

## **H. Res. 482**

### ***In the House of Representatives, U. S.,***

*July 11, 2007.*

Whereas the Good Friday Agreement, signed on April 10, 1998, in Belfast, and endorsed in a referendum by the overwhelming majority of people in Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland, set forth a blueprint for lasting peace in Northern Ireland;

Whereas on May 8, 2007, leaders from the major political parties in Northern Ireland took office as part of an agreement to share power in accordance with the democratic mandate of the Good Friday Agreement;

Whereas on May 8, 2007, Ian Paisley and Martin McGuinness became Northern Ireland's first minister and deputy first minister, marking the beginning of a new era of power-sharing;

Whereas Dr. Paisley, the Democratic Unionist leader, and Mr. McGuinness, the Sinn Fein negotiator, have put aside decades of conflict and moved toward historic reconciliation and unity in Northern Ireland;

Whereas on May 8, 2007, Dr. Paisley declared, "I believe that Northern Ireland has come to a time of peace, a time when hate will no longer rule.";

Whereas Mr. McGuinness declared this new government to be "a fundamental change of approach, with parties moving

forward together to build a better future for the people that we represent”;

Whereas former British Prime Minister Tony Blair declared that “[T]oday marks not just the completion of the transition from conflict to peace, but also gives the most visible expression to the fundamental principle on which the peace process has been based. The acceptance that the future of Northern Ireland can only be governed successfully by both communities working together, equal before the law, equal in the mutual respect shown by all and equally committed both to sharing power and to securing peace. That is the only basis upon which true democracy can function and by which normal politics can at last after decades of violence and suffering come to this beautiful but troubled land.”;

Whereas the Taoiseach of Ireland, Bertie Ahern, declared that “[O]n this day, we mark the historic beginning of a new era for Northern Ireland. An era founded on peace and partnership. An era of new politics and new realities.”;

Whereas both communities have worked together in a spirit of cooperation and mutual respect to solve the problems of concern to all the people of Northern Ireland, including the decision by all the major political parties to join the Northern Ireland Police Board and support the Police Service of Northern Ireland; and

Whereas President George W. Bush, like his predecessor President William J. Clinton, has worked tirelessly to bring the parties in Northern Ireland together in support of fulfilling the promises of the Good Friday Agreement: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that—

(1) the United States stands strongly in support of the new power-sharing government in Northern Ireland;

(2) political leaders of Northern Ireland, former Prime Minister Tony Blair, and Taoiseach Bertie Ahern should be commended for acting in the best interest of the people of Northern Ireland by forming the new power-sharing government;

(3) May 8, 2007, will be remembered as an historic day and an important milestone in cementing peace and unity for Northern Ireland and a shining example for nations around the world plagued by internal conflict and violence; and

(4) the United States stands ready to support this new government and to work with the people of Northern Ireland as they strive for lasting peace for the people of Northern Ireland.

Attest:

*Clerk.*