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H. RES. 515

Commemorating the 90th birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama on July 6, 2025, as “A Day of Compassion”, and expressing support for the human rights, religious freedom, and cultural and linguistic protection of the Tibetan people.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 13, 2025

Mr. McCAUL (for himself, Mr. MCGOVERN, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. KRISHNAMOORTHY, Mr. LAWLER, Ms. SCHAKOWSKY, Mrs. KIM, and Mr. RASKIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Commemorating the 90th birthday of His Holiness the Dalai Lama on July 6, 2025, as “A Day of Compassion”, and expressing support for the human rights, religious freedom, and cultural and linguistic protection of the Tibetan people.

Whereas July 6, 2025, marks the 90th birthday of His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama;

Whereas the 14th Dalai Lama was born in north-eastern Tibet in 1935, was enthroned as the 14th incarnation in 1940, and was called upon to assume temporal leadership of Tibet in 1950 in response to a tumultuous time as the

newly established People's Republic of China sent its military to seize control of Tibet;

Whereas Communist Party of China Chairman Mao Zedong assured the Dalai Lama that Tibet would have autonomy under Chinese rule and conveyed to the Dalai Lama that Tibet's unique religious and cultural traditions would be respected, and even formalized these assurances in the 17 Point Agreement of 1951;

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China, led by the Chinese Communist Party, steadily eroded Tibet's autonomy to which it committed in the Seventeen Point Agreement through repressive political and military actions, leading to tension, resistance, and ultimately the Dalai Lama's exile in 1959;

Whereas, in March 1959, the Dalai Lama had to flee Tibet after the People's Liberation Army began shelling Lhasa and has since then been residing in India, along with tens of thousands of Tibetan refugees;

Whereas, for more than seven decades, His Holiness the 14th Dalai Lama has significantly advocated for interfaith dialogue, emphasizing tolerance, harmony, and respect among major world religions;

Whereas the Dalai Lama has led the effort to preserve the rich and unique cultural, religious, historical, and linguistic heritage of the people of Tibet while working to safeguard other endangered cultures throughout the world;

Whereas the Dalai Lama has been gravely concerned by the degraded state of the environment of Tibet and the unchecked exploitation of the natural resources of Tibet, in-

cluding fresh water, because they have implications not only for the people of Tibet, but for the whole of Asia;

Whereas, beginning in 1979, the Dalai Lama has visited various parts of the United States and subsequently gained the admiration of all levels of society in the United States;

Whereas the people of the United States have consistently expressed their appreciation for the culture and Tibetan Buddhism, including through their support of its preservation, and political and diplomatic support for the Dalai Lama in his capacity as a spiritual leader;

Whereas there is strong bipartisan support from successive Congresses and Administrations for the Dalai Lama and his vision for Tibet and the world and for a negotiated resolution between Tibet and China that leads to meaningful autonomy for Tibetans that ensures they are able to freely practice their religion, culture, and language without repercussions;

Whereas, on October 17, 2007, Congress awarded the Congressional Gold Medal to the Dalai Lama, finding in the Fourteenth Dalai Lama Congressional Gold Medal Act (Public Law 109–287) that he is recognized around the world as “a leading figure of moral and religious authority” and is “the unrivaled spiritual and cultural leader of the Tibetan people”;

Whereas followers of Tibetan Buddhists in Tibet, the United States, India, Nepal, Bhutan, Mongolia, Russia, and elsewhere look to the Dalai Lama for religious leadership and spiritual guidance;

Whereas the Universal Declaration of Human Rights holds that “[e]veryone has the right to freedom of thought,

conscience and religion,” including the freedom to change religion or belief and to practice it in private or public;

Whereas at least 159 Tibetans in Tibet are known to have self-immolated, with statements or records left by many of them calling for freedom for Tibet and the return of the Dalai Lama;

Whereas, in 1991, section 355 of the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, Fiscal Years 1992 and 1993 (Public Law 102–138) expressed the sense of Congress that Tibet “is an occupied country under the established principles of international law” and that “Tibet’s true representatives are the Dalai Lama and the Tibetan government in exile as recognized by the Tibetan people”;

Whereas, in 1961, with the support of the United States, the United Nations General Assembly recognized the Tibetan people’s “fundamental human rights and freedoms, including the right to self-determination”;

