liamentary procedure, related legislative matters, and  
12 technology systems management.

13 **SEC. 6. DUTIES OF COMMISSION.**

14 (a) STUDY.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Commission shall con-  
16 duct an annual study on the feasibility of programs  
17 of assistance for parliaments of countries described  
18 in paragraph (2) for the purpose of strengthening  
19 the parliamentary infrastructure of such countries.  
20 This study may be conducted more frequently, if the  
21 Commission so decides. The study shall assess—

22 (A) how the parliament in each country  
23 studied plays, or could reasonably be expected  
24 to play, an independent and substantive role in

1 the legislative process and government over-  
2 sight;

3 (B) how improving access to information  
4 and developing independent and objective re-  
5 search and analytical capabilities would enable  
6 the parliament in each country studied to im-  
7 prove the effectiveness of members and profes-  
8 sional staff and would increase legislative trans-  
9 parency and accountability; and

10 (C) how modern automation and office sys-  
11 tems would improve efficiency and transparency  
12 in the work of the parliament in each country  
13 studied.

14 (2) COUNTRIES DESCRIBED.—The countries re-  
15 ferred to in paragraph (1) are countries that—

16 (A) have established or are developing  
17 democratic parliaments which would benefit  
18 from assistance described in this resolution; and

19 (B) express to the United States Govern-  
20 ment an interest to receive such assistance.

21 (3) SELECTED COUNTRIES.—From the coun-  
22 tries studied, the Commission shall select one or  
23 more parliaments that it recommends should receive  
24 assistance under the provisions of this resolution,  
25 based on the criteria in paragraph (1).

1 (b) REPORT.—The Commission shall prepare and  
2 submit to the Speaker of the House of Representatives,  
3 the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, the  
4 appropriate House committees, and the Administrator of  
5 the United States Agency for International Development,  
6 an annual report on the following:

7 (1) RESULTS OF STUDY.—The results of the  
8 study conducted pursuant to subsection (a).

9 (2) COMMISSION ACTIVITIES.—In accordance  
10 with the results of such study, a proposal for the ac-  
11 tivities of the Commission in the following year, as  
12 described in subsection (c).

13 (3) RECOMMENDATIONS TO USAID.—(A) In ac-  
14 cordance with the results of such study, rec-  
15 ommendations to the Administrator of the United  
16 States Agency for International Development to de-  
17 sign and implement programs of assistance for par-  
18 liaments of selected countries, including rec-  
19 ommendations to achieve the purposes of subpara-  
20 graphs (B) through (D).

21 (B) Such programs of assistance may include—

22 (i) efforts to establish or improve existing  
23 libraries of parliaments of selected countries, in-  
24 cluding, but not limited to, providing equip-  
25 ment, Internet access, books, reference mate-

1           rials, government documents, periodical sub-  
2           scriptions and databases; and

3                   (ii) efforts to improve the efficiency and  
4           transparency of legislation and proceedings in  
5           parliaments of selected countries, including, but  
6           not limited to, providing equipment, Internet  
7           access, and desktop publishing capabilities.

8           (C)(i) In coordination with parliaments in se-  
9           lected countries, USAID should develop detailed,  
10          multiyear plans for providing equipment, strength-  
11          ening library collections, and enhancing research and  
12          analysis capabilities in those parliaments.

13                   (ii) Plans described in clause (i) should include  
14          specific goals to be achieved through the provision of  
15          assistance, estimated costs of meeting the goals, the  
16          conditions under which assistance should be pro-  
17          vided, the type of equipment and resources to be  
18          provided, and annual plans for assessing the extent  
19          to which the goals have been achieved.

20           (D) All equipment and books that are provided  
21          to selected countries should be inscribed to designate  
22          the items as gifts from the United States of Amer-  
23          ica.

1 (c) ACTIVITIES.—The Commission shall work with  
2 the parliaments of selected countries on a frequent and  
3 regular basis in order to—

4 (1) allow Commission members and staff to  
5 provide expert advice to members and staff of the  
6 parliaments of selected countries;

7 (2) enable members and staff of parliaments in  
8 selected countries to visit the House of Representa-  
9 tives and its support agencies to learn about their  
10 operations first-hand; and

11 (3) observe and provide recommendations re-  
12 garding the implementation of the assistance pro-  
13 grams described in subsection (b)(3).

