

Mr. Speaker, in the summer of 2016, athletes from all over the world will come together to compete in a modern Olympiad, a series of games that has represented peace and hope since it first began more than 100 years ago. In April 2007, Chicago was selected by the United States Olympic Committee as the one and only United States bid city; and on June 4, 2008, the International Olympic Committee named Chicago as one of the four finalists to host the 31st Olympiad, and I can't think of any better place to host these games.

On the edge of the Great Lakes, Chicago boasts a magnificent skyline and a diverse population that prides itself not only on its history but on what will be achieved in the future. Chicago has overcome adversity to rise up as the crown jewel of the Midwest, embracing hard work and hospitality as cornerstone values.

The United States and the White House have each taken unprecedented steps to express support for the 2016 Olympics to be hosted in Chicago. Mayor Richard Daley has organized an incredible group of civic and political and business leaders in support of our bid, and it is my hope that my colleagues in the House will join in this cause by supporting this important resolution.

The bipartisan resolution recognizes June 23 as Olympic Day and supports the City of Chicago's bid to host the 2016 summer Olympics. I realize that that day has passed, but I think that when we join together to support this resolution, we'll be expressing our support for our great City of Chicago, and I strongly urge my colleagues to support it.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS).

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I'm just standing to commend my colleague, Congresswoman SCHAKOWSKY, for this great effort and just reaffirm the fact that this is true bipartisan support from the Illinois delegation and, more importantly, not just bipartisan but the entire Illinois delegation, both up State and down State. Sometimes our State, which is very large, like many other States, and so we have our differences regionally, but this is one where we're truly united, and we've signed a letter in support.

We see the benefits to show off not just the State of Illinois but really the great City of Chicago, the city that does work, and we invite the world community there and the rest of the State during this. And we hope that we're very successful in landing eventually the Olympics, and it will be great for the country. It will be great for the State of Illinois, and it will be great for the City of Chicago.

So I want to commend my colleague.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. JACKSON).

(Mr. JACKSON of Illinois asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 538, a resolution supporting Chicago, my hometown's bid to host the summer Olympics and Paralympics in 2016, and to congratulate Congresswoman SCHAKOWSKY for rallying the Congress behind this important effort.

Chicago, with its diverse culture and international flair, is an ideal host for these games. Since the World's Fair in Chicago in 1893, the city and its people have been internationally recognized for hosting magnificent events on a global stage. With world-class museums, outstanding restaurants, numerous accommodations and stadiums, the city would provide a resounding welcome, hearty embrace and ideal environment to host Olympic athletes and visitors from around the world.

Chicagoans are also known for their passion for sports: the world-famous Chicago Bulls, the Chicago Bears, the Chicago Blackhawks, the Chicago Cubs and the Chicago White Sox.

Furthermore, the Olympic games will bring many needed jobs, economic opportunities, and infrastructure investments to our Nation.

Chicago 2016 has worked with more than 75 community groups to ensure that opportunities in construction, procurement and jobs will be shared by everybody. The games will create the equivalent of 315,000 full-time jobs for at least 1 year and generate \$7 billion in wages.

Chicago's bid uses existing facilities, the lakefront and parks so no residents will be displaced as a result of construction related to the games. The new permanent venues that are proposed will serve communities after the games, providing sports facilities, pools, tennis courts and recreational spaces in our parks and on our lakefront.

The International Olympic Committee will make a decision on October 3. I can't think of a better way to demonstrate the House's support for Chicago's bid and America's bid than voting for this resolution.

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I urge all my colleagues to vote "aye," and I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mrs. BIGGERT. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 538 and in strong support for Chicago's bid for the 2016 Olympics.

On June 23, 2009, we will celebrate Olympic Day and recognize one hundred years since the International Olympic Committee was created. Olympic Day encourages universal participation in athletic activities and demonstrates global unity in support of the Olympic Games.

Furthermore, I would like to encourage the International Olympic Committee to select Chicago, Illinois, as the host city for the 2016 Olympic and Paralympic Games.

The 2016 Olympic Games will feature athletes from across the globe, coming together

with respect for their teammates and competitors alike.

The city of big shoulders is ready to welcome the Olympics with big open arms. As the host city of the 1893 World Columbian Exposition and the 1933 Century of Progress Exposition, Chicago has a long tradition of showcasing America's greatness, peace, and understanding to the world.

Daniel Burnham, the famous Chicago architect of the World Columbian Exposition in Chicago and Union Station here in Washington, once said, "make no little plans; they have no magic to stir men's blood . . . make big plans, aim high in hope and work."

To this day, Chicago embodies this principle. That's one of the many reasons Chicago would be the ideal city in which to hold the Olympic and Paralympic games, marking the century-old tradition of the modern Olympic movement.

I encourage my colleagues to support this resolution and show their support for the 2016 Olympics in Chicago!

