

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 136

Expressing the sense of the Senate that the United States should initiate negotiations to enter into a free trade agreement with the country of Georgia.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 7, 2009

Mr. KERRY (for himself and Mr. LUGAR) submitted the following resolution;
which was referred to the Committee on Finance

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate that the United States should initiate negotiations to enter into a free trade agreement with the country of Georgia.

Whereas Georgia has been developing its democratic and market-economy institutions for over a decade;

Whereas the pace of democratic and economic reforms has accelerated dramatically since the Rose Revolution of 2003;

Whereas the democratically elected Government of Georgia has worked aggressively to combat corruption and increase transparency and accountability in government institutions, and should continue to do so;

Whereas Georgia has implemented a number of economic reforms, particularly in its tax and regulatory regimes;

Whereas such reforms were designed to encourage entrepreneurship and small business development;

Whereas Georgia's economic reforms have spurred strong economic growth and foreign direct investment;

Whereas the August conflict with Russia nearly halted Georgia's economic growth, depleted public resources, drove up unemployment, and left a severe humanitarian crisis in its wake;

Whereas the global financial crisis has further hindered growth and investment in Georgia;

Whereas strong economic growth and investment would provide the necessary resources for Georgia to recover quickly from the devastation of the August conflict, as well as to further strengthen democratic institutions and solidify public support for democratic governance;

Whereas a vibrant, stable democracy in the Caucasus region is in the interest of the United States;

Whereas Georgia's position along energy transit routes is of strategic importance to the United States;

Whereas Georgia has aggressively sought integration into Euro-Atlantic institutions;

Whereas closer engagement with Georgia through trade negotiations would encourage even greater reform in Georgia and build its capacity to further modernize and liberalize its economy;

Whereas Georgia is a member of the World Trade Organization; and

Whereas pursuant to an agreement between Congress and the Bush Administration reached on May 10, 2007, the United States is committed to assisting its trading part-

ners in efforts to improve standards of environmental and labor protections: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Senate that the
- 2 United States should initiate negotiations to enter into a
- 3 free trade agreement with Georgia.

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