

As a longstanding supporter of the special relationship between the United States and Israel, I believe the United States must remain steadfast in its commitment to help Israel defend itself, to ensure that Israelis and Palestinians feel that a viable political horizon to ending this conflict continues to exist despite the current absence of ongoing, productive negotiations, and to stand ready to help create better conditions for peace—so that real and achievable progress may prove viable in the months and years ahead.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 165.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

ENCOURAGING REUNIONS OF DIVIDED KOREAN AMERICAN FAMILIES

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 40) encouraging reunions of divided Korean American families.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 40

Whereas the Republic of Korea (hereinafter in this resolution referred to as “South Korea”) and the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea (hereinafter in this resolution referred to as “North Korea”) remain divided since the armistice agreement was signed on July 27, 1953;

Whereas the United States, which as a signatory to the armistice agreement as representing the United Nations Forces Command, and with 28,500 of its troops currently stationed in South Korea, has a stake in peace on the Korean Peninsula and is home to more than 1,700,000 Americans of Korean descent;

Whereas the division on the Korean Peninsula separated more than 10,000,000 Korean family members, including some who are now citizens of the United States;

Whereas there have been 19 rounds of family reunions between South Koreans and North Koreans along the border since 2000;

Whereas Congress signaled its interest in family reunions between United States Citizens and their relatives in North Korea in section 1265 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public Law 110-181), signed into law by President George W. Bush on January 28, 2008;

Whereas the number of more than 100,000 estimated divided family members in the United States last identified in 2001 has been significantly dwindling as many of them have passed away;

Whereas many Korean Americans are waiting for a chance to meet their relatives in North Korea for the first time in more than 60 years; and

Whereas peace on the Korean Peninsula remains a long-term goal for the Governments of South Korea and the United States, and would mean greater security and stability for the region and the world: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—

(1) encourages North Korea to allow Korean Americans to meet with their family members from North Korea; and

(2) calls on North Korea to take concrete steps to build goodwill that is conducive to peace on the Korean Peninsula.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. SHERMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material for the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

As the Republican coauthor of this measure, I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 40—a resolution I was proud to introduce alongside my good friend, Mr. CHARLIE RANGEL. As always, I appreciate the help from the gentleman from New York, the ranking member, for his assistance in bringing it to the House floor for consideration. It has been a privilege to have worked alongside one of the true champions of peace and stability on the Korean Peninsula, Mr. CHARLIE RANGEL. He is, indeed, a true patriot.

We all know about his bravery and heroism as a young Army officer in the Korean war—spending his days literally freezing behind enemy lines. While wounded, CHARLIE courageously led 40 men from his unit out of a Chinese encirclement, undoubtedly saving many, many lives. For his bravery, CHARLIE earned the Purple Heart and the Bronze Star. Yes, CHARLIE suffered for his country, but his focus has continued to also be on the suffering of the Korean people. A nation was destroyed; millions were killed; families were brutally ripped apart. CHARLIE has never forgotten that. He didn’t leave Korea behind, which is why I was happy to work with him on the cause of bringing together the many, many Korean families that have been ripped apart by war.

Sadly, Mr. Speaker, Korea remains a divided peninsula. There is a prosperous and free South Korea and a brutal, totalitarian, impoverished North Korea. This division is a calamity that is acutely felt by South Korean families that have been separated by the DMZ, but it is equally felt here by many Korean American families in the United States. In the decades since the momentous liberation of Korea, millions of Korean families have been separated from their loved ones. Today, an estimated 100,000 Korean Americans have been separated from their relatives in North Korea and have long sought an opportunity to be reunited.

Mr. Speaker, time is running out. Earlier this year, the average Korean separated by the war was 80 years old. A large number is over 90. It is far past time that these war-torn families be given one last opportunity to reunite with the family members they were separated from six decades ago. It is everyone’s hope—and, of course, of those in this body—that someday we will see Korea reunited. In the meantime, we can do what we can to encourage the reuniting of these families; so I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise to support H. Con. Res. 40. I am pleased to support this measure that was introduced by Congressman CHARLIE RANGEL of New York, and I associate myself with the chairman’s remarks in the praise of Charlie’s service not only during the Korean war, but after that war, to focus on families that are both here and in Korea who were affected by that conflict.

