

rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 177, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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.

#### COMMENDING THE SIGNING OF THE UNITED STATES-ADRIATIC CHARTER

Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 209) commending the signing of the United States-Adriatic Charter, a charter of partnership among the United States, Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 209

Whereas the United States has an enduring interest in the independence, territorial integrity, and security of Albania, Croatia, and The Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia and supports their full integration in the community of democratic Euro-Atlantic states;

Whereas Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia have taken clear and positive steps to advance their integration into Europe by establishing close cooperative relations among themselves and with their neighbors, as well as their promotion of regional cooperation;

Whereas Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia have already contributed to European security and to the peace and security of southeast Europe through the resolution of conflicts in the region and their regional cooperation in the Southeast Europe Defense Ministerial;

Whereas on May 2, 2003, the United States-Adriatic Charter was signed in Tirana, Albania, by Secretary of State Colin Powell, Albanian Foreign Minister Ilir Meta, Croatian Foreign Minister Tonino Picula, and Macedonian Foreign Minister Ilinka Mitreva;

Whereas the Adriatic Charter affirms the commitment of Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia to the values and principles of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and to joining the Alliance at the earliest possible time;

Whereas Secretary of State Powell stated that the Adriatic Charter "reaffirms our partners' dedication to work individually, with each other, and with their neighbors to build a region of strong democracies powered by free market economies . . . [i]t underscores the importance we place on their eventual full integration into NATO and other European institutions . . . [a]nd most importantly, the Charter promises to strengthen the ties that bind the peoples of the region to the United States, to one another, and to a common future within the Euro-Atlantic family"; and

Whereas 75 Albanian special forces troops were sent to Iraq as part of the coalition forces during Operation Iraqi Freedom, 29 Macedonian special forces troops were sent to Iraq as part of the postwar stabilization force, and Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia all contributed to the stabilization forces in

Afghanistan, as signs of their commitment to promote international freedom and security: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That Congress—*

(1) strongly supports the United States-Adriatic Charter and commends Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia for their continued efforts to become full-fledged members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the European Union;

(2) urges NATO to invite Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia to join NATO as soon as each of these countries respectively demonstrates the ability to assume the responsibilities of NATO membership through the Membership Action Plan;

(3) welcomes and supports the aspirations of Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia to join the European Union at the earliest opportunity;

(4) recognizes that Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia are making important strides to bring their economic, military, and political institutions into conformance with the standards of NATO and other Euro-Atlantic institutions; and

(5) commends Secretary of State Powell for his personal support of the Adriatic Charter.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GREEN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GREEN).

#### GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the concurrent resolution before us expresses the support of the Congress for the Adriatic Charter, as it was reported favorably by the Committee on International Relations on June 12.

The charter was signed on May 2 in the Albanian capital of Tirana by Secretary of State Powell and the foreign ministers of Albania, Croatia, and the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, the three remaining NATO-aspirant nations.

The Adriatic Charter pledges the United States to support efforts by Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia to join Euro-Atlantic institutions like NATO and the European Union. In this agreement, the three aspirant nations commit themselves to accelerate their democratic reforms, protect human rights, implement market-oriented economic policies, and enhance their mutual cooperation. Under the Adriatic Charter, the United States and these three countries pledge to consult whenever the security of one of them is threatened. For their part, the aspirant countries promise to continue defense

reforms and to undertake steps to enhance border security so they can contribute to regional stability.

Mr. Speaker, this Member urges the House to agree to this concurrent resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution. First, I want to commend the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. WEXLER) for their leadership on this important resolution, and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), our chairman, for moving it forward so expeditiously.

Our resolution celebrates cooperation and forward-thinking among the nations of the Balkans, a region that just a few years ago was engulfed in ethnic violence and strife. Our Nation, Mr. Speaker, has an enduring interest in the independence, territorial integrity, and security of Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia and supports their full integration in the community of democratic Euro-Atlantic states. The Adriatic Charter affirms the commitment of Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia to the values and principles of NATO and to their joining the Atlantic Alliance at the earliest practical time.

Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia have taken positive steps to advance their integration into Europe and have already contributed to European security and to the peace and security of southeast Europe through the resolution of severe conflicts in the region.

Mr. Speaker, I commend all of my colleagues who have worked on this concurrent resolution. I urge every Member of this House to support its passage.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER), the chairman of the Europe Subcommittee.

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

Mr. BEREUTER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GREEN) for handling this concurrent resolution and for the support of the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), as well, on this very important resolution.