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, we have no further speakers, so I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time as well.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KLEIN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 538.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

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.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

CONGRATULATING LITHUANIA ON 1,000TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 285) congratulating the people of the Republic of Lithuania on the 1000th anniversary of Lithuania and celebrating the rich history of Lithuania.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 285

Whereas the name "Lithuania" first appeared in European records in the year 1009, when it was mentioned in the German manuscript "Annals of Quedlinburg";

Whereas Duke Mindaugas united various Baltic tribes and established the state of Lithuania during the period between 1236 and 1263;

Whereas, by the end of the 14th century, Lithuania was the largest country in Europe,

encompassing territory from the Baltic Sea to the Black Sea;

Whereas Vilnius University was founded in 1579 and remained the easternmost university in Europe for 200 years;

Whereas the February 16, 1918, Act of Independence of Lithuania led to the establishment of Lithuania as a sovereign and democratic state;

Whereas, under the cover of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, on June 17, 1940, Latvia, Estonia and Lithuania were forcibly incorporated into the Soviet Union in violation of pre-existing peace treaties;

Whereas, during 50 years of Soviet occupation of the Baltic states, Congress strongly, consistently, and on a bipartisan basis refused to legally recognize the incorporation of Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania by the Soviet Union;

Whereas, on March 11, 1990, the Republic of Lithuania was restored and Lithuania became the first Soviet republic to declare independence;

Whereas, on September 2, 1991, the United States Government formally recognized Lithuania as an independent and sovereign nation;

Whereas Lithuania has successfully developed into a free and democratic country, with a free market economy and respect for the rule of law;

Whereas Lithuania is a full and responsible member of the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the European Union, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization;

Whereas, in 2007, the United States Government and the Government of Lithuania celebrated 85 years of continuous diplomatic relations;

Whereas the United States Government welcomes and appreciates efforts by the Government of Lithuania to maintain international peace and stability in Europe and around the world by contributing to international civilian and military operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Georgia; and

Whereas Lithuania is a strong and loyal ally of the United States, and the people of Lithuania share common values with the people of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) congratulates the people of the Republic of Lithuania on the occasion of the 1000th anniversary of Lithuania;

(2) commends the Government of Lithuania for its success in implementing political and economic reforms, for establishing political, religious and economic freedoms, and for its commitment to human rights; and

(3) recognizes the close and enduring relationship between the United States Government and the Government of Lithuania.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KLEIN) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise to support H. Res. 285, which recognizes the 1,000-year anniversary of Lithuania, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I wish to thank my good friend from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS) for introducing this resolution. It allows the House to add its voice to the Senate's in congratulating the Lithuanian people on this momentous occasion.

In the year 1009, the name Lithuania first appeared in European records when it was mentioned in a German manuscript. The gentleman from Illinois would note that a number of us, Democrats and Republicans, were in Lithuania earlier this year and had the opportunity to meet with the government and talk about the history. It was a great opportunity.

Since that time, the country has had a long and distinguished history. The state of Lithuania was established by Duke Mindaugas in 1236; yet his official coronation as King was on July 6, 1253, a date that is still celebrated as a national holiday in Lithuania.

By the end of the 14th century, Lithuania had become the largest country in Europe. On February 16, 1918, Lithuania was established as a sovereign and democratic state.

In June 1940, Lithuania, along with its Baltic neighbors, was forcibly incorporated into the Soviet Union. On March 11, 1990, Lithuania became the first Soviet Republic to declare its independence.

Lithuania has since become an active member of the national community, helping to strengthen Euro-Atlantic relations through its participation in NATO and the European Union.

Lithuania has helped secure peace and stability through its many contributions to international and civilian military operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, and the Balkans.

Lithuania has also been a strong ally of the United States, as our countries marked 85 years of continuous diplomatic relations in 2007.

The subject of Lithuanian-American relations came up during our recent participation in the Transatlantic Legislators' Dialogue. Members of Congress felt it was important to urge Lithuania to enact property restitution laws in order to bring some sense of justice and closure to the families of victims of the Holocaust, and I look forward to working with our colleagues in Lithuania to resolve this issue. This will surely continue to strengthen our relationship.

While we Americans celebrate our national independence on July 4th, the people of Lithuania commemorated their day of statehood on July 6. It is therefore appropriate, during this festive month, that the House passes a resolution to congratulate Lithuania on its 1,000th anniversary and reaffirm the close ties between our peoples and countries.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this resolution and urge my colleagues to do the same.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the author of the resolution, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. SHIMKUS).

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

Mr. SHIMKUS. Mr. Speaker, I come to the floor humbly as a fourth-generation immigrant family of Lithuania. Of course, I, like many Americans today, are really a Heinz 57 mutt, also having German ancestry and Irish ancestry, and we think some American Indian ancestry. But "Shimkus" is ethnically Lithuanian.

So I always kid and joke that it's only in Washington, D.C., that you automatically become an expert in a region of the world based upon the ethnicity of your last name. But it's a labor of love that I've taken, and, hence, I bring this resolution to the floor to place Lithuania in the spotlight.