A decorated veteran of the Korean war, Representative RANGEL has been a tireless advocate for peace and security on the peninsula and for the Korean American community here in the United States. His achievements are many, and as he retires after 40 decades of service here in Congress, he will, of course, be missed.

What Congressman RANGEL and the many cosponsors of H. Con. Res. 40 bring forth today—154 bipartisan cosponsors, including the chair and ranking member of the committee, myself, and so many others—is a reminder not just of the complex security situation on the peninsula, but of the human dimension of a war that has not been formally ended.

As this resolution reminds us, there are 10 million people on the Korean Peninsula and around the world who are victims of this family division, and there are some 100,000 American citizens who are still waiting to see—perhaps for one last time—family members that they have not seen for 60 years, who have remained north of the 38th parallel in the aftermath of the Korean war. There are approximately 1.7 million Korean Americans here in the United States. As I mentioned, over 100,000 of them have relatives who are north of the DMZ, and I am pleased to say that over half of those Korean Americans reside in the State of California.

The Korean Americans who have been divided from their families in North Korea are now in their senior years. Time is running out for these separated families to reunite—perhaps for just one last time—with parents, siblings, children. For many, reunification will be the only contact they will have had in so many decades. As of yet, Korean Americans have not been permitted to participate in family reunions. North Korea should encourage

reunions for the sake of their own citizens who are divided family members, for Korean Americans, and for those affected by the war no matter where in the world they live.

H. Con. Res. 40 urges the North Korea regime to resume family reunification visits, which have been suspended for over a year, and to allow families that chance to get together. It also calls on North Korea to take concrete steps to build goodwill that is conducive to peace on the Korean Peninsula. This is particularly important given the nuclear weapons tests and missile tests that we have seen from the north.

The reunification of families is a goodwill gesture that can help put the world and northeast Asia on the road to peace. That is why I support this resolution and urge all of my colleagues to do the same.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DOLD).

Mr. DOLD. I thank the gentleman for yielding the time.

Mr. Speaker, this is a critically important humanitarian issue as we talk about families. Each and every one of us just got back from Thanksgiving—an opportunity for us to gather around the table with our families. I think that is something that, often, too many of us take for granted—the opportunity and the ability that we have to jump on a plane or to get on a train and go visit our families. Yet, for so many Korean families, that is something that is beyond the realm of possibility.

It is beyond the realm of possibility because, at the outbreak of the Korean war, many of the Koreans thought that this was just going to be a conflict that was not going to last very long; so families were literally separated at that time and were hoping to be reunited in a very short period of time. What we do know is that, decade after decade, these families have not been able to be reunited. We want to encourage this reuniting of families. There are so many Korean Americans who have family in the north who have not been able to see their families.

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Recently, Mr. Speaker, this last year I had an opportunity to travel to Korea and actually had an opportunity to talk to some of the families. A very small few—100 families—were going to have an opportunity to see their loved ones.

Time is of the essence. This is a humanitarian issue because more and more people are passing away and the opportunities to see their loved ones perishes. For the Korean Americans and for the Korean community, their opportunity to pay respects to those who have gone before them is also something that is critical, and they don't have the opportunity to visit them.

So I want to make sure that we stand together in a bipartisan way to encourage the opportunity for families to be able to be reunited.

I thank the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL) for his leadership on this issue. Again, anybody who has served any time in this body knows his love for the Korean people and his record in the Korean war, his heroism in that regard.

I do hope that we, today, will vote to make sure we send a strong signal that the reuniting of families is something we should all stand and be united behind.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL), the author of this resolution and a champion for the Korean American community.

(Mr. RANGEL asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. RANGEL. Mr. Speaker, I thank Congressman SHERMAN for giving me this time to speak on this important issue. I will also take this opportunity to thank Chairman ED ROYCE.

So many people ask: After 46 years, what do you consider your major accomplishments? It is hard to explain to those of us who serve in the Congress that you don't list friendships as an accomplishment. There is no question, in knowing ED ROYCE from the people's Republic of California, that he has shattered the wall between Republicans and Democrats, and conservatives and liberals, and he is an American who cares about this Congress and this country. Whether I have talked to him about Africa or about Korea, he has listened and has done the best he could to show what America really feels proud of, and that is seeking peace and justice where we find dictatorships and people destroying the lives of others.

