

## PERSONAL EXPLANATION

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I was unavoidably absent during some of the votes on amendments to H.R. 339, the "Personal Responsibility in Food Consumption Act." I would like the Record to reflect that, had I been present, I would have voted in the following manner:

Watt No. 6/ Scott (exempt state agency actions to enforce state consumer protection laws concerning mislabeling or other unfair and deceptive trade practices): "Yes."

Watt No. 7 (preserve the right of state courts to hear cases brought under state law): "Yes."

Andrews No. 2 (exempt manufacturers of genetically modified foods that do not disclose that the food is genetically modified from the legal immunity provided in the bill): "Yes."

Ackerman No. 1 (exempt manufacturers and sellers of foods that have not taken steps to prevent meat from being tainted with mad cow disease from the legal immunity provided in the bill): "Yes."

## ELECTION OF MEMBERS TO COMMITTEE ON GOVERNMENT REFORM

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I offer a resolution (H. Res. 553) and I ask unanimous consent for its immediate consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the resolution.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 553

*Resolved*, That the following Members be and are hereby elected to the following standing committee of the House of Representatives:

Committee on Government Reform: Mr. Tiberi and Ms. Harris.

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

There was no objection.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

## ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on additional motions to suspend the rules on which a record vote or the yeas and nays are ordered or on which a vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken tomorrow.

## COMMENDING INDIA ON ITS CELEBRATION OF REPUBLIC DAY

Mr. LEACH. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 15) commending India on its celebration of Republic Day.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 15

Whereas the Republic of India is the world's largest democracy;

Whereas on January 26, 1950, India adopted its Constitution, which formalized India as a parliamentary democracy;

Whereas the celebration of India's Republic Day on January 26th is the second most important national holiday after Independence Day;

Whereas the framers of India's Constitution were greatly influenced by the American Founding Fathers James Madison, Alexander Hamilton, and John Adams;

Whereas among the rights and freedoms provided to the people of India under its Constitution is universal suffrage for all men and women over the age of eighteen;

Whereas India's Constitution adopted the American ideals of equality for all citizens, regardless of faith, gender, or ethnicity;

Whereas the basic freedoms we cherish in America such as the freedom of speech, freedom of association, and freedom of religion are also recognized in India;

Whereas Mohandas Mahatma Gandhi is recognized around the world as the father of India's nonviolent struggle for independence;

Whereas people of many faiths, including Hindus, Muslims, Sikhs, and Christians, were united in securing India's freedom from colonial rule and have all served in various capacities in high-ranking government positions;

Whereas the Republic of India has faithfully adhered to the principles of democracy by continuing to hold elections on a regular basis on the local, regional, and national levels;

Whereas the people of the United States and the Republic of India have a common bond of shared values and a strong commitment to democratic principles; and

Whereas President George W. Bush and Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee are elected leaders of the world's two largest democracies and are actively cultivating strong ties between the United States and India: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) commends India on its celebration of Republic Day; and

(2) reiterates its support for continued strong relations between the United States and India.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER of Michigan). Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH).

## GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LEACH. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Con. Res. 15.

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of House Concurrent Resolution 15, a measure commending India on its Republic Day and reiterating congressional support for continued strong relations between India and the United States.

This thoughtful concurrent resolution was introduced by the gentleman

from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON), the distinguished head of the Indian Caucus, and our colleague on the Committee on International Relations, the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY). It was considered and adopted without amendment by the committee on February 25.

As Members are aware, in recent years the relationship between the United States and India has been fundamentally transformed in exceptionally positive ways. Thankfully, the time has long since passed when it could be said that India and America are democracies estranged. Instead, in recognition both of the end of the Cold War and India's embrace of market economics, our two great countries have not only rediscovered each other but developed a remarkable degree of amity and rapport.

The United States/India political relationship is rapidly maturing. We are having regular meetings at the highest levels of government. At the summit in Washington in November 2001, President Bush and Prime Minister Vajpayee articulated their vision of the relationship our countries should enjoy. The prime minister insightfully described it as a natural partnership.

Our deepening government-to-government relationship is complemented by a rich mosaic of expanding people-to-people ties. In many ways, the more than 2 million Indian Americans in the United States have become a living bridge between our two great democracies, bringing together our two peoples, as well as greatly enlarging the United States' understanding of India and Indian understanding of the United States.

In short, this timely resolution appropriately honors the world's largest democracy, a country with which the United States is enjoying increasingly warm ties and a people for whom Americans have a great and enduring affection.

I urge the adoption of this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I rise in strong support of this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I first would like to commend the chairman of our committee, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), for moving forward with this legislation so expeditiously.