14 (d) TIMING.—The Commission is not required to  
15 carry out any of its duties under this section prior to Octo-  
16 ber 1, 2005.

17 **SEC. 7. TRAVEL.**

18 Members and staff of the Commission are authorized  
19 to travel to foreign countries to carry out this resolution.

20 **SEC. 8. ROLE OF THE COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RE-**  
21 **LATIONS.**

22 It is the sense of the House of Representatives that,  
23 prior to October 1, 2005, the Committee on International  
24 Relations of the House of Representatives—

1 (1) should undertake all necessary actions to fa-  
2 cilitate the work of the Commission upon the com-  
3 mencement of its funding, including by utilizing as-  
4 sistance from the congressional support agencies,  
5 such as the Congressional Research Service of the  
6 Library of Congress, House Information Resources,  
7 and other resources of the Chief Administrative Offi-  
8 cer of the House of Representatives; and

9 (2) should consult with the Committee on Ap-  
10 propriations to determine an appropriate level of  
11 funding that will be necessary for the operations of  
12 the Commission and its activities for fiscal year  
13 2006.

14 **SEC. 9. TERMINATION.**

15 The Commission shall terminate on September 30,  
16 2009.

17 **SEC. 10. DEFINITIONS.**

18 In this resolution:

19 (1) **APPROPRIATE HOUSE COMMITTEES.**—The  
20 term “appropriate House committees” means the  
21 Committee on Appropriations, the Committee on  
22 House Administration, the Committee on Inter-  
23 national Relations, and the Committee on Rules of  
24 the House of Representatives.



1           (2) EQUIPMENT.—The term “equipment” in-  
2       cludes basic office and automation equipment (copi-  
3       ers, fax, telephone answering machines, an initial  
4       complement of personal computers and printers,  
5       software, CD-ROMs, and auxiliary storage media),  
6       and library collections and library support automa-  
7       tion, as well as the associated training and technical  
8       assistance to effectively use such equipment.

9       **SEC. 11. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

10       There are authorized to be appropriated from the ap-  
11       plicable accounts of the House of Representatives to the  
12       Commission to carry out this resolution such sums as may  
13       be necessary for each of the fiscal years 2006 through  
14       2009. No funds may be appropriated or otherwise made  
15       available to carry out this resolution (other than section  
16       8) prior to October 1, 2005.

○

**AMENDMENT TO H. RES. 642**  
**OFFERED BY MR. BEREUTER**

Page 10, strike line 20 and all that follows through line 13 on page 11 and insert the following:

1 **SEC. 8. ROLE OF COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS.**  
2 **TIONS.**

3 (a) **STUDY.**—

4 (1) **IN GENERAL.**—The Committee on International Relations of the House of Representatives shall conduct a preliminary study on the feasibility of programs of assistance for the purpose of strengthening the infrastructure of the parliaments of Albania, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Macedonia, Serbia and Montenegro, and Ukraine. To the extent appropriate, the preliminary study may also include an analysis of the feasibility of such programs of assistance for the parliaments of Afghanistan, Iraq, and such other countries as may be determined by the chairman of the Committee on International Relations after consultation with the ranking member of the Committee.

18 (2) **CRITERIA.**—In conducting the preliminary study, the Committee on International Relations

1 shall carry out an assessment of each of the par-  
2 liaments described in paragraph (1) based on the  
3 criteria described in subparagraphs (A) through (C)  
4 of section 6(a)(1).

5 (b) REPORT.—Not later than May 15, 2005, the  
6 Committee on International Relations shall prepare and  
7 submit to the Speaker of the House of Representatives,  
8 the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, the  
9 other appropriate House committees, and the Commission  
10 a report on the following:

11 (1) RESULTS OF STUDY.—The results of the  
12 preliminary study conducted pursuant to subsection  
13 (a).

14 (2) RECOMMENDATIONS.—In accordance with  
15 the results of the preliminary study, a list of one or  
16 more parliaments described in subsection (a)(1) that  
17 the Committee on International Relations rec-  
18 ommends should receive assistance under the provi-  
19 sions of this resolution beginning in fiscal year 2006.

20 (3) REQUEST FOR COMMISSION FUNDING.—A  
21 request for an appropriate level of funding that will  
22 be necessary for the operations of the Commission  
23 and its activities for fiscal year 2006.

