

112TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 764

Recognizing and celebrating the 50th anniversary of Jamaica's independence.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

AUGUST 2, 2012

Ms. CLARKE of New York (for herself, Mr. RANGEL, Mrs. CHRISTENSEN, Mr. ENGEL, Ms. RICHARDSON, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. FUDGE, Mr. DAVIS of Illinois, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. WEST, Mr. RUSH, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Ms. LEE of California, and Mr. TOWNS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Recognizing and celebrating the 50th anniversary of
Jamaica's independence.

Whereas Jamaica gained its independence on August 6, 1962;

Whereas, on August 6, 2012, the island nation of Jamaica will celebrate the 50th anniversary of its independence;

Whereas after years of Spanish and subsequent British colonial rule, Jamaica, which is now a member of the British Commonwealth, finally acquired its independence from the British in 1962;

Whereas August 6, 1962, signifies this full independence and a birth of a nation;

Whereas this date also marks the date that the black, green, and gold Jamaican national flag was first raised;

Whereas the first decade of independence led successively by Prime Ministers Alexander Bustamante, Donald Sangster, and Hugh Shearer of the Jamaica Labor Party (JLP), were marked by strong economic growth;

Whereas following its first 10 years of independence, Jamaica was challenged by the effects of a global economic slowdown and a growing sense of economic inequality, which prompted the electorate to change government, electing the People's National Party (PNP) in 1972;

Whereas through these challenging times, which continued into the mid-1980s, the Jamaican people remained united in their struggles, goals, aspirations, and dreams;

Whereas Jamaica is the third largest island nation in the Caribbean and with 2,800,000 people and is the third most populous Anglophone country in the Americas, after the United States and Canada;

Whereas as the Jamaican people work to position the economy for growth and celebrate their 50th anniversary of independence, they reflect on their proud history, triumphs, and the sacrifices made by their ancestors;

Whereas the United States Government maintains close and productive relations with the Government of Jamaica;

Whereas the United States is Jamaica's most important trading partner;

Whereas from January to August 2011, United States exports to Jamaica were \$1,430,000,000 and Jamaican exports to the United States were \$601,000,000;

Whereas Jamaica is also a very popular destination for United States tourists;

Whereas Jamaican culture had a strong influence that has been well received around the world, through its music, industry, literature, athletics and sports, academia, and cuisine;

Whereas Jamaica was home to the internationally renowned musical legend Bob Marley, Marcus Garvey, Jamaica's first national hero, model, singer, and actress, Grace Jones, and model and actor Tyson Beckford;

Whereas sports and athletics are an integral part of national life in Jamaica and the athletes tend to perform to a standard well above what might ordinarily be expected of such a small country;

Whereas Jamaica served as one of the venues of 2007 Cricket World Cup and the West Indies cricket team is one of the only 10 International Cricket Council full member teams who participate in international test cricket;

Whereas the Jamaica national cricket team competes regionally, and also provides players for the West Indies Cricket Team;

Whereas over the past 6 decades, Jamaica has produced dozens of world class sprinters, among them are Olympic Gold medalist and World Champion Usain Bolt, current world record holder in the 100m for men at 9.58 seconds, and 200m for men at 19.19 seconds;

Whereas other noteworthy Jamaican sprinters include Asafa Powell, gold medal winner in the men's 2008 Olympic 4x100m, Shelley-Ann Fraser-Pryce, the first Jamaican woman in history to win an Olympic gold medal in the 100 m sprint, Arthur Wint, the first Jamaican Olympic

gold medalist in Olympic history, Donald Quarrie, Olympic gold, silver, and bronze medalist and former 200m world record holder, Deon Hemmings, Olympic gold medalist, as well as former 100m world record holder;

Whereas the Jamaican National Bobsled Team represents Jamaica in international bobsledding competitions, first gaining fame during their debut in the 1988 Winter Olympic Games in Calgary, Alberta Canada, where they were seen as underdogs, representing a tropical nation in a winter sport;

Whereas the team returned to the Winter Olympics again in 1992, 1994, and subsequent competitions;

Whereas the team's performance at the 1988 Olympics inspired the 1993 film "Cool Runnings", which was a loose depiction of real events;

Whereas Jody-Anne Maxwell from Kingston, Jamaica, was the winner of the 1998 Scripps National Spelling Bee at the age of 12, becoming the first contestant from outside the United States to win in the history of the competition;

Whereas the United States is home to a large Jamaican Diaspora community, which has contributed greatly to the fabric of United States culture and history;

Whereas prominent Jamaican Americans like former Secretary of State Collin Powell, first Caribbean American elected woman to the New York City Council, Dr. Una S.T. Clarke, writer, Malcolm Gladwell, singer and activist, Harry Belafonte, track star, Carl Lewis, current United States Ambassador to the United Nations Susan Rice, and the first female and first African-American Attorney General of California, Kamala Harris, have con-

tributed greatly to the social and political landscape of the United States;

Whereas the relationship between the United States and Jamaica is a significant partnership based in shared hemispheric objectives through security, economic growth, and prosperity;

Whereas this relationship is critical to Diasporic communities, helping to promote diplomacy and cross-cultural understanding between the two nations; and

Whereas the Jamaican people will take this opportunity to reflect on the journey that led to their independence 50 years ago, pay homage to the people that played an important role in the country's independence, marvel at the contributions of its Diaspora around the globe, and look forward the progress of this generation for an even better future: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives recog-
- 2 nizes the significance of the 50th anniversary of Jamaica's
- 3 independence to the people of Jamaica and supports the
- 4 goals and ideals of Jamaica's Independence Day.

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