This important resolution commends India on its celebration of Republic Day which occurs on January 26. While we may be a few weeks late in commemorating this important event, our enthusiasm for reaffirming the strong and unbreakable ties between the United States and India remain strong.

Madam Speaker, a new chapter in the bilateral relationship between the United States and India was opened with President Clinton's historic visit to India 4 years ago. President Clinton and Prime Minister Vajpayee broke

decades of ice which covered our relationship and ushered in a new and unprecedented form of cooperation between our two great democratic nations.

The most dramatic demonstration of our new friendship with India was India's immediate offer of full cooperation in the war on terrorism after the September 11 tragedy and its willingness to allow the use of Indian bases for counterterrorism operations. But in so many other ways, the tenor and tempo of our bilateral cooperation has continued to improve remarkably over the past 4 years. Security cooperation between the United States and India has increased significantly, with the United States providing funds for military assistance, counternarcotics aid, and other forms of military training. We are working with the Indian government to rationalize India's economy to promote American investment in India and to accelerate India's economic growth.

We are also working closely with the Indian government to tackle the spread of HIV/AIDS. As the executive branch moves forward with the implementations of the Global HIV/AIDS bill approved by us last year, it is critically important that funding for India be increased. In short, Madam Speaker, the United States and India are developing close partnerships on key security, political and humanitarian matters, partnerships that will further strengthen the already close ties between our two great nations. But there is no stronger relationship between the United States and India than our shared commitment to democracy and civil society. We are truly natural allies.

We must also be mindful at all times of the enormous strides taken by Prime Minister Vajpayee towards peace with Pakistan. Time and again it has been India that has reached out to its neighbor in the cause of peace. I fervently hope that this time the discussions between the two nations will finally bear fruit. India is the world's largest democracy with almost a billion people. Its democratic form of government rests solidly on the Indian constitution. So as we commemorate the day that India formally adopted its constitution, we celebrate the strength of India's democracy, the vitality of the Indian people and U.S.-Indian friendship. I urge all of my colleagues to support H. Con. Res. 15.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LEACH. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON), the chairman of the India Caucus.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I am honored to speak today as the co-chair of the Caucus on India and Indian Americans, the largest country caucus on Capitol Hill with 183 members. I am grateful for the leadership of the prior co-chairman, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE). I support this truly historic

resolution which praises India's firm commitment to democratic principles.

On January 26, 1950, after a long struggle for freedom led by Mahatma Gandhi, India began its formal existence as a parliamentary democracy. Republic Day is the second most important national holiday in India after Independence Day, which is celebrated on August 15.

India modeled its constitution after America's and both our nations believe that the freedoms enshrined in the constitution are universal for all human beings.

India's national elections occur next month, a historic occasion with more than the 600 million that voted in the last election expected to vote next month. The last national elections in 1999 had the largest voter participation of any election in world history.

India's creation and adherence to a national constitution can serve as an example to newly liberated countries like Iraq of how much can be gained by creating a constitution supported by the people and respected by democratic institutions.

India's struggles and success can be a source of inspiration to the people of Iraq. Since independence, India has struggled with high poverty and illiteracy rates, maintained a socialist economy, endured numerous conflicts with Pakistan, and sometimes even experienced internal conflicts between various religious and ethnic groups in India. Yet India has risen to the challenge every time, showing the rest of the world that a nation of more than a billion people can consistently adhere to elections at the local, state, and national levels and overcome challenges in its path.

India has dramatically reduced its poverty and illiteracy rates and recently opened its economy to the world, experiencing nearly an 8 percent economic growth during the last fiscal year. India and Pakistan have begun a composite dialogue with the prospect of a negotiated agreement to the Kashmir dispute on the horizon. And India continues to make improvements to its economic infrastructure, judicial system, and electoral process to ensure that the freedoms outlined in the constitution are truly protected for all of India's people. India is most deserving of today's congressional recognition of this faithful adherence to democracy for more than 50 years.

America and India have entered into a new era of friendship with victory in the Cold War. India as the world's largest democracy and America as the world's oldest democracy are realizing more every day that we have shared values.

I want to commend President George W. Bush for his leadership in bringing America and India closer together as allies with his vision of a new strategic partnership.

In conclusion, I would like to thank both the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH), chairman of the Subcommittee

on East Asia and the Pacific, and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), chairman of the Committee on International Relations, for allowing the committee to consider and pass this historic and important resolution. I urge my colleagues to support House Concurrent Resolution 15.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), an important member of the House Committee on International Relations.