24 (c) ASSISTANCE FROM CONGRESSIONAL SUPPORT  
25 AGENCIES.—At the request of the Chairman of the Com-

1 mittee on International Relations, congressional support  
2 agencies, such as the Congressional Research Service of  
3 the Library of Congress, House Information Resources,  
4 and other resources of the Chief Administrative Officer  
5 of the House of Representatives, shall assist the Com-  
6 mittee on International Relations in carrying out the pro-  
7 visions of this section.

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Chairman, I reserve the right to object.

Chairman HYDE. The gentleman is recognized.

Mr. BEREUTER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. I preserve the right to object and ultimately will not object and withdraw. I want to make a few remarks about the legislation and the amendment that I am offering.

As one of the three primary original co-sponsors, and the sponsors now include not only Mr. Price of North Carolina, but Mr. Lantos, Mr. Frost, and Mr. Mark Udall, I want to thank you, Mr. Chairman, for agreeing to hold this markup in such a timely fashion, and to accommodate the schedule of the Members. I also want to thank my friend, the distinguished gentleman from North Carolina, Mr. Price, for working with me in introducing this new resolution to establish the House Commission For Assisting Democratic Parliaments.

Having been involved in the Frost-Solomon task force, which undertook a similar effort a decade ago, I am enthused to offer this new initiative. Mr. Frost joins us as an original co-sponsor of this resolution, and Mr. Dreier was an original co-sponsor of an earlier version of the legislation that was introduced on February 26th of this year.

The distinguished Ranking Democratic Member of the Committee, the gentleman from California, Mr. Lantos, has also signed on as a co-sponsor, and I thank him for his support.

The Frost-Solomon task force, later known as the Solomon-Frost task force, allowed the House of Representatives to help develop needed research and infrastructure capabilities in the parliaments of the newly emerging democracies of Central and Eastern Europe.

That effort drew on the expertise of Members and staff, especially from the Congressional Research Service. The task force provided modest donations of information-related and technology-related office equipment and reference material for parliamentary libraries, thereby facilitating the establishment of independent research services.

The task force also helped those parliaments develop parliamentary procedures and legislation information systems to inform Members and the general public about parliamentary activities in a timely and open fashion.

At a modest cost, we were able to help those parliaments become effective legislatures and play their crucial part in a democratic system. And by the way, the funds for that came from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID).

Largely because of its success, the Frost-Solomon task force was terminated in 1996, however, while most of those countries that received aid have indeed become full-fledged democracies. Now many of these countries are involved in the European Union and in NATO. Others still need a helping hand, and this resolution aims to provide that assistance.

The commission itself will come into being immediately upon adoption of this resolution by the full House. However, given the current budget environment, we recognize that it would be difficult to fund its activities in the upcoming fiscal year.

Therefore, this resolution authorized the appropriations to fund the commission's activities beginning in fiscal year 2006. The

amendment that I am offering would have this Committee, the International Relations Committee, conduct a preliminary study prior to the commencement of the commission's funding and activities.

The study would examine the feasibility of assistance programs to the parliaments of Albania, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Croatia, Georgia, Macedonia, Serbia-Montenegro, and Ukraine. The parliaments of Afghanistan and Iraq might also be included in that study.

This Committee will report the findings of its study and recommend one or more of those countries to be selected to receive assistance once the commission begins its activity in fiscal year 2006.

That report would also include a request for funding for commission activities. In conducting these assessments, the Committee should draw on the expertise of congressional support agencies like the Congressional Research Service, the Library of Congress, House Information Resources, and the Chief Administrative Officer of the House.

I expect that this task will require visits to the countries involved by staff of the Committee, and of the support agencies, and certainly, ultimately, of Members of this Committee.

I was pleased to play a part in that Frost-Solomon task force in the 1990s by participating in our trips to Albania, Lithuania, Latvia, Estonia, and the Czech Republic, that reviewed the results of the assistance provided, and I think it was a remarkable success that this House had at that time.

Today we have the opportunity to further assist in the emergence of democratic parliaments by enabling the House to share its expertise and to work with USAID to provide the necessary assistance.

So this morning I urge my colleagues to vote to send House Resolution 642, the Price-Bereuter-Frost-Lantos resolution to create the House Commission For Assisting Democratic Parliaments, to the Floor.

And with that explanation, Mr. Chairman, of course I would be happy to answer any questions, but I do withdraw my objection.