Before I do that, I want to read a letter from three friends and former leaders of the Baltic countries and 22 total leaders: Valdas Adamkus, a former President of the Republic of Lithuania; Vaira Vike-Freiberga, former President of the Republic of Latvia; and Mart Laar, who is the former Prime Minister of Estonia.

I'm not going to read the whole letter. I'm going to highlight a few sections, and then I'm going to transition to state why resolutions like this are important, because sometimes we go, Oh, why do we do these resolutions? I think the letter that they have written highlights the importance of us continuing to mention our friends and allies and talk about the strengths of the relationships.

This letter is about three pages long, but I just highlight a few short snippets in each one. Again, these are 22 leaders of not just the Baltic areas, but the Central and Eastern European democracies. Most of these are now no longer in public service but are former leaders.

They say, "Twenty years after the end of the cold war, however, we see that Central and Eastern European countries are no longer at the heart of American foreign policy."

"Americans have largely stopped worrying about. . ." Now, that's positive about some of our successes, but it also raises concerns.

"There is a growing sense of nervousness in the region."

"NATO today seems weaker than when we joined." They also say, "The region's deeper integration in the EU is of course welcome and should not necessarily lead to a weakening of the transatlantic relationship."

Also stated is "there are fewer and fewer leaders who emerged from the revolutions of 1989 who experienced Washington's key role in securing our democratic transition and anchoring our countries in NATO and EU. A new

generation of leaders is emerging who do not have those memories and follow a more 'realistic' policy."

I think that's important for us to understand. These countries fought for freedom, but the leaders who fought for freedom are now leaving power. And this new generation needs to be reminded of the strength of the U.S. relationship to the former captive nations from the Eastern European countries.

They also, in here, talk about, "We welcome the 'reset' . . . "but there is also nervousness in our capitals."

"Our region suffered when the United States succumbed to 'realism' at Yalta. And it benefited when the United States used its power to fight for principle." And that's what I hope we continue to do.

"We believe this is a time both the United States and Europe need to reinvest in the transatlantic relationship."

So I appreciate the committee allowing the resolution to come to the floor because this is another way in which we can talk about the important relationship that we have.

The resolution, itself, talks about the 1,000 years which they're celebrating in Lithuania, the 1,000 years when the name Lithuania first appeared in written documents. Lithuania was around before that, but that makes us look like little kids here in the United States; hence, the world is much older than our great Constitutional Republic.

There's a lot of "whereas" in the resolution. Whereas, under the cover of the Molotov-Ribbentrop Pact, on June 17, 1940, Latvia, Estonia, and Lithuania were forcibly incorporated into the Soviet Union in violation of preexisting peace treaties.

Another whereas: Lithuania is a full and responsible member of the United Nations, the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe, the European Union, and the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

Full partners—full voting partners and full participants in the defense organization known as NATO and the article 5 guarantee to both themselves and other NATO countries.

Another whereas: As contributing to international civilian and military operations in Afghanistan, Iraq, Bosnia, Kosovo, and Georgia, which are all important aspects that they have stepped up to the plate to be part of this commitment to securing democracy and freedom in the war on terror.

So we, as a country, get a chance, through this resolution, to congratulate the people of the Republic of Lithuania for this historical timeframe. We commend the Government of Lithuania for their commitment to democracy, freedom, the rule of law, and being allies in the campaigns that we, in connection with our treaty obligations and the greatest organization that's kept peace and stability that the world has known, which is NATO, their role in that. And we want to continue to recognize that this relationship is strong

now and we will do all we can in our part to make it strong in the future.

I think my colleague from Florida mentioned, also, challenges that we've addressed, and we will continue to work on those so that our relationship becomes stronger in a world where democracy and freedom needs to flourish for people to live the lifestyles that they will grow and flourish individually.

I thank the committee for allowing this to the floor, and I thank Congressman SMITH for allowing me this time.

AN OPEN LETTER TO THE OBAMA ADMINISTRATION FROM CENTRAL AND EASTERN EUROPE

We have written this letter because, as Central and Eastern European (CEE) intellectuals and former policymakers, we care deeply about the future of the transatlantic relationship as well as the future quality of relations between the United States and the countries of our region. We write in our personal capacity as individuals who are friends and allies of the United States as well as committed Europeans.

Our nations are deeply indebted to the United States. Many of us know firsthand how important your support for our freedom and independence was during the dark Cold War years. U.S. engagement and support was essential for the success of our democratic transitions after the Iron Curtain fell twenty years ago. Without Washington's vision and leadership, it is doubtful that we would be in NATO and even the EU today.

We have worked to reciprocate and make this relationship a two-way street. We are Atlanticist voices within NATO and the EU. Our nations have been engaged alongside the United States in the Balkans, Iraq, and today in Afghanistan. While our contribution may at times seem modest compared to your own, it is significant when measured as a percentage of our population and GDP. Having benefited from your support for liberal democracy and liberal values in the past, we have been among your strongest supporters when it comes to promoting democracy and human rights around the world.