Mr. ENGEL. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding me time.

I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 15, which commends India on its celebration of Republic Day and reiterates its support for continued strong relations between the United States and India.

My colleagues have all talked about the importance of this relationship. I for many years in the Congress have always tried to stress this relationship. I am pleased to say that I was one of the founding original members of the Indian Caucus and have remained a member of the Indian Caucus. And as it was pointed out, it is the largest caucus here on Capitol Hill, and with good reason. As my colleagues have mentioned, India and the United States share common values: the oldest democracy, the United States; and the biggest democracy, India.

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It is not easy to be a democracy for as many years as we have been a democracy and for the people of India who have struggled to be a democracy. So we have shared values and shared concerns. We have many, many Indian Americans in this country, and we celebrate our Indian American friends and what they have added to the United States of America, and that also solidifies the ties between India and the United States.

I had the pleasure of visiting India a few years ago, and I was amazed by the warmth I felt by the people who wanted to be close to Americans. During the days of the Cold War sometimes the ties between India and the United States were strained. It never made any sense to me, but since the end of the Cold War, we have moved very closely together to ensure that the ties between India and the United States are strong, remain strong and continue to get strong year by year.

It certainly makes a lot of sense. India's a strategic partner of the United States. India has the same concerns as the United States, fighting terrorism on its borders and inside its country. India stands with the United States as a strong fighter in the war against terrorism, and India also is very concerned by other countries that surround India or near India, and the United States also needs to share those concerns.

So H. Con. Res. 15, in congratulating India, points out the strong bonds between our two Nations, and those of us

in Congress on both sides of the aisle will continue to work to strengthen ties between two great democracies, India and the United States.

Mr. LEACH. Madam Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) who is a member of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, chairman emeritus of the India Caucus, as well as a leader in Congress on many Asian issues.

Mr. ROYCE. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH) for yielding me the time, and I am only going to take maybe a minute here to say that I am a cosponsor of this resolution, but I think most of the resolutions that we deal with here in this Chamber that come to this floor rightly focus on what is wrong throughout the world, whether it is the authoritarian regime of Robert Mugabe in Zimbabwe or Kim Jong Il in North Korea. In this context, I think it is proper for the House to recognize positive developments, and in this case, that positive development is the vibrant democracy that is India.

India adopted that Constitution on January 26 of 1950 that formalized her identity as a parliamentary democracy, and the framers of India's constitution were greatly influenced by our Founding Fathers. I had an opportunity to talk to one of those framers, and he made the point that many of the same freedoms that are enshrined in our Constitution are enshrined in theirs for a reason.

So today, yes, India's the world's largest democracy and that is an impressive distinction. It is an incredible commitment when we think of 600 million people going and filing their ballots in a democratic election, but the other point I think that we are focused on tonight is the fact that it is India's growth as a world power that is creating a chance for peace and for stability in south Asia.

Last month, members of the Committee on International Relations had a chance to meet with India's foreign minister to discuss the growing bilateral relationship in the areas of space and of science, and I think this resolution signals Congress' interest in furthering this important relationship.

I would also be remiss if, in closing, I did not mention the growing contribution of the Indian American community here in the United States. I have always been impressed with, when working with that community, their energy, their enthusiasm and indeed their dedication to education. Their upward social mobility through education is unmatched, and I think that that particular community possesses some of our most effective future leaders in this country.

So, with that said, I urge passage of this resolution, and I thank the gentleman for yielding me the time.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, we reserve the balance of our time.

Mr. LEACH. Madam Speaker, we have no further requests for time, and

I yield myself such time as I may consume.

In conclusion, I would simply like to express my personal appreciation for the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) and the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) for their leadership on so many Indian affairs, and particularly for this bipartisan expression of admiration for India and its achievements, and for the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), two leaders of this House on Indian affairs.

Yes, it has been noted that India is the world's largest democracy, but it also should be made clear it is one of the oldest and greatest civilizations on this planet with evidence of civil society dating back many millennium before Christ.

In the years since its modern day independence in 1947, it has produced some of the greatest leaders in modern times: Mr. Gandhi and his doctrine of nonviolence, civil disobedience. The doctrine of Sarjat Hagahoth is a great symbol and inspiration for many citizens of the globe. Mr. Nehru stood for a great international leadership of independence and neutrality, and then in the new era of Mr. Vajpayee we have an India dedicated to economic development and market forces, all of which betokens in terms of history, in terms of longevity of civilization, a modern day society that is one of the greatest on this planet, and we in this body are deeply impressed.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 15 and congratulate my colleague Mr. WILSON of South Carolina for his sponsorship of the resolution.