I get so much credit for being a wounded hero in Korea. I volunteered for the Army, but I sure didn't volunteer for Korea. As a matter of fact, it always baffled me how we could go there without a declaration of war. It baffled me who could make a decision to take a country like Korea with such a beautiful history and have human beings just draw a line and say that this is north, this is south, this is the Soviets, this is the United Nations, and the United States and not realize that these are human beings, mothers and fathers, sons and daughters; that notwithstanding the fact that the south was attacked, notwithstanding that the war still continues technically today, that all people should want to see their families united when all it takes is that, yes, you may see them.

So today I thank Chairman ROYCE so much, Mr. Speaker, and this House for showing America what we are all about. Because it is ironic that we are now talking about Korean Americans, we are talking about divided families USA. We are talking about people who love this country, who fight for this

country, but they still have a place they love, and they have family that they want to see before they pass away or before their families are gone.

Isn't this really what makes America different, to find people who love their homeland like Korean Americans love Korea and, at the same time, love this country more and ask us to join with them for what? They ask for peace, equity, and all the things that we care about, but also to meet their family.

There is so much compassion in this. There is so much to show how a line can show you poverty above the line, democracy and progress below the line. But more than anything else, this body is saying today that people who God made of the same blood, the same background, and the same culture, let them meet.

So I would like to include tonight as one of those proudest days that I have served in this august body and, also, to include Representative ED ROYCE as one of the most decent human beings I have also met while serving in this body.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. CONNOLLY).

Mr. CONNOLLY. Mr. Speaker, I too join the chairman and the ranking member in saluting the gentleman from New York (Mr. RANGEL).

I remember him telling the story that he was a teenager at the outbreak of the war in Korea, living in Harlem, and didn't know where Korea was. He sure knows today. He is an iconic figure in the Korean community.

Representative RANGEL, we salute you for your incredible heroism.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 40 to encourage the reunion of divided Korean American families. The division of north and south along the 38th parallel offers one of the world's most striking dichotomies. Yet, on both sides of the demilitarized zone resides a shared pain. The pain is that of families ripped apart by the war and an enduring division of one people into two countries. Reunions are a welcome respite from that separation, but, in the end, they provide yet another reminder that family reunification on the Korean Peninsula is all too fleeting.

Many of these Americans—more than 100,000 according to the last estimate—have been waiting to reunite with their family members in North Korea. Too many have already passed away without ever realizing that hope.

This resolution encourages Pyongyang to allow those Korean Americans to meet with their families. It also calls on the North Korean regime to take steps to build goodwill that is conducive to peace in the peninsula.

Earlier this year, we passed the North Korean Sanctions and Policy Enhancement Act, which included my

amendment conditioning sanctions relief on the promotion of family reunifications for Koreans and Korean Americans.

It is vital our North Korea policy be informed with an understanding that there are human victims of this ongoing conflict in the North Korean Peninsula.

I ask my colleagues to support the resolution, which demonstrates our commitment to efforts to seek to relieve the pain of separation felt by Korean families.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I salute the author of this resolution, Representative RANGEL, and urge its adoption.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I also want to recognize the staff who have been so instrumental, not only on this resolution but also in maintaining our constructive policy toward Korea, Hannah Kim on Mr. RANGEL's staff and our committee staffers, Hunter Strupp and Jennifer Hendrixson-White.

Earlier, I noted how happy I was to have worked alongside my good friend and colleague, CHARLIE RANGEL, on this measure. As he is retiring at the end of this Congress, I want to once again recognize him as a true champion of U.S.-Korea relations. He truly is. No one, whether it was fighting for his country or advocating on behalf of so many Korean Americans, has done more for this partnership.

As Charlie has often said, since he survived the battle of Kunu-ri and led those freezing soldiers out of that encirclement, he has never, not since that day, never ever had a bad day since. Mr. Speaker, let's hope this streak continues well into the future.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. PASCRELL. Mr. Speaker, as a cosponsor of H. Con. Res. 40, I rise today in strong support of its passage.