Twenty years after the end of the Cold War, however, we see that Central and Eastern European countries are no longer at the heart of American foreign policy. As the new Obama Administration sets its foreign-policy priorities, our region is one part of the world that Americans have largely stopped worrying about. Indeed, at times we have the impression that U.S. policy was so successful that many American officials have now concluded that our region is fixed once and for all and that they could "check the box" and move on to other more pressing strategic issues. Relations have been so close that many on both sides assume that the region's transatlantic orientation, as well as its stability and prosperity, would last forever.

That view is premature. All is not well either in our region or in the transatlantic relationship. Central and Eastern Europe is at a political crossroads and today there is a growing sense of nervousness in the region. The global economic crisis is impacting on our region and, as elsewhere, runs the risk that our societies will look inward and be less engaged with the outside world. At the same time, storm clouds are starting to gather on the foreign policy horizon. Like you, we await the results of the EU Commission's investigation on the origins of the Russo-Georgian war. But the political impact of that war on the region has already been felt. Many countries were deeply disturbed to see the Atlantic alliance stand by as Russia violated the core principles of the

Helsinki Final Act, the Charter of Paris, and the territorial integrity of a country that was a member of NATO's Partnership for Peace and the Euroatlantic Partnership Council—all in the name of defending a sphere of influence on its borders.

Despite the efforts and significant contribution of the new members, NATO today seems weaker than when we joined. In many of our countries it is perceived as less and less relevant—and we feel it. Although we are full members, people question whether NATO would be willing and able to come to our defense in some future crises. Europe's dependence on Russian energy also creates concern about the cohesion of the Alliance. President Obama's remark at the recent NATO summit on the need to provide credible defense plans for all Alliance members was welcome, but not sufficient to allay fears about the Alliance's defense readiness. Our ability to continue to sustain public support at home for our contributions to Alliance missions abroad also depends on us being able to show that our own security concerns are being addressed in NATO and close cooperation with the United States.

We must also recognize that America's popularity and influence have fallen in many of our countries as well. Public opinions polls, including the German Marshall Fund's own Transatlantic Trends survey, show that our region has not been immune to the wave of criticism and anti-Americanism that has swept Europe in recent years and which led to a collapse in sympathy and support for the United States during the Bush years. Some leaders in the region have paid a political price for their support of the unpopular war in Iraq. In the future they may be more careful in taking political risks to support the United States. We believe that the onset of a new Administration has created a new opening to reverse this trend but it will take time and work on both sides to make up for what we have lost.

In many ways the EU has become the major factor and institution in our lives. To many people it seems more relevant and important today than the link to the United States. To some degree it is a logical outcome of the integration of Central and Eastern Europe into the EU. Our leaders and officials spend much more time in EU meetings than in consultations with Washington, where they often struggle to attract attention or make our voices heard. The region's deeper integration in the EU is of course welcome and should not necessarily lead to a weakening of the transatlantic relationship. The hope was that integration of Central and Eastern Europe into the EU would actually strengthen the strategic cooperation between Europe and America.

However, there is a danger that instead of being a pro-Atlantic voice in the EU, support for a more global partnership with Washington in the region might wane over time. The region does not have the tradition of assuming a more global role. Some items on the transatlantic agenda, such as climate change, do not resonate in the Central and Eastern European publics to the same extent as they do in Western Europe.

Leadership change is also coming in Central and Eastern Europe. Next to those, there are fewer and fewer leaders who emerged from the revolutions of 1989 who experienced Washington's key role in securing our democratic transition and anchoring our countries in NATO and EU. A new generation of leaders is emerging who do not have these memories and follow a more "realistic" policy. At the same time, the former Communist elites, whose insistence on political and economic power significantly contributed to the crises in many CEE countries, gradually disappear from the political scene.

The current political and economic turmoil and the fallout from the global economic crisis provide additional opportunities for the forces of nationalism, extremism, populism, and anti-Semitism across the continent but also in some of our countries.

This means that the United States is likely to lose many of its traditional interlocutors in the region. The new elites replacing them may not share the idealism—or have the same relationship to the United States—as the generation who led the democratic transition. They may be more calculating in their support of the United States as well as more parochial in their world view. And in Washington a similar transition is taking place as many of the leaders and personalities we have worked with and relied on are also leaving politics.

And then there is the issue of how to deal with Russia. Our hopes that relations with Russia would improve and that Moscow would finally fully accept our complete sovereignty and independence after joining NATO and the EU have not been fulfilled. Instead, Russia is back as a revisionist power pursuing a 19th-century agenda with 21st-century tactics and methods. At a global level, Russia has become, on most issues, a status-quo power. But at a regional level and vis-a-vis our nations, it increasingly acts as a revisionist one. It challenges our claims to our own historical experiences. It asserts a privileged position in determining our security choices. It uses overt and covert means of economic warfare, ranging from energy blockades and politically motivated investments to bribery and media manipulation in order to advance its interests and to challenge the transatlantic orientation of Central and Eastern Europe.