Chairman HYDE. I thank the gentleman. If there are no questions or amendments, it is so ordered. Without objection, the Chairman is authorized to seek consideration of H. Con. Res. 410, Recognizing the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, under suspension of the rules.

[H. Con. Res. 410 follows:]

108TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

## H. CON. RES. 410

Recognizing the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of the Marshall Islands and recognizing the Marshall Islands as a staunch ally of the United States, committed to principles of democracy and freedom for the Pacific region and throughout the world.

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### IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 30, 2004

Mr. FLAKE (for himself, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, Mr. ROHRBACHER, Ms. BORDALLO, Mr. HOUGHTON, Ms. WATSON, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. CARDOZA, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. ACEVEDO-VILÁ, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, and Mr. CASE) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

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## CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Recognizing the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of the Marshall Islands and recognizing the Marshall Islands as a staunch ally of the United States, committed to principles of democracy and freedom for the Pacific region and throughout the world.

Whereas the Marshall Islands were ruled under a succession of colonial regimes for 400 years, including under Spanish and German rule, followed in the 20th century by Japanese rule under the League of Nations system for governance of territories;

Whereas military activities of Imperial Japan based in the Marshall Islands before and during World War II established the strategic importance of the Marshall Islands in the Pacific;

Whereas the Marshall Islands were liberated from Japanese military occupation in some of the most horrific battles of World War II, during which brave Marshallese people risked their lives to aid the Armed Forces of the United States and its allies;

Whereas in 1947 Congress approved a trusteeship agreement with the United Nations Security Council under which the United States became the administering power with plenary powers of government in the Marshall Islands;

Whereas during the United Nations trusteeship period the United States fulfilled its commitment to promote the progress of the Marshall Islands toward democratic self-government and self-determination, leading to the establishment of local self-government that culminated in a constitutional convention in which delegates representing the people of the Marshall Islands proposed that they be constituted as a self-governing nation;

Whereas in accordance with the enabling measures adopted by the United States as administering power of the Marshall Islands, which encouraged and fully supported the emergence of the Marshall Islands as a duly constituted nation based on the freely expressed will of the people, in 1979 the people of the Marshall Islands adopted their own constitution and subsequently declared their form of government to be a republic;

Whereas the Constitution of the Republic of the Marshall Islands established a parliamentary governmental system



with separation of powers and a “Bill of Rights,” guaranteeing democracy and freedom for the Marshallese people based on the rule of law, limited government, and individual liberty;

Whereas the United States and the duly constituted Government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands adopted a Compact of Free Association to define government-to-government relations between the United States and the Marshall Islands as two sovereign nations under mutually agreed terms upon termination of the United Nations trusteeship for the Marshall Islands;

Whereas the promulgation of a national constitution made possible the termination of the United Nations trusteeship in 1986 and the emergence of the Republic of the Marshall Islands as a sovereign nation in free association with the United States under the Compact of Free Association, forming an alliance that preserves the close and special political, social, economic, and military relationship between the two countries that developed during the trusteeship period;

Whereas the United States has no closer alliance with any nation or group of nations than it does with the Republic of the Marshall Islands under the Compact of Free Association, which continues the strategic partnership and role of the Marshall Islands in United States strategic programs based in the Marshall Islands, which began at the end of World War II and has continued under the trusteeship and Compact to promote the mutual security of the United States and the Marshall Islands;

Whereas the Republic of the Marshall Islands is a model for transition of formerly non-self-governing territory ravaged by war to a sovereign political status as a stable de-

mocracy, a success story for institution building and recovery from conflict not only for the Pacific region but throughout the world;

Whereas in light of the shared history of the United States and the Republic of the Marshall Islands and special relations under the Compact of Free Association, it is entirely fitting for Congress to recognize the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, recalling the importance of duly constituted self-government in the self-determination process leading to national sovereignty for the Marshall Islands; and

Whereas the Republic of the Marshall Islands has remained one of the staunchest allies of the United States during the cold war and the war on terrorism, and the voting record of the Republic of the Marshall Islands as a member state in the United Nations General Assembly is unparalleled by any other country, further demonstrating the shared commitment of the two nations to promote democracy and global peace: Now, therefore be it—

1       *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*  
2 *concurring), That Congress—*

3               (1) recognizes the 25th anniversary of the adop-  
4       tion of the Constitution of the Republic of the Mar-  
5       shall Islands; and

6               (2) recognizes the Republic of the Marshall Is-  
7       lands as a staunch ally of the United States, com-

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- 1 mitted to principles of democracy and freedom for
- 2 the Pacific region and throughout the world.