Whereas the Government of the People’s Republic of China has interfered in the identification and installation of re-incarnated leaders of Tibetan Buddhism, as part of its efforts to maintain control over Tibet, including in 1995 arbitrarily detaining the then-recently identified 11th Panchen Lama, then a six-year-old boy, and purporting to install China’s own candidate, Gyaltzen Norbu, as Panchen Lama;

Whereas, in 2011, the 14th Dalai Lama declared that the responsibility for identifying a future 15th Dalai Lama will rest with officials of Gaden Phodrang, the Dalai Lama’s office, and that “apart from the reincarnation recognized through such legitimate methods, no recognition or acceptance should be given to a candidate chosen for polit-

ical ends by anyone, including those in the People’s Republic of China”;

Whereas, in 2011, the 14th Dalai Lama initiated a historic devolution of power to the Central Tibetan Administration (CTA) in which he formally renounced his political role, transferring full democratic governance to an elected Tibetan leadership, thereby ensuring a democratic and secular political system for the Tibetan people;

Whereas the Tibetan Policy and Support Act of 2020 (sub-title E of title III of division K of Public Law 116–260) was passed, strengthening the landmark Tibetan Policy Act of 2002 (22 U.S.C. 6901 note on December 21, 2020, the Tibetan Policy and Support Act of 2020), including by—

(1) addressing the issue of water security and environmental destruction in Tibet;

(2) providing humanitarian assistance and support for Tibetans in Tibet and in exile;

(3) stipulating that the objectives of the United States Special Coordinator for Tibet include promoting “substantive dialogue without preconditions between the Government of the People’s Republic of China and the Dalai Lama, his or her representatives, or democratically elected leaders of the Tibetan community”;

(4) stating that it is the policy of the United States that “decisions regarding the selection, education, and veneration of Tibetan Buddhist religious leaders are exclusively spiritual matters that should be made by the appropriate religious authorities within the Tibetan Buddhist tradition and in the context of the will of practitioners of Tibetan Buddhism” and that the wishes of the 14th Dalai Lama “should play a key role” in the selec-

tion, education, and veneration of a future 15th Dalai Lama; and

(5) stating that it is the policy of the United States to hold accountable, including through the imposition of sanctions, any officials of the People’s Republic of China or the Chinese Communist Party who directly interfere with the identification and installation of a future Dalai Lama;

Whereas, on July 12, 2024, the Promoting a Resolution to the Tibet-China Dispute Act (Public Law 118–70) was signed into law, with the Act affirming that it is the policy of the United States that the Tibet issue must be resolved in accordance with international law by peaceful means, through dialogue without preconditions, and that China should cease propagating disinformation about Tibet’s history, and stating that it is the sense of Congress that the People’s Republic of China’s claims that Tibet has been part of the People’s Republic of China since “ancient times” are “historically inaccurate”;

Whereas the Central Tibetan Administration, the institution that represents and reflects to the greatest extent the aspirations of the Tibetan diaspora around the world, has officially decided to celebrate the 14th Dalai Lama’s 90th birth year as the “Year of Compassion”; and

Whereas the Dalai Lama has highlighted the oneness of humanity and has dedicated his life for the promotion of compassion and human values, and is considered a leader of compassion by the international community: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) recognizes “A Day of Compassion”;

1 (2) congratulates His Holiness the Dalai Lama
2 on his 90th birthday and affirms its recognition of
3 his outstanding contributions to peace, nonviolence,
4 human rights, and religious understanding;

5 (3) affirms the Tibetan people's fundamental
6 human rights and freedoms, including their right to
7 self-determination and the protection of their dis-
8 tinct religious, cultural, linguistic, and national iden-
9 tity;

10 (4) reiterates as outlined in the Tibetan Policy
11 and Support Act that the identification and installa-
12 tion of Tibetan Buddhist religious leaders are within
13 the authority of the Tibetan Buddhist faith commu-
14 nity, in accordance with their inalienable right to re-
15 ligious freedom and a future 15th Dalai Lama is a
16 matter that should be determined solely by the
17 present 14th Dalai Lama;

18 (5) reiterates that any attempt by the Govern-
19 ment of the People's Republic of China to identify
20 or install Tibetan Buddhist religious leaders, includ-
21 ing a future 15th Dalai Lama, is invalid interference
22 in the right to religious freedom of Tibetan Bud-
23 dhists around the world, including in Tibet and in
24 the United States; and

- 1 (6) encourages that this resolution be presented
- 2 to His Holiness the Dalai Lama as an expression of
- 3 esteem and respect.