We welcome the “reset” of the American-Russian relations. As the countries living closest to Russia, obviously nobody has a greater interest in the development of the democracy in Russia and better relations between Moscow and the West than we do. But there is also nervousness in our capitals. We want to ensure that too narrow an understanding of Western interests does not lead to the wrong concessions to Russia. Today the concern is, for example, that the United States and the major European powers might embrace the Medvedev plan for a “Concert of Powers” to replace the continent’s existing, value-based security structure. The danger is that Russia’s creeping intimidation and influence-peddling in the region could over time lead to a de facto neutralization of the region. There are differing views within the region when it comes to Moscow’s new policies. But there is a shared view that the full engagement of the United States is needed.

Many in the region are looking with hope to the Obama Administration to restore the Atlantic relationship as a moral compass for their domestic as well as foreign policies. A strong commitment to common liberal democratic values is essential to our countries. We know from our own historical experience the difference between when the United States stood up for its liberal democratic values and when it did not. Our region suffered when the United States succumbed to “realism” at Yalta. And it benefited when the United States used its power to fight for principle. That was critical during the Cold War and in opening the doors of NATO. Had a “realist” view prevailed in the early 1990s, we would not be in NATO today and the idea of a Europe whole, free, and at peace would be a distant dream.

We understand the heavy demands on your Administration and on U.S. foreign policy. It is not our intent to add to the list of problems you face. Rather, we want to help by being strong Atlanticist allies in a U.S.-European partnership that is a powerful force

for good around the world. But we are not certain where our region will be in five or ten years time given the domestic and foreign policy uncertainties we face. We need to take the right steps now to ensure the strong relationship between the United States and Central and Eastern Europe over the past twenty years will endure.

We believe this is a time both the United States and Europe need to reinvest in the transatlantic relationship. We also believe this is a time when the United States and Central and Eastern Europe must reconnect around a new and forward-looking agenda. While recognizing what has been achieved in the twenty years since the fall of the Iron Curtain, it is time to set a new agenda for close cooperation for the next twenty years across the Atlantic.

Therefore, we propose the following steps: First, we are convinced that America needs Europe and that Europe needs the United States as much today as in the past. The United States should reaffirm its vocation as a European power and make clear that it plans to stay fully engaged on the continent even while it faces the pressing challenges in Afghanistan and Pakistan, the wider Middle East, and Asia. For our part we must work at home in our own countries and in Europe more generally to convince our leaders and societies to adopt a more global perspective and be prepared to shoulder more responsibility in partnership with the United States.

Second, we need a renaissance of NATO as the most important security link between the United States and Europe. It is the only credible hard power security guarantee we have. NATO must reconfirm its core function of collective defense even while we adapt to the new threats of the 21st century. A key factor in our ability to participate in NATO’s expeditionary missions overseas is the belief that we are secure at home. We must therefore correct some self-inflicted wounds from the past. It was a mistake not to commence with proper Article 5 defense planning for new members after NATO was enlarged. NATO needs to make the Alliance’s commitments credible and provide strategic reassurance to all members. This should include contingency planning, prepositioning of forces, equipment, and supplies for reinforcement in our region in case of crisis as originally envisioned in the NATO-Russia Founding Act.

We should also re-think the working of the NATO-Russia Council and return to the practice where NATO member countries enter into dialogue with Moscow with a coordinated position. When it comes to Russia, our experience has been that a more determined and principled policy toward Moscow will not only strengthen the West’s security but will ultimately lead Moscow to follow a more cooperative policy as well. Furthermore, the more secure we feel inside NATO, the easier it will also be for our countries to reach out to engage Moscow on issues of common interest. That is the dual track approach we need and which should be reflected in the new NATO strategic concept.

Third, the thorniest issue may well be America’s planned missile-defense installations. Here too, there are different views in the region, including among our publics which are divided. Regardless of the military merits of this scheme and what Washington eventually decides to do, the issue has nevertheless also become—at least in some countries—a symbol of America’s credibility and commitment to the region. How it is handled could have a significant impact on their future transatlantic orientation. The small number of missiles involved cannot be a threat to Russia’s strategic capabilities, and the Kremlin knows this. We should decide the future of the program as allies and based

on the strategic pluses and minuses of the different technical and political configurations. The Alliance should not allow the issue to be determined by unfounded Russian opposition. Abandoning the program entirely or involving Russia too deeply in it without consulting Poland or the Czech Republic can undermine the credibility of the United States across the whole region.

Fourth, we know that NATO alone is not enough. We also want and need more Europe and a better and more strategic U.S.-EU relationship as well. Increasingly our foreign policies are carried out through the European Union—and we support that. We also want a common European foreign and defense policy that is open to close cooperation with the United States. We are the advocates of such a line in the EU. But we need the United States to rethink its attitude toward the EU and engage it much more seriously as a strategic partner. We need to bring NATO and the EU closer together and make them work in tandem. We need common NATO and EU strategies not only toward Russia but on a range of other new strategic challenges.