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Mr. FLAKE. Reserving the right to object.

Chairman HYDE. The gentleman reserves the right to object.

Mr. FLAKE. Mr. Chairman, I thank you for bringing this resolution forward. It recognizes the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

I have had the wonderful opportunity to travel twice now to the Marshall Islands, and to meet with President Note, their President who happens to be in Washington this week, and I think it is fitting and proper that we do this at this time.

The RMI has been a stable democracy in the Pacific region for 25 years now, and this is due in large part to the fact that the United States, during the U.N. trusteeship period, fulfilled its commitment to bring democratic self-government and self-determination for the Marshall Islands.

This led to the establishment of self-government. It culminated in a constitutional convention, in which a Constitution was put together in 1979. They have a bill of rights guaranteeing democracy and freedom of unlimited government for all the Marshallese people. And since then the Republic of the Marshall Islands has been the staunchest ally of the United States. They have supported us in the Cold War and now in the war on terrorism.

They vote with us more frequently than any other country in the world at the United Nations. Over 99 percent of the time, the Marshall Islands are with us at the U.N., and that cannot be said of any other ally that we have, or any other country, and I think it speaks well for them, and well for our relationship.

We operate now under what is called the Compact of Free Association with the Marshallese, and under that, several Marshallese citizens actually served with our armed forces in Iraq and in Afghanistan, and I think they need to be recognized for that.

So I commend the Chairman for bringing this forward, and let us recognize this historic 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Marshall Islands Constitution. So, thank you, Mr. Chairman. I withdraw my right to objection.

Chairman HYDE. I thank the gentleman, and the Chair recognizes the gentlemen from American Samoa, Mr. Faleomavaega.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Chairman, reserving the right to object, I really want to thank you for giving me this opportunity to provide some commentary to our colleagues on the Committee, and especially to express my appreciation to the gentleman from Arizona for his initiative in introducing his resolution.

In terms of our relationship with the Republic of the Marshall Islands, not only is this proposed resolution most appropriate, but it certainly was our privilege over the years to meet with the Marshallese leaders. I think more than anything that I would like to bring to the attention of my colleagues on the Committee the fact that the Marshall Islands and its people played one of the most critical roles in our efforts in winning the Cold War.

And I say this to the extent that if our colleagues are not aware, this is where we conducted our nuclear testing program. And I might say also, Mr. Chairman, that these people made tremendous sacrifices in terms of what we did to them. According to some of the documents that were recently declassified, we detonated 57 nuclear devices in these islands in the Pacific. Whereby we exploded

the first nuclear and the first hydrogen bomb in the history of mankind, and one, particularly, that I want to share with my colleagues was the one that was exploded in 1954, which was known as the Bravo Shot.

This was a hydrogen bomb that was exploded, and it was one thousand times more powerful than the two atom bombs that were dropped in Nagasaki and Hiroshima. I don't know if it would be the lack of information or sensitivity on the part of the officials of our Government, given the fact that several hundred Marshallese were subjected directly to nuclear radiation when we conducted these nuclear tests among these people.

It is most unfortunate, Mr. Chairman, but that is another issue that I want to pursue later on with our colleagues.

But I would say that this resolution not only gives recognition, but some sense of appreciation on the part of our Government, not only to the people, but to the Government of the Marshall Islands. And to commend not only the leaders, but the people of the Marshall Islands for their efforts in establishing this Constitution.

It was my privilege recently to travel with the gentleman from Arizona and several of our other colleagues to visit the Marshall Islands, and I sincerely hope that in the future that other Members of the Committee might also have that same opportunity.

The unfortunate thing, Mr. Chairman, is that every time Members visit the Islands, the media does not play a very good—I will just call it as junkets, and a bunch of Members going out on junketing in these places.

But in fact some of these very historical things that have happened and have occurred are for the benefit of our Government and our people here. And this is one classic example where the people of the Marshall Islands, I think, made a tremendous contribution in our efforts in winning the Cold War.

And the fact that our nuclear testing program took place there, and the fact that the reason that we stopped was that we found Strontium 90 in milk products in Wisconsin and Minnesota, and we had seen nuclear clouds around all over the world.

