

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 759

Recognizing the 40th Anniversary of the Mass Movement for Soviet Jewish Freedom and the 20th Anniversary of the Freedom Sunday Rally for Soviet Jewry on the Mall in Washington, DC.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 18, 2007

Mr. WAXMAN (for himself, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. BERMAN, Ms. SCHWARTZ, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mr. LEVIN, Mr. CANTOR, Mr. ROTHMAN, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. HONDA, Mr. BUTTERFIELD, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. NADLER, and Mr. ACKERMAN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the 40th Anniversary of the Mass Movement for Soviet Jewish Freedom and the 20th Anniversary of the Freedom Sunday Rally for Soviet Jewry on the Mall in Washington, DC.

Whereas, in 1964, the American Jewish Conference on Soviet Jewry (AJCSJ) was founded to spearhead a national campaign on behalf of Soviet Jewry;

Whereas, in 1964, the Student Struggle for Soviet Jewry was founded to demand freedom for Soviet Jewry;

Whereas, in 1964, thousands of college students rallied on behalf of Soviet Jewry in front of the United Nations;

Whereas Israel's victory in the 1967 Six-Day War inspired Soviet Jews to intensify their efforts to win the right to emigrate;

Whereas, in 1967, Soviets launched an anti-Zionist propaganda campaign in the state-controlled mass media, and a crackdown on Jewish autonomy, galvanizing a mass advocacy movement in the United States;

Whereas, in 1970, the Union of Councils for Soviet Jewry was founded as a coalition of local grass-roots "action" councils supporting freedom for Jews of the Soviet Union;

Whereas, in 1971, the severe sentences, including death, meted out to nine Leningrad Jews who attempted to hijack a plane to flee the Soviet Union spurred worldwide protests;

Whereas, in 1971, the National Conference on Soviet Jewry (NCSJ) succeeded the AJCSJ;

Whereas, in 1971, mass emigration of Jews from the Soviet Union began;

Whereas, in 1975, President Gerald R. Ford signed into law the Jackson-Vanik Amendment to the Trade Act of 1974, prohibiting the extension of trade benefits to countries that limit emigration, and otherwise infringe basic human rights;

Whereas, in 1978, the Congressional Wives for Soviet Jewry was founded;

Whereas, in 1982, President Ronald Reagan enacted Public Law 97-157, expressing the sense of the Congress that the Soviet Union should cease its repressive actions against those individuals who seek the freedom to emigrate or to practice their religious or cultural traditions,

drawing special attention to the hardships and discrimination imposed upon the Jewish community in the Soviet Union;

Whereas, in 1983, the bipartisan Congressional Human Rights Caucus was founded to advance the cause of human rights;

Whereas, in 1984, the Congressional Coalition for Soviet Jews was founded;

Whereas, in 1987, an estimated 250,000 people demonstrated on the Mall in Washington before the start of the Reagan-Gorbachev summit, in an unprecedented rally that helped give the issue added visibility on the national scene;

Whereas, in 1989, the Soviet Union opened its doors to the millions of Soviet Jews who had been held as virtual prisoners within their own country;

Whereas, in 1991, the Supreme Soviet passed a law that codified the right of every Soviet citizen to emigrate, precipitating massive emigration by Jews from the Soviet Union, primarily to Israel and the United States;

Whereas the hundreds of thousands of immigrants from the Soviet Union and former Soviet republics have greatly enriched their new-found homes in areas as diverse as business, professional sports, the arts, politics, and philanthropy;

Whereas, in 1992, Congress passed the Freedom Support Act, making aid for the fifteen former Soviet republics contingent on progress towards the implementation of a democratic system, and respect for human rights;

Whereas, since 2000, more than 400 independent Jewish cultural organizations and 30 Jewish day schools have been

established in the former Soviet Union, giving rise to a renewal of Jewish life;

Whereas NCSJ and its partners have performed exceptionally by continually promoting the safety and security of Jews in the former Soviet Union;

Whereas continued acts of anti-Semitism and xenophobia in the former Soviet Union are reprehensible and respect for democracy, religious freedom, and human rights in the former Soviet republics needs promotion and strengthening; and

Whereas it is the 40th anniversary of the mass movement for freedom by and on behalf of Soviet Jewry: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That Congress recognizes the 20th anniver-
2 sary of the Freedom Sunday Rally for Soviet Jews in
3 Washington, DC, which embodies the American principle
4 of citizen activism for the greater good.

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