Fifth is energy security. The threat to energy supplies can exert an immediate influence on our nations’ political sovereignty also as allies contributing to common decisions in NATO. That is why it must also become a transatlantic priority. Although most of the responsibility for energy security lies within the realm of the EU, the United States also has a role to play. Absent American support, the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan pipeline would never have been built. Energy security must become an integral part of U.S.-European strategic cooperation. Central and Eastern European countries should lobby harder (and with more unity) inside Europe for diversification of the energy mix, suppliers, and transit routes, as well as for tough legal scrutiny of Russia’s abuse of its monopoly and cartel-like power inside the EU. But American political support on this will play a crucial role. Similarly, the United States can play an important role in solidifying further its support for the Nabucco pipeline, particularly in using its security relationship with the main transit country, Turkey, as well as the North-South interconnector of Central Europe and LNG terminals in our region.

Sixth, we must not neglect the human factor. Our next generations need to get to know each other, too. We have to cherish and protect the multitude of educational, professional, and other networks and friendships that underpin our friendship and alliance. The U.S. visa regime remains an obstacle in this regard. It is absurd that Poland and Romania—arguably the two biggest and most pro-American states in the CEE region, which are making substantial contributions in Iraq and Afghanistan—have not yet been brought into the visa waiver program. It is incomprehensible that a critic like the French anti-globalization activist Jose Bove does not require a visa for the United States but former Solidarity activist and Nobel Peace prizewinner Lech Walesa does. This issue will be resolved only if it is made a political priority by the President of the United States.

The steps we made together since 1989 are not minor in history. The common successes are the proper foundation for the transatlantic renaissance we need today. This is why we believe that we should also consider the creation of a Legacy Fellowship for young leaders. Twenty years have passed since the revolutions of 1989. That is a whole generation. We need a new generation to renew the transatlantic partnership. A new program should be launched to identify those young leaders on both sides of the Atlantic

who can carry forward the transatlantic project we have spent the last two decades building in Central and Eastern Europe.

In conclusion, the onset of a new Administration in the United States has raised great hopes in our countries for a transatlantic renewal. It is an opportunity we dare not miss. We, the authors of this letter, know firsthand how important the relationship with the United States has been. In the 1990s, a large part of getting Europe right was about getting Central and Eastern Europe right. The engagement of the United States was critical to locking in peace and stability from the Baltics to the Black Sea. Today the goal must be to keep Central and Eastern Europe right as a stable, activist, and Atlanticist part of our broader community.

That is the key to our success in bringing about the renaissance in the Alliance the Obama Administration has committed itself to work for and which we support. That will require both sides recommitting to and investing in this relationship. But if we do it right, the pay off down the road can be very real. By taking the right steps now, we can put it on new and solid footing for the future.

Valdas Adamkus, Former President of the Republic of Lithuania; Martin Butora, Former Ambassador of the Slovak Republic to the United States; Emil Constantinescu, Former President of the Republic of Romania; Pavol Demes, Former Minister of International Relations and Advisor to the President, Slovak Republic; Lubos Dobrovsky, Former Minister of Defense of Czechoslovakia, former Czech Ambassador to Russia; Matyas Eorsi, Former Secretary of State of the Hungarian MFA; Istvan Gyarmati, Ambassador, President of the International Centre for Democratic Transition in Budapest; Vaclav Havel, Former President of the Czech Republic; Rastislav Kacer, Former Ambassador of the Slovak Republic to the United States; Sandra Kalniete, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Latvia; Karel Schwarzenberg, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Czech Republic; Michal Kovac, Former President of the Slovak Republic; Ivan Krastev, Chairman of the Centre for Liberal Strategies in Sofia, Bulgaria; Aleksander Kwasniewski, Former President of the Republic of Poland; Mart Laar, Former Prime Minister of Estonia; Kadri Liik, Director of the International Centre for Defense Studies in Tallinn, Estonia; Janos Martonyi, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Hungary; Janusz Onyszkiewicz, Former Vice-president of the European Parliament, former Defense Minister, Poland; Adam Rotfeld, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs, Poland; Alexandr Vondra, Former Minister of Foreign Affairs and Deputy Prime Minister, Czech Republic; Vaira Vike-Freiberga, Former President of the Republic of Latvia; Lech Walesa, Former President of the Republic of Poland.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of my friend and colleague's resolution celebrating the rich history of Lithuania.

I was recently back in Lithuania just a couple of weeks ago, Mr. Speaker, for the July meeting of the Parliamentary Assembly of the Organization for Secu-

rity and Cooperation in Europe, and saw, once again, the beautiful city of Vilnius, a city with an historic history.

But more importantly than the city and its physical attractiveness is the people themselves, the kindness, the generosity, and a goodness, innate goodness, which is truly remarkable.

