

111TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 1552

Supporting a legally binding global agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and provide financial assistance to the poorest and most vulnerable nations for adaptation and mitigation measures, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 22, 2010

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Supporting a legally binding global agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and provide financial assistance to the poorest and most vulnerable nations for adaptation and mitigation measures, and for other purposes.

Whereas, on December 18, 2009, the Conference of the Party nations took note of the Copenhagen Accord, a non-binding agreement on greenhouse gas emissions reduction, during the 15th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) convened in Copenhagen, Denmark;

Whereas a legally binding global agreement including mitigation and adaptation financing for developing countries provided by developed nations is the best approach to

prevent impacts of climate change such as increased frequency and intensity of droughts, floods, and heat waves;

Whereas the Department of Defense Quadrennial Defense Review 2010 states that “climate change will contribute to food and water scarcity, will increase the spread of disease, and may spur or exacerbate mass migration. While climate change alone does not cause conflict, it may act as an accelerant of instability or conflict, placing a burden to respond on civilian institutions and militaries around the world . . . extreme weather events may lead to increased demands for defense support to civil authorities for humanitarian assistance or disaster response both within the United States and overseas”;

Whereas developed countries’ pledges of financing for international mitigation and adaptation measures for developing countries were crucial to achieving the Copenhagen Accord and will be essential to a legally binding global agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;

Whereas a 2 degree Celsius average global temperature rise above pre-industrial levels, the upper limit of global temperature increase targeted by the scientific world and the parties to the Copenhagen Accord, will disproportionately affect the developing world according to the World Bank, including 75 to 80 percent of the global cost of damages resulting from climate change;

Whereas the World Bank and UNFCCC estimate that such a 2 degree Celsius warming in average global temperatures could result in a 4 to 5 percent permanent reduction in annual per capita income in Africa, a 12 to 50 percent decrease in agricultural productivity in South America by 2100, and water shortages affecting

75,000,000 to 220,000,000 Africans and 7,000,000 to 77,000,000 Latin Americans by the 2020s;

Whereas adaptation is defined by the United Nations International Panel on Climate Change (UNIPCC) as initiatives or measures to reduce the vulnerability of natural and human systems to actual or expected climate change effects, and mitigation is defined as implementation of policies to reduce greenhouse gas emissions and enhance removal of aerosols, greenhouse gases, or their precursors from the atmosphere;

Whereas the United States, the European Union, Japan, Canada, and Australia emitted approximately 42 percent of the world's greenhouse gases in 2006 while the least developed countries emitted 0.5 percent, according to the World Resources Institute;

Whereas the Secretariat of the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change has estimated that by 2030 developing countries will require \$176,000,000,000 annually in additional investment and financial flows for climate change mitigation and the World Bank estimates that \$75,000,000,000 to \$100,000,000,000 is needed per year by 2050 for adaptation in developing countries;

Whereas the Copenhagen Accord notes that financing for developing countries will be based on the concept of additionality in which new public and private, bilateral and multilateral, and alternative revenue streams will be developed rather than reallocating existing and planned overseas development assistance for adaptation and mitigation assistance;

Whereas the Copenhagen Accord calls for \$30,000,000,000 in fast start funds and \$100,000,000,000 in ongoing annual

funding from 2020, but does not delineate the means of raising and disbursing those funds;

Whereas the High-Level Advisory Group on Climate Change Financing is examining potential sources of revenue for mitigation and adaptation in developing nations, and this Advisory Group has begun its work;

Whereas developing nations can engage in low-cost mitigation efforts through changed agricultural practices, afforestation, reforestation, and the reduction of deforestation, yet will likely require international assistance for administration, enforcement, and social and institutional adjustments, according to the Stern Review on the Economics of Climate Change;

Whereas UNIPCC scientists estimate that an 18 to 58 centimeter rise in sea level by the end of the century relative to levels from 1980 to 1999 would force up to 94,000,000 people living in low-lying coastal areas to migrate by 2100;

Whereas Southeast Asia, and South Pacific and Caribbean islands are vulnerable to more frequent and intense tropical cyclones with loss of life and property similar to Cyclone Nargis which killed 138,000 Burmese in May 2008 and Hurricane Mitch which destroyed 50 percent of Honduras' crops in 1998;

Whereas according to some estimates, the area of the Tibetan plateau covered by glaciers is decreasing at rates threatening to curtail the flow Asia's 10 major rivers fed by those glaciers, including the Yellow, Yangtze, Mekong, Salween, Irrawaddy, Brahmaputra, Ganges, Indus, Amu Darya, and Tarim, which supply the water for hundreds of millions of people;

Whereas mustering the political will to fund mitigation and adaption for the most vulnerable will require sustained commitment and attention;

Whereas the global community possesses the knowledge and ingenuity needed to maintain the dignity and meet the basic needs and rights of people affected by the consequences of climate change;

Whereas the 16th Session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change will take place from November 29, 2010, to December 10, 2010, in Cancun, Mexico; and

Whereas the United States must demonstrate leadership if the developed world is to meet its pledges to provide adequate finance for climate change adaptation and mitigation in developing nations: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) supports the Copenhagen Accord as a
3 meaningful step toward achieving the goal of a bind-
4 ing global agreement to reduce greenhouse gas emis-
5 sions;

6 (2) supports finance for developing countries
7 consistent with the Accord's goals;

8 (3) calls for enactment of comprehensive energy
9 and climate change legislation, including provisions
10 for international finance;

11 (4) commends the High-Level Advisory Group
12 on Climate Change Financing for its preliminary

1 work in defining how finance for developing coun-
2 tries will be raised and disbursed;

3 (5) advises that an appropriate portion of fund-
4 ing be allotted to develop the processes and organi-
5 zations required to manage the disbursement of
6 funds efficiently and transparently; and

7 (6) encourages the international community to
8 create a legally binding agreement to reduce green-
9 house gas emissions as soon as possible.

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