So these things are not very positive, but to the extent that we made this experiment, and the sacrifices that these good people have offered to do for the benefit of our Government and our people, I would think that the gentleman's proposed resolution is most appropriate.

And I sincerely hope that my colleagues will support the resolution, and with that, Mr. Chairman, I yield my reservation. But again I want to commend the gentleman from Arizona for his proposal, and I urge my colleagues to support this resolution. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HYDE. Thank you for your contribution. The gentleman from Iowa, Mr. Leach.

Mr. LEACH. I thank the gentleman. I don't want to prolong this. I would simply ask for unanimous consent to place a statement in the record and to clearly thank the gentleman from Arizona for a very thoughtful resolution, and to totally identify with the comments of Mr. Faleomavaega. I yield back the balance of my time.

Chairman HYDE. Well, without objection, Members may insert their remarks into the record on these two resolutions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Leach follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF THE HONORABLE JAMES A. LEACH, A REPRESENTATIVE IN  
CONGRESS FROM THE STATE OF IOWA

I support H.Con.Res. 410, recognizing the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, and thank the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. Flake) for introducing it. It is particularly fitting that we are considering the resolution this week, during the visit of President Note to Washington.

The United States and the Marshall Islands share deep bonds of history and friendship, and have enjoyed a uniquely close alliance for the past half century. That alliance was reconfirmed and extended earlier this Congress, when we considered and passed amendments to the Compact of Free Association between the U.S. and the RMI.

When the Marshall Islands adopted its constitution in 1979, it was a victory for both our peoples. The Republic of the Marshall Islands emerged as a democratic republic, committed to the rule of law and individual liberty—an important step in its transition from UN trusteeship to full independence. The people of the United States saw our shared ideals take root among our Pacific Island friends and—when full sovereignty followed in 1986—we gained a stalwart ally in the community of nations.

I commend this effort to commemorate that event and our continuing alliance with the Republic of the Marshall Islands, which deserves our unanimous support.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HYDE. Mr. Rohrabacher.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Reserving the right to an objection, I would be very brief. Let me just associate myself with the gentleman from Arizona, and also the remarks of Mr. Faleomavaega from American Samoa.

The people of the Marshall Islands have been incredible friends of the United States, and I think that it behooves us to do things such as we are in this resolution of recognizing their great friendship and the relationship that we have.

Their relationship to us has made America a safer place, and let me note that the people of the Marshall Islands are wonderful people. I have visited them, and I have several friends who come from the Marshall Islands. And they are happy to be friends of the United States, even though at times America has not done right by them, as just outlined by our friend from American Samoa. I think that we need to make sure that we reach out to them, and again this resolution does that.

And I would commend our friend from Arizona for this, and let me just say to the people of the Marshall Islands, thank you for being friends with the United States, and thank you for making our country safer, and we look forward to many years of friendship and good relations with the Marshall Islands.

Mr. BEREUTER. Would the gentleman yield under his reservation?

Mr. ROHRABACHER. I would certainly.

Mr. BEREUTER. I thank the gentleman for yielding, and the major contributions that they have made in the past have been mentioned, and I certainly associate myself with all of the remarks made by colleagues.

But beyond all of that, of course, we shouldn't forget the fact that they were on the receiving end of the Vandenberg test flights. The Kwajalein Atoll, of course, is a crucial element for us today in our anti-missile test program.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. So they still continue to make their contribution.

Mr. BEREUTER. They do, indeed, and I yield back.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you, and I will yield back as well.

Chairman HYDE. The gentlelady from California, Ambassador Watson.

Ms. WATSON. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman. Give me a second to get settled here. All right. Mr. Chairman, reserving the right to object, I want to commend Mr. Flake for his resolution recognizing the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of the Marshall Islands and recognizing the Marshall Islands as a staunch ally of the United States. The Republic of the Marshall Islands, as the resolution notes, is a model for transition of a formerly non-self-governing territory ravished by military occupation and war, to a sovereign political status as a stable democracy.

The United States has shared a special relationship with the people of the Marshall Islands under the Compact of Free Association. It is therefore most fitting to recognize the importance of the 25th anniversary of the adoption of the Constitution of the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

I commend the Republic of the Marshall Islands for its commitment to self-governance, self-determination and democratic principles, and for its continued support of the United States during the Cold War and the current war on terrorism. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, and I withdraw my objection.

Chairman HYDE. I thank the gentlelady. If there is any further—oh, Mr. Houghton of New York.

