

107<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# H. RES. 491

Supporting the use of fair trade certified coffee.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 17, 2002

Mr. STARK (for himself, Mr. GEORGE MILLER of California, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Ms. EDDIE BERNICE JOHNSON of Texas, Ms. MCKINNEY, Ms. LEE, Ms. MILLENDER-McDONALD, Ms. WOOLSEY, Mr. DOGGETT, Mr. MCGOVERN, and Mr. FARR of California) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Government Reform, and in addition to the Committees on House Administration and the Judiciary, for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

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## RESOLUTION

Supporting the use of fair trade certified coffee.

Whereas in the context of the global economy, consumer choices affect communities and the environment throughout the world;

Whereas most small-scale coffee farmers who receive local market prices for their harvests can not meet their costs of production and are therefore forced into a cycle of poverty and debt;

Whereas dire poverty is prevalent in Africa, Asia, Latin America, and other areas of the world;

Whereas large-scale, nonsustainable coffee farming leads to environmental problems, such as the contamination of air and water supplies from pesticide poisoning and the extinction of some bird species due to the destruction of their habitats;

Whereas fair trade certified coffee is coffee that has been purchased without the participation of intermediate dealers and at a minimum price per pound of \$1.26, and therefore enables small-scale farmers to sustain their farms and to avoid debt;

Whereas TransFair USA, a nonprofit organization, is a fair trade certification organization in the United States, has certified over 13,000,000 pounds of fair trade coffee since its founding in 1998, and has worked with more than 130 companies to generate more than \$10,000,000 in additional income for small coffee farmers;

Whereas other organizations also have certification standards, some of which exceed those of TransFair USA;

Whereas TransFair USA encourages the cultivation of coffee under organic conditions and under shade canopies which preserve trees and birds;

Whereas with the profits generated from receiving a fair price, farmers can invest in community development, health care, education, and environmental responsibility; and

Whereas the Congress, the executive branch, and the judiciary have a responsibility to set a high standard of ethics with regard to their economic activities and, therefore, to ensure that the goods and services they purchase are produced in the fairest manner possible: Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved, That—*

2               (1) the United States House of Representatives  
3       recommends the restriction of coffee purchases by all  
4       executive, legislative, and judicial branch offices and  
5       entities to brands that are fair trade certified; and

6               (2) the Congress, the executive branch, and the  
7       judiciary should provide information to the public  
8       about the importance of fair trade certified coffee.

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