Madam Speaker, the resolution before us today commends India on its celebration of Republic Day and urges continued strong bilateral relations between the United States and India. But there is much more to celebrate than simply India's Republic Day. There are the commonalities between the U.S. and India, in particular both are thriving multi-cultural democracies. India is the largest and the U.S. is the oldest. This year both nations are in the midst of the great democratic tradition of elections. India's elections begin later this month and run through the beginning of April.

Beyond our common experiences with democracy, the United States and India have been growing ever closer over the last several years. Beginning with President Clinton's trip to India in 2000, the U.S.-India relationship has truly blossomed over the last several years.

In the immediate aftermath of the horrendous attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, India was the first nation to step forward and offer unqualified support and assistance to us. Just a few months later, India suffered a devastating attack in the heart of its democracy, the parliament building in New Delhi. These events underscore the fact that both nations have faced, and continue to face, serious threats from global terrorist organizations.

These unfortunate events have led to a significant expansion of the U.S.-India relation-

ship into areas where our two nations had not previously cooperated: defense and counterterrorism. Evidence of the new and intense level of cooperation in these areas can be found in the most recent joint exercises between air force units of the United States and India in central India just last month.

On the other aspects of our relationship, like the newly announced U.S.-India Strategic Partnership and a steady stream of senior level visits in both capitals speak volumes regarding the robust nature of our relationship. So it is only fitting Mr. Speaker, that the Congress, join the chorus of voices in recognizing that the oldest and largest democracies are on a new and welcome path bilaterally.

Madam Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support the resolution.

Mrs. MALONEY. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Con. Res. 15, which commends India on its celebration of Republic Day and expresses congressional support for continued strong relations between the United States and India.

As the largest democracy in the world, India has shown a genuine commitment to improving its economic ties to the United States, and the U.S. and India have formally committed to work together to build peace and security in South Asia, increase bilateral trade and investment, meet global environmental challenges, fight disease, and eradicate poverty.

There is no doubt that the close relationship between the U.S. and India is crucial to world stability and to the economic futures of both countries. India's long-term economic potential is tremendous, and the U.S. is already its largest trading and investment partner.

I am hopeful that we will foster an even closer relationship in the coming years by working together to tackle new and existing challenges.

Mr. FALOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 15, commending India on its celebration of Republic Day. India is the world's largest democracy and Republic Day is India's second most important national holiday.

India became a Republic on January 26, 1950, adopting a written Constitution and electing its first democratic parliament. Prior to independence, India was under British rule.

Today, India stands with the people of the United States. The Republic of India and the United States have a common bond of shared values and a strong commitment to democratic principles.

We are also united in the war against terrorism. As the Ranking Members of the International Relations Subcommittee. I will not rest until Pakistan makes good on its promises to end cross border terrorism, shut down its terrorist training camps, and cease the transfer of nuclear technology to rogue nations and third parties.

I commend India for its continued commitment to peace and for promoting the ideals of equality for all citizens, regardless of faith, gender or ethnicity. I also pay tribute to Mahandas Mahatma Gandhi who is recognized as the father of India's nonviolent struggle for independence.

Finally, I express my appreciation to Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee for his leadership in cultivating strong ties with the United States and for initiating historic talks with Pakistan in hopes of decreasing tensions in South Asia. I

also knowledge the contributions of His Excellency Lalit Mansingh, Ambassador of the Republic of India, who has represented the interests of India before the U.S. Congress in a manner that has strengthened U.S.-India relations.

I also applaud the efforts of Sanjay Puri, founder and Executive Director of an organization working to influence policy on issues of concern to the Indian American community. With a membership of 27,000, this organization is giving more than 2 million Indian Americans a voice in the political process and I believe both India and the United States are fortunate to have more than 27,000 Indian Americans working with us to address important issues like terrorism, trade, HIV/AIDS, and immigration.

Again, I applaud the efforts of so many and I commend India on its celebration of Republic Day.

Mr. HOYER. Madam Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this important Resolution commending the incredibly diverse, democratic nation of India on the celebration of its Republic Day.

This Resolution reiterates the overwhelming Congressional support for continued strong relations between the United States and India. And it notes India's commitment, under the Indian constitution, for universal suffrage; equality for all citizens, regardless of faith, gender, or ethnicity; and protections for freedom of speech, association and religion.

Our two nations are "natural allies," as Prime Minister Vajpayee has stated. For while our alliance is relatively young, it has already begun to flourish based on our shared values and commitment to democratic principles.

In recognition of our growing relationship, the gentleman from New York (Mr. CROWLEY) and I led a delegation of nine members of Congress to India in January.