Mr. HOUGHTON. Mr. Chairman, I just would like to ask a question of Mr. Flake, or Mr. Faleomavaega, or whoever. And this is a fine statement, and it is something that we ought to do obviously with great friendship, but is this going to have any traction out there?

I mean, will it get publicized? Will people understand how we really feel, because that is the important thing there.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Will the gentleman yield?

Mr. HOUGHTON. Yes.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. I thank my good friend, the gentleman from New York, for raising that very interesting question. In fact, Mr. Chairman, it was my privilege, just yesterday, to meet with the President of the Republic of the Marshall Islands, President Note, and they shared with me several documents that were just declassified from the Department of Energy, as well as the Department of Defense. And one of these documents that was brought to my attention, Mr. Chairman, was that over the years the Islands or Atolls of Rongelap and Enewetak were primarily the only ones that have been specifically cited as where the greatest damage or harm was done by radioactive contamination of the Marshallese people.

Well, this document that I saw, Mr. Chairman, where the Department of Energy says that 50 rems is considered safe in terms of whatever radiation or exposure that a human being goes through. Mr. Chairman, I submit to the Committee, this document that I want to be made part of the record, every one of these Atolls

or Islands, where some 400 or 500 Marshallese lived when we conducted these nuclear tests, there were over 22,000 rems.

[The document referred to was not submitted prior to printing.]

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Some of these Marshallese people were subjected to 3 or 4 serious operations from iodine, and what you call "radioactive exposure" that they had been subjected to. And I want to say to the gentleman from New York, I sincerely hope that this message goes out.

We have not done enough as a government to properly compensate the loss of property, and the tremendous harm that was done to the safety and the health of these people.

And I sincerely hope, as my good friend from New York has raised, that this issue is put out more publicly, and not just the Members of Congress get their attention on this very serious issue that was just raised in the declassification of this documentation.

We were not good stewards I would submit, Mr. Chairman, when we conducted these tests, and that hundreds of Marshallese people were severely exposed to nuclear radiation without our assistance.

To this day we still have not given proper assistance for medical treatment, or even giving these people the proper compensation for the loss of their health, and everything that you can associate with our nuclear testing program that took place in the 1950s.

So with that, Mr. Chairman, I thank the gentleman for raising the issue. And I sincerely hope that the major newspapers will put the word out that we need to do a better job right now in dealing with the good people of the Marshall Islands. And I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Chairman HYDE. Does Mr. Houghton yield to Ms. Watson?

Mr. HOUGHTON. Yes.

Ms. WATSON. Thank you so much, Congressman Houghton, and thank you so much Mr. Chairman.

I want to dovetail right into the remarks that Mr. Faleomavaega just made. We traveled together back down to the Marshall Islands, as well as Micronesia, where I was stationed as an Ambassador. And we had the privilege of sitting in on one of the hearings that takes place periodically, and where the people within the island community of the Marshalls can come in and respond to the government's opportunity to be heard on the problems that they are still continuing to face.

I would like to make, really, three strong points. Number one, the Marshall Islands have had a challenge over the years with self-governance. They have finally elected a group of leaders that are adhering to democratic principles, and I commend them for that.

The second thing that I want to say is that we, as an overseeing authority under a Compact of Free Association, have really let the people down in many ways.

The third point that I want to stress is that they were ravished in that community when we tested our atomic bomb, and we flew over in a small plane, and we were able to see islands that were completely blown off the map. We were able to walk on land that is still hot.

Chairman HYDE. The gentlelady's time has expired.

Ms. WATSON. I am so sorry. If I could just close out my statement. It will take me a half-a-second.



Chairman HYDE. Without object the gentlelady is given a whole full second.

Ms. WATSON. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for indulging me. But I just want to bring some reality to this hearing, and that is that we owe these people who were moved off their land, and now they are back on their land, particularly in Rongelap.

And there really are no jobs there. Young girls are pregnant as early as 18, and the educational system has really failed them. The health care system is trying to build up.

So they are doing, with our help, the best that they can, and I commend all of us for continuing to support the Compact, and I very happily will do whatever I can to see that this Compact is affirmed and that the people are offered a future. Thank you so much, Mr. Chairman.

Chairman HYDE. Thank you, Ms. Watson. If there is no further discussion, it is so ordered, and the business meeting of the Committee is adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 10:51 a.m., the Committee was adjourned.]

