

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 367

Urging that elections, pursuant to the terms of the Good Friday Agreement, be held in Northern Ireland in 2003 and reaffirming support for the continued implementation of the Good Friday Agreement as the framework for the peaceful settlement of the conflict in Northern Ireland.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SEPTEMBER 15, 2003

Mr. BEREUTER (for himself, Mr. HYDE, Mr. WEXLER, and Mr. WALSH) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

RESOLUTION

Urging that elections, pursuant to the terms of the Good Friday Agreement, be held in Northern Ireland in 2003 and reaffirming support for the continued implementation of the Good Friday Agreement as the framework for the peaceful settlement of the conflict in Northern Ireland.

Whereas the Good Friday Agreement reached by the Government of Ireland, the Government of the United Kingdom, and political party leaders of Northern Ireland, on April 10, 1998, provided for the devolution of government from the United Kingdom to local institutions in Northern Ireland, created the Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive Committee and provided for a democratically elected

Assembly in Northern Ireland which is inclusive in its membership, capable of exercising executive and legislative authority, and subject to safeguards to protect the rights and interests of all sides of the community;

Whereas the Good Friday Agreement established a North/South Ministerial Council, established an independent Commission on Policing to reorganize current policing practices and to encourage widespread community support for new policing arrangements, established an Independent Commission on Decommissioning to facilitate the process of permanently removing from use paramilitary arms, and outlined other provisions regarding human rights and the treatment of prisoners;

Whereas in a referendum on May 22, 1998, the people of both Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland voted overwhelmingly in favor of the Good Friday Agreement;

Whereas on April 10, 2003, the 5th Anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement which had established a framework for the peaceful settlement of the conflict in Northern Ireland had come and gone without a continuing and operating local power sharing government under the Good Friday Agreement;

Whereas in October 2002, the devolved institutions of the Executive Assembly and Executive Committee were suspended amid allegations which created a lack of trust among the parties;

Whereas critical elections for Northern Ireland's Assembly have been postponed twice due to a stalemate over the rejection of military attacks, training, targeting, intelligence-gathering, acquisition of arms or weapons, other preparations for terrorist-related activities, punishment

beatings and involvement in riots, by paramilitary elements in Northern Ireland;

Whereas other provisions of the Good Friday Agreement, such as demilitarization, should also continue to move forward;

Whereas the British and Irish Governments, supported by the United States Government, have developed an additional package of proposals which would help ensure the further implementation of the Good Friday Agreement;

Whereas despite several, but not insurmountable, difficulties identified by the parties in the implementation of the Good Friday Agreement, the citizens of Northern Ireland continue to indicate support for ongoing efforts at policing reform and decommissioning and for candidates representing the parties which supported the Good Friday Agreement and the peace process; and

Whereas the United States should remain politically involved to ensure the long-term success of the peace agreement: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) recognizes the continued importance of the
3 Good Friday Agreement and urges all parties to the
4 Agreement to work more diligently for the full im-
5 plementation of all its provisions;

6 (2) urges all parties to the Agreement to create
7 the conditions necessary to hold the important elec-
8 tions for the Assembly before the end of 2003, to
9 abide by the outcome of the elections and to agree

1 to have the devolved government back in operation
2 as soon as practical;

3 (3) urges the people of Northern Ireland to con-
4 tinue to demonstrate their faith in and continued
5 support for the peace process, the Good Friday
6 Agreement, and to urge all political parties and can-
7 didates to fully support the Agreement;

8 (4) supports the Prime Minister of the United
9 Kingdom, the Irish Taoiseach, and all the leaders of
10 the political parties in Northern Ireland who created
11 the opportunity for a negotiated peace but now
12 urges them to put aside past differences and dis-
13 putes and to proceed in a meaningful way to actually
14 implement those agreements which they endorsed;

15 (5) encourages those parties to the Good Friday
16 Agreement which have not appointed members to
17 the policing Board to do so in a timely fashion in
18 order to ensure that the police service continues to
19 gain the support of all Northern Ireland and which
20 will ensure that the police service will reflect both
21 communities they serve, will be fair, accountable,
22 free from political control and committed to human
23 rights;

24 (6) stresses the importance of completing the
25 decommissioning of weapons held by paramilitary or-

1 ganizations on all sides and to follow recent decom-
2 missioning successes with additional efforts by
3 paramilitaries on both the loyalist and republican
4 sides; and

5 (7) reaffirms the bonds of friendship and co-
6 operation that exist between the United States and
7 the Governments of the United Kingdom and Ire-
8 land, our continued strong support for the Good Fri-
9 day Agreement, and our support for the political
10 parties who are seeking the establishment of a
11 strong and lasting peace in Northern Ireland.