I want to begin by of course expressing my strong support for the resolution and thanking the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), one of our colleagues on the Committee on International Relations, for authoring the legislation and for working with the staff of the subcommittee and the full committee. He has long been a champion of Albania in the House, and I am pleased to be a cosponsor of this resolution.

As mentioned by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GREEN), this is a pledge

also on the part of Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia through what they did in Tirana for full continued support for moving towards NATO membership.

Under the Adriatic Charter, the United States and these three countries pledge to consult whenever the security of one of them is threatened. For their part, the aspirant countries promise to continue defense reforms and to undertake steps to enhance border security so that they can contribute to regional stability.

Some of the language in the Adriatic Charter might look familiar. Indeed, this document was based on the successful Baltic Charter, which was signed in 1998 between Estonia, Latvia, and Lithuania. Five years ago few observers would have been so bold as to predict that those three countries occupied for 50 years by the Soviet Union and then Russia-to-be would be poised to join NATO and the EU next year. The Baltic Charter signifies an American commitment to help those three countries in their successful efforts to join NATO and the EU. Today, the Adriatic Charter holds the potential for helping Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia to achieve the same goals.

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This Member, of course, recognizes and commends the efforts of Secretary of State Powell and those of our diplomats working the European and Eurasian Bureau of the State Department for their initiative in crafting the Adriatic Charter.

As NATO prepares to admit seven new countries next year, it is important that these three remaining candidate countries are not forgotten. NATO's door remains open to all who are willing and able to assume the responsibilities of membership, and it is important that the Congress assert that it is the achievements of Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia that will determine when their aspirations for accession will be realized. Each of them are working through membership action plans to meet NATO's standards, and each will be judged on their own accomplishments.

Mr. Speaker, already, these three nations have acted like allies. All three countries have sent troops to the International Security Assistance Force in Afghanistan. In addition, Albania sent 75 special operations troops to take part in Operation Iraqi Freedom, and Macedonia this month has sent 29 special forces troops to Iraq to take part in the stabilization operations there. We appreciate their contributions and look forward to the day when they are ready to take on the full responsibilities of NATO membership.

Mr. Speaker, the Adriatic Charter is also one more step towards President Bush's goal of a Europe whole and free from the Baltic to the Black Sea. This Member commends and congratulates the people of Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia for their initiative and progress, and this Member urges the House to pass this resolution.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Con. Res. 209, which commends the signing of the U.S. Adriatic Charter. As the author of H. Con. Res. 209, I am honored that the House is now considering this important resolution.

On May 2, 2003, the U.S. Adriatic Charter was signed in Tirana, Albania by Secretary of State Colin Powell and the Foreign Ministers of Albania, Croatia, and the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia. As Secretary Colin Powell noted when he signed the document, it is remarkable that the agreement was signed in Albania, a country once known only for its isolation and distance from Western principles. Today, Tirana is a capital filled with energy as it continues its opening to Europe. Macedonia and Croatia have seen similar changes.

As NATO has expanded through other countries of Europe, several former Yugoslav nations in South Central Europe were excluded. They just were not ready for membership. Today, three of those nations, Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia are now moving to make the needed changes and reforms so that they can join the North Atlantic structures.

The U.S. Adriatic Charter embodies a commitment by Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia to the values and principles of NATO and a declaration of their intent to join NATO as soon as they meet Alliance standards. I strongly support their efforts to advance toward NATO membership and having Secretary Powell sign the Charter puts the United States firmly in support of their efforts to join NATO when they are ready.

By passing this resolution today, Congress will add its voice, by "urg[ing] NATO to invite Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia to join NATO as soon as these countries demonstrate the ability to assume the responsibilities of NATO membership."

H. Con. Res. 209 also welcomes and supports the aspirations of Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia to join the European Union at the earliest opportunity and recognizes that the three countries are making important strides to bring their economic, military, and political institutions into conformance with the standards of NATO and other Euro-Atlantic institutions. Finally, our resolution also commends Secretary Powell for his strong personal support of the resolution, as demonstrated by his travel to the region to sign the document.

Mr. Speaker, as the sponsor of H. Con. Res. 209, I think this is an appropriate forum to publicly thank Albania, for sending 75 commandos to Iraq to fight along side our troops. It is my hope that Albania, one of only three European countries to send ground troops to fight in the war, would be high on Defense Department's list when it considers the realignment of and new bases for American forces around the world.

Finally, I would like to thank the chairman of the Europe Subcommittee, Mr. BEREUTER, and his staff for their cooperation and support as we drafted this resolution, H. Con. Res. 209. I would also like to thank the ranking member of the subcommittee, Mr. WEXLER, for his support.