Tragically, the division on the Korean Peninsula separated more than 10,000,000 Korean family members, including some who are now citizens of the United States. As a result, many Korean Americans have waited for over 60 years for a chance to meet their relatives in North Korea for the first time.

Although there have been 19 rounds of family reunions between South Koreans and North Koreans, instability has continued to impede the reunion of these divided families. As some family members reach the later years of their lives, time becomes an important factor in giving these families the opportunity to connect.

Congress first signaled its interest in family reunions between United States citizens and their relatives in North Korea in section 1265 of the National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2008 (Public Law 110-181), which became law on January 28, 2008. We furthered our commitment to reunification when President Barack Obama signed into law the Continuing Appropriations Act 2011 (Public Law 111-242), which urged the Special Representative on North Korea Policy to prioritize the issues involving Korean divided families.

Enabling Korean Americans to meet their family members from North Korea will help establish the goodwill to lay the foundation for peace on the Korean Peninsula. While peace on the Korean Peninsula remains a long-term goal for the United States and all stakeholders in the region, a first step towards achieving it would be to allow family members to be reunified. This would be a significant step forward for greater security and stability for the region and the world.

I urge my colleagues in the House to swiftly pass H. Con. Res. 40.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 40.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

TRANSMITTING AN ALTERNATIVE PLAN FOR PAY INCREASES FOR CIVILIAN FEDERAL EMPLOYEES COVERED BY THE GENERAL SCHEDULE AND CERTAIN OTHER PAY SYSTEMS IN JANUARY 2017—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 114-185)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, referred to the Committee on Oversight and Government Reform and ordered to be printed:

To the Congress of the United States:

I am transmitting an alternative plan for pay increases for civilian Federal employees covered by the General Schedule and certain other pay systems in January 2017. Title 5, United States Code, authorizes me to implement alternative pay plans for pay increases for civilian Federal employees covered by the General Schedule and certain other pay systems if, because of "national emergency or serious economic conditions affecting the general welfare," I view the adjustments that would otherwise take effect as inappropriate.

Civilian Federal employees made significant sacrifices as a result of the 3-year pay freeze that ended in January 2014. Since the pay freeze ended, annual adjustments for civilian Federal employees have also been lower than private sector pay increases and statutory formulas for adjustments to the General Schedule for 2014 through 2016. However, we must maintain efforts to keep our Nation on a sustainable fiscal course. This is an effort that continues to require tough choices under current economic conditions.

Under current law, locality pay increases averaging 28.49 percent and costing \$26 billion would go into effect

in January 2017. Federal agency budgets cannot sustain such increases. In my August 31, 2016, alternative pay plan submission, I noted that the alternative plan for locality payments will be limited so that the total combined cost of the 1.0 percent across-the-board base pay increase and the varying locality pay increases will be 1.6 percent of basic payroll, consistent with the assumption in my 2017 Budget. Accordingly, I have determined that under the authority of section 5304a of title 5, United States Code, locality-based comparability payments for the locality pay areas established by the President's Pay Agent, in the amounts set forth in the attached table, shall become effective on the first day of the first applicable pay period beginning on or after January 1, 2017.

The locality-based comparability payments for the locality pay rates in the attached table are based on an allocation of 0.6 percent of payroll as indicated in my August 31, 2016, alternative pay plan for adjustments to the base General Schedule. These decisions will not materially affect our ability to attract and retain a well-qualified Federal workforce.

BARACK OBAMA.
THE WHITE HOUSE, November 29, 2016.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess for a period of less than 15 minutes.

Accordingly (at 6 o'clock and 27 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

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AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. HOLDING) at 6 o'clock and 30 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, proceedings will resume on motions to suspend the rules previously postponed.

Votes will be taken in the following order:

H.R. 5422, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 4757, by the yeas and nays;

H.R. 5843, de novo.

The first electronic vote will be conducted as a 15-minute vote. Remaining electronic votes will be conducted as 5-minute votes.

FUNDING FOR THE NATIONAL HUMAN TRAFFICKING HOTLINE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The unfinished business is the vote on the motion to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5422) to ensure funding for the National Human Trafficking Hotline, and for other purposes, on which the yeas and nays were ordered.