The Lithuanians, as we know, were occupied. They were often called a captive nation, one of the Baltic captive nations. In 1940, they were brought into the Soviet Union by force, a grave injustice that this Congress has never recognized and thankfully now, since 1990, they were the first of the so-called Soviet Republics to declare its independence.

Since securing their independence from the Soviet Union, Lithuanians have won the world's admiration by making Lithuania a free country that truly respects fundamental human rights. The Lithuanian Government conducts democratic and fair elections, respects the rule of law, and the Lithuanian economy is free.

Mr. Speaker, the United States owes Lithuania a debt of gratitude, but the United States has not freed Lithuania from Soviet domination—they did that themselves. Lithuania has recognized the common values it shares with the United States and has deployed its soldiers to do duty alongside ours in Afghanistan, Iraq, Bosnia, Kosovo, as well as in Georgia.

Let me also point out that back in the early 1990s, I was part of a delegation led by Steny Hoyer. When the Soviets looked like they were about to take over the Parliament and rush it with the black berets, several of us traveled to Vilnius to be there to be in solidarity with President Landsbergis, who was under siege. And the belief was that if sufficient numbers of parliamentarians were there as witnesses, it might have a chilling effect on Soviet ambitions and they might not storm that Parliament.

What we found in Vilnius was people who were literally praying night and day, people outside the parliament saying rosaries, offering up prayers and, hopefully, acting as shields themselves to the Soviet aggression.

□ 1730

I will never forget visiting a TV tower that had been attacked by the Soviets. There were candles burning where people dropped as they were fired upon by Soviet troops; but they were still there in defiance, standing up to this world power that was seeking to crush them. One of the incidents I will never forget. Don Ritter, one of our Members of the House who was then the ranking member of the CSCE, stepped across the line, and there was a Soviet tank there at the TV tower which all of a sudden began turning its turret towards him. Several of us who were there said, Don, you'd better step across. This is truly a volatile situation. And nothing came of it. But again, the Lithuanians were there pro-

testing against tyranny and the domination that was coming out of Moscow but did so with such class and such courage that it was truly inspiring.

Our delegation was matched by delegations from Poland and other countries, recently emerging democracies; and they too were saying, We're not going to stand idly by and watch this great people conquered once again—conquered but never really conquered in their hearts and minds. So I, again, want to thank Mr. SHIMKUS for bringing this to the floor. I also thank my friends on the other side of the aisle for posting it for debate and consideration. Again, this says to the people of Lithuania, You are a tremendous people. We recognize and admire your goodness and your courage, because you certainly demonstrated it under fire.

Mr. LIPINSKI. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 285, and urge its immediate adoption. This resolution, introduced by friend and home state colleague, Chair of the House Baltic Caucus, Congressman JOHN SHIMKUS, congratulates the people of the Republic of Lithuania on the one thousandth anniversary of their country, celebrates the rich history of this nation and its people, and highlights the valuable relations Lithuania maintains with the United States.

As Co-Chair of the Central and Eastern European Caucus, and representative of a large Lithuanian community, I have a special pride in being a cosponsor of this measure, and rising in its support. The Balzekas Museum of Lithuanian Culture, which is a major player in Lithuanian cultural life and scholarship in the United States, is located in my district. And Chicago is home to more Lithuanians outside their native home than any other location.

As few know, the name "Lithuania" first appeared in Europe in the year 1009—a historical timeline unfathomable to many Americans. The state of Lithuania was established as early as 1236, and became at times the largest country in Europe. The modern establishment of Lithuania as a sovereign and democratic state occurred in 1918.

While Lithuania, along with Latvia and Estonia, were forcibly incorporated into the Soviet Union in 1940, this did not diminish Lithuanians' national pride, their valor or spirit. Despite Soviet persecution and barbaric assaults on their freedoms, Lithuanians persisted, aided by the support and prayers of millions of Lithuanians in the United States and elsewhere.

In 1990, after decades of oppression and occupation, Lithuania became the first Soviet-controlled republic to break away and declare its independence.

Since that time, Lithuania has developed into a free and democratic society. Its free market economy has experienced strong growth, and has joined the United States in pursuing knowledge-driven opportunities, including biotechnology and other high-tech sectors.

The United States has and continues to maintain a strong and positive relationship with Lithuania. Our nations have held 85 years of continuous diplomatic relations. Lithuania has supported international peace and security efforts, and has contributed to civilian and military operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, Georgia, and elsewhere, for which the United States government is highly appreciative.

In that vein, I would like to extend the warmest congratulations to Ms. Dalia Grybauskaitė, who was elected as the new President of Lithuania in May of this year with over two-thirds of the vote. The first female President of Lithuania, Ms. Grybauskaitė was sworn in on July 11, 2009. A former European Union Budget Commissioner, finance commissioner in Lithuania and a diplomat in Lithuania's U.S. Embassy, I congratulate her and wish President Grybauskaitė success in her new role.

