

107TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES. 272

Expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the success of the Varela Project's collection of 10,000 certified signatures in support of a national referendum and the delivery of these signatures to the Cuban National Assembly.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 20, 2002

Mr. NELSON of Florida (for himself, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. TORRICELLI, Mr. ALLEN, and Mr. CORZINE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

MAY 29, 2002

Reported, under authority of the order of the Senate of May 22, 2002, by Mr. BIDEN, with an amendment and an amendment to the preamble

JUNE 10, 2002

Considered, amended, and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Senate regarding the success of the Varela Project's collection of 10,000 certified signatures in support of a national referendum and the delivery of these signatures to the Cuban National Assembly.

Whereas Article 88 of the Cuban Constitution provides for Cuban citizens to submit legislative proposals to the Cuban National Assembly for its consideration;

Whereas on May 10, 2002, a group of Cuban citizens led by Oswaldo Paya delivered 11,020 verified signatures to the Cuban National Assembly in support of a referendum;

Whereas Mr. Paya's petition drive is inspired by the 19th-century priest and Cuban independence hero, Padre Felix Varela, and is known as the Varela Project;

Whereas the Varela Project seeks a referendum on civil liberties, including freedom of speech, amnesty for political prisoners, support for private business, a new electoral law, and a general election;

Whereas the Varela Project is supported by 140 opposition organizations in Cuba and has received no money or support from foreign citizens or foreign governments;

Whereas the Varela Project is the largest petition drive in Cuban history;

Whereas the Varela Project is a step in moving Cuba toward achieving international standards for human rights;

Whereas the goal of United States policy in Cuba is to promote a peaceful transition to democracy; and

Whereas the Varela Project is engaged in the promotion of a peaceful transition to democracy in Cuba: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) supports the constitutional right of the citi-
3 zens of Cuba who have signed the Varela Project to
4 petition the Cuban National Assembly for a ref-
5 erendum;

6 (2) calls on the Cuban National Assembly to
7 give serious consideration to the Varela Project peti-

1 tion in accordance with Article 88 of the Cuban
2 Constitution and to the holding of a referendum on
3 civil liberties, including freedom of speech, an am-
4 nesty for political prisoners, support for private busi-
5 ness, a new electoral law, and a general election;

6 (3) praises the bravery of Oswaldo Paya and
7 his colleagues in collecting 11,020 verified signatures
8 in support of the Varela Project;

9 (4) calls on the Cuban government to provide
10 its citizens with internationally accepted standards
11 for civil and human rights, and the opportunity to
12 vote in free and fair elections; and

13 (5) urges the President to support the right of
14 the citizens of Cuba who have signed the Varela
15 Project to petition the Cuban National Assembly for
16 a referendum and the peaceful transition to democ-
17 racy.

18 SEC. 2. The Secretary of the Senate shall transmit
19 a copy of this resolution to the President.

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