During our trip, we were privileged to be received by a number of Mr. Vajpayee's Ministers and we engaged key policymakers in thoughtful discussions on issues ranging from Kashmir and Pakistan to this year's national elections in both India and the United States.

While we certainly discussed, and even debated, a number of issues on which our countries have legitimate differences, the lasting impressions were the broad areas of agreement and cooperation, and the strength and dynamism of the growing U.S.-India relationship.

Madam Speaker, the mutual respect demonstrated in these discussions was a clear sign of our maturing relationship and the trust between us.

For example, our armed forces now regularly participate in joint exercises involving all branches of the military, and the sale of U.S. military equipment to India approached \$200 million last year.

In the immediate aftermath of the September 11 terrorist attacks, India pledged its full cooperation and offered the use of all its military bases for counterterrorism efforts. And India continues to play a key role in stabilization and reconstruction efforts in Afghanistan.

Our economic cooperation also is noteworthy. In fact, the nearly 60% increase in total trade between the United States and India since 1996 illustrates that.

With more than 1 billion citizens, India still faces many problems. And the increasing engagement with the United States will help India to address them.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I want to commend all of my colleagues who spoke on behalf of this important resolution.

Madam Speaker, we have no further requests for time and we yield back the balance of our time.

Mr. LEACH. Madam Speaker, we yield back the balance of our time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. MILLER of Michigan). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 15.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

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EXPRESSING CONDOLENCES OF HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES FOR UNTIMELY DEATH OF MACEDONIAN PRESIDENT BORIS TRAJKOVSKI

Mr. BEREUTER. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 540) expressing the condolences and deepest sympathies of the House of Representatives for the untimely death of Macedonian President Boris Trajkovski, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 540

Whereas on February 26, 2004, President Boris Trajkovski of the Republic of Macedonia was tragically killed in a plane crash in Bosnia-Herzegovina while he was on his way to an international investment conference;

Whereas Mr. Trajkovski served Macedonia as Deputy Minister of Foreign Affairs from December 21, 1998 until he was inaugurated as President on December 15, 1999;

Whereas Mr. Trajkovski stood up for what he believed was right and moral, even when he faced opposition within Macedonia;

Whereas under Mr. Trajkovski's leadership, Macedonia was one of the first countries to publicly support Operation Iraqi Freedom and to commit troops to the effort;

Whereas during Macedonia's armed ethnic clashes Mr. Trajkovski demonstrated his willingness to work with all of Macedonia's ethnic groups, which helped to prevent a civil war;

Whereas Mr. Trajkovski was a strong believer in free markets and worked tirelessly to bring development and investment to Macedonia;

Whereas under President Trajkovski's leadership, Macedonia negotiated an agreement with the United States under Article 98 of the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court, signed the agreement on June 30, 2003, and ratified the agreement on October 16, 2003, thereby helping to ensure United States citizens will not be subject to politically motivated prosecutions;

Whereas Mr. Trajkovski worked to foster peace for the entire Balkan region and to integrate Macedonia into the international community; and

Whereas the death of Mr. Trajkovski is a tragedy for the people of Macedonia: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) expresses its deepest sympathies to the people of the Republic of Macedonia, the family of President Boris Trajkovski, and the families of the other crash victims;

(2) expresses its desire for a smooth and orderly transition of power; and

(3) expresses the solidarity of the people of the United States with the people of Macedonia and the Macedonian Government during this tragedy.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER).

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BEREUTER. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on H. Res. 540, the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, this Member rises in support of H. Res. 540, as amended, expressing the condolences and deepest sympathy of the U.S. House of Representatives upon the death of Macedonian President Boris Trajkovski. This resolution was introduced by the distinguished gentleman from Indiana (Mr. SOUDER).

On February 26, 2004, President Boris Trajkovski of the former Yugoslav republic of Macedonia was tragically killed in a plane crash over Bosnia-Herzegovina, while traveling to Moscow to attend a regional economic conference. He and eight other individuals on the aircraft died in this tragic accident. This Member understands the official State funeral was held Friday of last week in Skopje.

President Trajkovski is one of the most important reasons why Macedonia is making the progress it has made in recent years. President Trajkovski was an important leader and voice of reason in resolving the ethnic conflict that was threatening his country 3 years ago and in implementing the Ohrid peace agreement of August 2001. His leadership and moderation between opposing sides have been absolutely essential in creating the conditions for the progress that his government and his country have made since then.

He worked tirelessly to ensure that democratic values and institutions would prevail in his country and to bring his country closer towards full