Again, I strongly support H. Con. Res. 209 and urge my colleagues to support its passage.

Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to include in the portion of the CONGRESSIONAL RECORD containing the debate on H. Con. Res. 209, regarding the U.S. Adriatic Charter,

letters from John Kraljic, President of the National Federation of Croatian Americans, His Excellency Nikola Dimitrov, Ambassador of the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, and Martin Vulaj, Executive Director of the National Albanian American Council.

EMBASSY OF THE  
AMBASSADOR REPUBLIC OF MACEDONIA,  
Washington, DC, June 12, 2003.

Hon. Representative ELIOT E. ENGEL,  
*House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR MR. ENGEL: Allow me to express my sincere gratitude for your initiative in adopting the resolution H. Con. Res. 209 by the Committee on Foreign Relations of the House of the Representatives regarding the signing of the United States-Adriatic Charter, charter of partnership among the United States, Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia.

Let me assure you one more time that Macedonia, along with Albania and Croatia is strongly committed to the values and principles of the NATO and is willing to joining the Alliance at the earliest possible time.

My country already contributes to European security and to the peace and security of southeast Europe through peaceful resolution of the conflicts and regional cooperation.

Macedonia strongly supports the endeavors of the Government of the United States to bring security, stability and democracy in Iraq and Afghanistan. My Government has sent troops to Iraq as part of the coalition forces to contribute the success of the operation Iraqi Freedom, and to Afghanistan.

Dear Mr. Engel, I look forward for future opportunity to exchange our views, and thank you again for your support to my country.

Sincerely,

*Nikola Dimitrov.*

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF CROATIAN  
AMERICANS CULTURAL FOUNDATION,  
Washington, DC, June 19, 2003.

Hon. ELIOT ENGEL,  
*Rayburn House Office Building, House of Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CONGRESSMAN ENGEL: Thank you for the introduction of H. Con. Res. 209 and your important service in the U.S. Congress on the Europe Subcommittee of the House International Relations Committee.

The National Federation of Croatian Americans (NFCA) understands that your Concurrent Resolution commending the signing of the United States-Adriatic Charter—a charter of partnership among the United States, Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia—has been voted out of the Full Committee and awaits House Floor action. Please be aware that the NFCA fully supports the passage of this Resolution by both the House of Representatives and the Senate.

NFCA has long supported the Republic of Croatia's request for membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). We believe it is a natural and important extension of Croatia's integration into important western security and related alliances since the Republic's reestablishment as a viable nation-state over ten years ago. Croatia is the most stable and economically developed country in southeastern Europe. Its democratic structure has been strongly established as evidenced by three national elections since 1990. Croatia has a wide range of political parties and a critical and independent press. Economically Croatia's Gross Domestic Product is greater than that of most of its neighbors, some of whom have already joined NATO. Furthermore, since the time Croatia claimed its independence in the

early 1990s, it has adopted American and NATO military techniques. Croatia currently participates as full partner in the U.S. and NATO war on international terrorism.

The NFCA is a Washington, DC-based national umbrella organization that represents over 20 Croatian American groups and 130,000 members. We have promoted the early admittance of Croatia into NATO and, indeed, believe that Croatia should be invited to join NATO as soon as it meets the criteria for membership. Our organization believes the passage of this Concurrent Resolution by the U.S. House of Representatives will further underline the need to bring Croatia into NATO at the earliest opportunity. The NFCA fully supports the passage of H. Con. Res. 209.

Thank you once again for your leadership on this important Resolution.

Sincerely,

JOHN KRALJIC,  
*President.*

NATIONAL ALBANIAN  
AMERICAN COUNCIL,  
Washington, DC, June 23, 2003.

Hon. ELIOT ENGEL,

*Co-Chairman of the Albanian Issues Caucus,  
Rayburn House Office Building, House of  
Representatives, Washington, DC.*

DEAR CONGRESSMAN ENGEL: The National Albanian American Council wishes to express its grateful thanks to you for your initiative in introducing H. Con. Res. 209, which passed by the House International Relations Committee regarding the signing of the United States—Adriatic Charter, a charter of partnership among the United States, Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia.

We believe that this is an important step in paving the way for Albania, Croatia, and Macedonia to become members of NATO in the future. It also reaffirms their determination to work individually and with each other to build a region of strong democracies powered by a free market economy.

We wish to thank you Congressman Engel for your outstanding work and your commitment to the development and democratization of the Balkans. The National Albania American Council wishes to recognize your outstanding contributions and your leadership in the Albania Issues Caucus on behalf of the Albania American Community.

