

110TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 299

Recognizing the religious and historical significance of the festival of Diwali.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

AUGUST 3, 2007

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. BROWN, Mr. LEVIN, and Mr. CASEY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

NOVEMBER 14, 2007

Committee discharged; considered, amended, and agreed to

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the religious and historical significance of the festival of Diwali.

Whereas Diwali, a festival of great significance to Indian Americans and South Asian Americans, is celebrated annually by Hindus, Sikhs, and Jains throughout the United States;

Whereas there are nearly 2,000,000 Hindus in the United States, approximately 1,250,000 of which are of Indian and South Asian origin;

Whereas the word “Diwali” is a shortened version of the Sanskrit term “Deepavali”, which means “a row of lamps”;

Whereas Diwali is a festival of lights, during which celebrants light small oil lamps, place them around the home, and pray for health, knowledge, and peace;

Whereas celebrants of Diwali believe that the rows of lamps symbolize the light within the individual that rids the soul of the darkness of ignorance;

Whereas Diwali falls on the last day of the last month in the lunar calendar and is celebrated as a day of thanksgiving and the beginning of the new year for many Hindus;

Whereas for Hindus, Diwali is a celebration of the victory of good over evil;

Whereas for Sikhs, Diwali is feted as the day that the sixth founding Sikh Guru, or revered teacher, Guru Hargobind, was released from captivity by the Mughal Emperor Jehangir; and

Whereas for Jains, Diwali marks the anniversary of the attainment of moksha, or liberation, by Mahavira, the last of the Tirthankaras (the great teachers of Jain dharma), at the end of his life in 527 B.C.: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) recognizes the religious and historical significance of the festival of Diwali; and
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4 (2) in observance of Diwali, the festival of
5 lights, expresses its deepest respect for Indian Amer-
6 icans and the Indian diaspora throughout the world
7 on this significant occasion.

