

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 641

Recognizing the 60th anniversary of the founding of Radio Free Europe/
Radio Liberty.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 14, 2009

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself, Mr. INGLIS, Mr. McCOTTER, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, and Mr. BILIRAKIS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the 60th anniversary of the founding of Radio
Free Europe/Radio Liberty.

Whereas Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty (RFE/RL) was founded in 1949 with the mission to promote democratic values and institutions by broadcasting unbiased and factual information and ideas to audiences behind the communist “Iron Curtain”;

Whereas many East European and Russian leaders, including Vaclav Havel of the Czech Republic, and the late Boris Yeltsin of the Russian Federation, have testified to the important role RFE/RL broadcasts played in ending the Cold War;

Whereas the former President of Estonia, Lennart Meri, nominated RFE/RL for the Nobel Peace Prize in 1991;

Whereas Nobel laureate and former President of Poland, Lech Walesa testified to the role played by RFE/RL in Poland's struggle for freedom when he stated that its influence "cannot even be described. Would there be earth without the sun?";

Whereas RFE/RL programs were so comprehensive that communist authorities relied on secret transcripts of the broadcasts for information they could not obtain from the local media they themselves controlled;

Whereas RFE/RL was subjected to efforts to undermine its operations through offensive actions launched by communist regimes and intended to discredit the broadcasts;

Whereas the communist Soviet KGB and Warsaw Pact intelligence services penetrated the radio stations with their spies, jailed sources, and even resorted to violence in attempts to intimidate RFE/RL staff;

Whereas RFE/RL Bulgarian Service correspondent Georgi Markov was murdered in London in 1978, evidently by the Bulgarian communist intelligence service;

Whereas the Romanian communist security service detonated a bomb at RFE/RL's headquarters in Munich, West Germany, in 1981, critically injuring six employees;

Whereas today, after having played a significant role in the collapse of communism, RFE/RL continues to provide news, information, and open discussion of domestic and international issues to countries where free and independent media are not permitted, or are not yet fully established;

Whereas RFE/RL broadcasts in 28 languages to 30 million listeners in Eastern and Southeastern Europe, Russia, the Caucasus, the Middle East, and Central and Southwest Asia;

Whereas RFE/RL employees and freelance journalists are subject to intimidation and oppression by the authorities of regimes in many countries to which RFE/RL broadcasts; and

Whereas RFE/RL has a proven history of promoting freedom and liberty in oppressive and autocratic regimes through news broadcasts based upon the principle that the first requirement of democracy is a well-informed citizenry: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) recognizes the 60th anniversary of the
3 founding of Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty
4 (RFE/RL) and honors its contribution to promoting
5 freedom and liberty around the world; and

6 (2) commends the employees and reporters of
7 RFE/RL for their commitment to provide fair and
8 unbiased news to people living under oppressive re-
9 gimes.

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