Sincerely,

MARTIN VULAJ,  
*Executive Director.*

Mr. RADANOVICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 209. I am proud to support a resolution which commends the signing of the United States-Adriatic Charter and urges NATO to invite Croatia to become a member.

I have long supported the Republic of Croatia's request for membership in the NATO, and I believe it is a natural and important extension of Croatia's integration into important western security and related alliances since the Republic's reestablishment as a viable nation-state over 10 years ago.

Croatia is one of the most stable and economically developed countries in the southeastern Europe. Its democratic structure has been strongly established as evidence by three national elections since 1990.

Croatia has a wide range of political parties and a critical and independent press. Economically, Croatia's Gross Domestic Product is greater than that of most of its neighbors, some of whom have already joined NATO.

In addition, Croatia currently participates as a full partner in the United States and NATO war on international terrorism. Finally, I believe the passage of this concurrent resolution will further underline the need to bring Croatia into NATO at the earliest opportunity.

Mr. GREEN of Wisconsin. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time,

and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ADERHOLT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GREEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 209, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds of those present have voted in the affirmative.

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

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.

#### FAMILY FARMER BANKRUPTCY RELIEF ACT OF 2003

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2465) to extend for six months the period for which chapter 12 of title 11 of the United States Code is reenacted.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 2465

*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 "Family Farmer Bankruptcy Relief Act of 2003".

#### SEC. 2. SIX-MONTH EXTENSION OF PERIOD FOR WHICH CHAPTER 12 OF TITLE 11, UNITED STATES CODE, IS REENACTED.

(a) AMENDMENTS.—Section 149 of title I of division C of Public Law 105-277 (11 U.S.C. 1201 note) is amended—

(1) by striking "July 1, 2003" each place it appears and inserting "January 1, 2004"; and

(2) in subsection (a)—

(A) by striking "December 31, 2002" and inserting "June 30, 2003"; and

(B) by striking "January 1, 2003" and inserting "July 1, 2003".

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendments made by subsection (a) take effect on July 1, 2003.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) and the gentlewoman from Wisconsin (Ms. BALDWIN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER).

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 2465.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 2465, the Family Farmers Bankruptcy Relief Act of 2003.

Earlier this year, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

reported that certain parts of our Nation, particularly the western and Great Plains States, were experiencing "one of the worst droughts in 108 years." Other parts of the country, like the Northeast, are currently enduring seemingly unending days of rainy weather.

While bad weather may be merely an inconvenience for some of us, uncontrollable weather conditions represent just one of the many difficult challenges that confront family farmers. Like many small businesses, family farmers must also endure and react to rising energy costs, volatile marketplace conditions, and increasing competition from larger businesses. Unfortunately, these economic forces can negatively affect the financial stability of the family farmer.

In response to the particularized needs of family farmers in financial distress, chapter 12 of the Bankruptcy Code was enacted in 1986 as a part of the Bankruptcy Judges, United States Trustees, and Family Farmer Bankruptcy Act. Although originally enacted on a temporary basis to address the farming crisis of the 1980s, chapter 12 has been extended on nine occasions in recognition of the vital relief it offers to family farmers in financial distress. Unless further extended, chapter 12 will sunset at the end of this month.

It is crucial that this specialized form of bankruptcy relief for family farmers not be allowed to sunset for two fundamental reasons. First, family farmers, absent chapter 12, would be forced to file for bankruptcy relief under the Bankruptcy Code's other alternatives, none of which work as well for them as does chapter 12.

Chapter VII of the Bankruptcy Code, for instance, would require a farmer to liquidate; that is, sell the family farm to pay the claims of the farmer's creditors. Many farmers would be precluded from choosing bankruptcy relief under chapter 13 of the Bankruptcy Code because of its restrictive eligibility standards. Furthermore, Chapter XI, the Bankruptcy Code's business reorganization alternative, is not farmer-friendly in various respects, as it often entails an expensive and time-consuming process that does not readily accommodate the special needs of farmers.

Second, recent statistics demonstrate that there is not only a continuing need for chapter 12, but that this need is apparently increasing. According to the Administrative Office of the United States Courts, chapter 12 bankruptcy filings jumped by more than 62 percent over the past year. I introduced H.R. 2465 to extend chapter 12 for an additional 6 months through December 31, 2003, and thereby maintain the status quo while the Congress completes its consideration of comprehensive bankruptcy reform.

As my colleagues may recall, last March the House overwhelmingly