I look forward to joining my constituents and other Chicago-area Lithuanians in celebrating this 1000th anniversary in September. Lietuvių Dienos Chicago 2009, a community celebration led by Mr. Andrew Bucas—owner of Grand Duke's Lithuanian restaurant—and the Chicago Consul General of the Republic of Lithuania, will be held at Summit Park, in the Village of Summit located in my district, on September 20, 2009. Prominent Lithuanian-American Joe Kulys has been instrumental in organizing this celebration and has been a key leader in the Lithuanian-American community.

I wish Lithuanians and Lithuanian-Americans alike the best wishes and hearty congratulations in the celebration of 1000 years of Lithuanian history and progress.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. If there are no other speakers, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KLEIN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 285.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I object to the vote on the ground that a quorum is not present and make the point of order that a quorum is not present.

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.

The point of no quorum is considered withdrawn.

TORTURE VICTIMS RELIEF REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2009

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1511) to amend the Torture Victims Relief Act of 1998 to authorize appropriations to provide assistance for domestic and foreign programs and centers for the treatment of victims of torture, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1511

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Torture Victims Relief Reauthorization Act of 2009".

SEC. 2. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR DOMESTIC TREATMENT CENTERS FOR VICTIMS OF TORTURE.

Section 5(b)(1) of the Torture Victims Relief Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 2152 note) is amended to read as follows:

"(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Of the amounts authorized to be appropriated for the Department of Health and Human Services for fiscal years 2010 and 2011, there are authorized to be appropriated to carry out subsection (a) \$25,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2010 and 2011."

SEC. 3. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR FOREIGN TREATMENT CENTERS FOR VICTIMS OF TORTURE.

Section 4(b)(1) of the Torture Victims Relief Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 2152 note) is amended to read as follows:

"(1) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—Of the amounts authorized to be appropriated for fiscal years 2010 and 2011 pursuant to chapter 1 of part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, there are authorized to be appropriated to the President to carry out section 130 of such Act \$12,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2010 and 2011."

SEC. 4. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE UNITED STATES CONTRIBUTION TO THE UNITED NATIONS VOLUNTARY FUND FOR VICTIMS OF TORTURE.

Of the amounts authorized to be appropriated for fiscal years 2010 and 2011 pursuant to chapter 3 of part I of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, there are authorized to be appropriated to the President for a voluntary contribution to the United Nations Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture \$12,000,000 for each of the fiscal years 2010 and 2011.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Florida (Mr. KLEIN) and the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. KLEIN of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation and yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I'd like to thank the distinguished ranking Member of the Africa and Global Health Subcommittee, my friend CHRIS SMITH, for his longstanding leadership in the fight against torture; and I am proud to stand with him unequivocally in this crucial human rights fight. I would also like to thank the distinguished chairman of the Committee on Energy and Commerce, Chairman WAXMAN from California, and the distinguished ranking Member on the committee, Mr. BARTON from Texas, for their excellent collaboration in bringing this important piece of legislation expeditiously to the House floor.

Mr. Speaker, the underlying legislation which we are reauthorizing today, the Torture Victims Relief Act of 1998,

is the practical expression of our deeply held values. Americans abhor and condemn the use of torture wherever it may occur, including at the hands of our own citizens. This bill demonstrates the commitment of the United States to stand squarely with the victims of this barbaric and illegal practice, not only fighting against the use of torture but also providing hope and relief to those who survive it, wherever and whoever they may be. Mr. Speaker, according to Amnesty International, over 117 countries around the world still engage in torture. Amidst allegations of our own government's possible involvement in torture, President Obama and the American people have reaffirmed our policy that the United States will not torture. An estimated 500,000 foreign torture survivors reside in the United States and over 100 million may exist worldwide. The personal ramifications of torture are beyond the realm of our comprehension. Torture leaves no victim unscarred. It shapes the remainder of lives. While physical wounds may ultimately heal, torture survivors need ongoing psychosocial services and therapy to cope with the post-traumatic stress that afflicts them daily. Recovering from torture is a long-term process. It can take years before torture survivors can once again feel emotionally comfortable in society. More than 200 treatment programs operate internationally to provide crucial medical, psychological and social services to torture survivors. The legislation before us supports international programs through grants which are administered by the United States Agency For International Development, USAID, through its Victims of Torture Fund, otherwise known as VTF. H.R. 1511 authorizes \$12 million for each of fiscal years 2010 and 2011 for this important purpose. In the United States, the Center For Victims of Torture in Minnesota was the first multidiscipline treatment center of its kind in the United States and the third torture victims treatment program in the world. Currently there are 25 programs for the treatment of survivors of torture operating in the United States, most of them financially assisted through the Office of Refugee Resettlement of the Department of Health and Human Services. H.R. 1511 makes a critical investment in this crucial work. In addition, this legislation authorizes critical funds for the United States' contribution to the multilateral U.N. Voluntary Fund for Victims of Torture. Through the United Nations' mechanism, the UNVF supports torture treatment centers all over the world, including within the United States. Mr. Speaker, the funds authorized in the legislation before the House are urgently needed. I strongly support this legislation and urge my colleagues to do the same.