

Mr. NELSON of Florida

### **AMENDMENTS TO S. RES. 272**

Viz:

1 Strike the preamble and insert the following:

Whereas Article 88 of the Cuban Constitution provides for Cuban citizens to submit legislative proposals to the Cuban National Assembly for its consideration;

Whereas on May 10, 2002, a group of Cuban citizens led by Oswaldo Paya delivered 11,020 verified signatures to the Cuban National Assembly in support of a referendum;

Whereas Mr. Paya's petition drive is inspired by the 19th-century priest and Cuban independence hero, Padre Felix Varela, and is known as the Varela Project;

Whereas the Varela Project seeks a referendum on civil liberties, including freedom of speech, amnesty for political prisoners, support for private business, a new electoral law, and a general election;

Whereas the Varela Project is supported by 140 opposition organizations in Cuba and has received no money or support from foreign citizens or foreign governments;

Whereas the Varela Project is the largest petition drive in Cuban history;

Whereas the Varela Project is a step in moving Cuba toward achieving international standards for human rights;

Whereas the goal of United States policy in Cuba is to promote a peaceful transition to democracy; and

Whereas the Varela Project is engaged in the promotion of a peaceful transition to democracy in Cuba: Now, therefore, be it

1           Strike all after the resolving clause and insert the fol-  
2   lowing:

3   That the Senate—

4           (1) supports the constitutional right of the citi-  
5   zens of Cuba who have signed the Varela Project to  
6   petition the Cuban National Assembly for a ref-  
7   erendum;

8           (2) calls on the Cuban National Assembly to  
9   give serious consideration to the Varela Project peti-  
10   tion in accordance with Article 88 of the Cuban  
11   Constitution and to the holding of a referendum on  
12   civil liberties, including freedom of speech, an am-  
13   nesty for political prisoners, support for private busi-  
14   ness, a new electoral law, and a general election;

15           (3) praises the bravery of Oswaldo Paya and  
16   his colleagues in collecting 11,020 verified signatures  
17   in support of the Varela Project;

18           (4) calls on the Cuban government to provide  
19   its citizens with internationally accepted standards  
20   for civil and human rights, and the opportunity to  
21   vote in free and fair elections; and

22           (5) urges the President to support the right of  
23   the citizens of Cuba who have signed the Varela  
24   Project to petition the Cuban National Assembly for

1 a referendum and the peaceful transition to democ-  
2 racy.

3 SEC. 2. The Secretary of the Senate shall transmit  
4 a copy of this resolution to the President.