

this next brief extension they will work with the Senate and House committees to pass program changes that resolve these issues fairly, effectively and expeditiously. Their plan does not work and the small business and lending communities are opposed to it. We need a plan that does.

I look forward to working with my colleagues to resolve this as soon as possible.●

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the bill be read the third time and passed, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating to the bill be printed in the RECORD.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The bill (H.R. 3915) was read the third time and passed.

DESIGNATING THE WEEK OF MARCH 7 THROUGH MARCH 13, 2004, AS "NATIONAL PATIENT SAFETY AWARENESS WEEK"

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the immediate consideration of S. Res. 320, submitted earlier today by Senators GRAHAM of Florida, SNOWE, GREGG, and others.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The clerk will state the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 320) designating the week of March 7 through 13, 2004, as "National Patient Safety Awareness Week."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. GRAHAM of Florida. Mr. President, I am very pleased to introduce a resolution to recognize the week of March 7–March 14 as "National Patient Safety Awareness Week" with my colleagues and friends Senator SNOWE, Senator GREGG, Senator DODD and Senator JEFFORDS.

We know that patient safety is a paramount health care issue today: a 1998 Institute of Medicine study shocked us with the fact that nearly 100,000 Americans die each year from medical errors in our clinical settings alone, which highlights both the gravity and emotion associated with this complex challenge.

Some of us have experienced the tragedy of medical error, either directly or through a family member or friend. We are not unique; estimates show that about one in every 5 Americans has experienced a medical error or has a family member who has experienced a medical error.

In addition to the profound emotional cost of these errors, the added burden placed on an already overburdened health care system is equally profound. The cost of medical care provided to correct an error, and the lost wages for those whose recoveries are extended because of medical errors is significant. The Institute of Medicine put a price tag of between \$17 and \$29

billion per year on the overall costs to our economy and our citizens due to medical errors.

We can do better; indeed, we must do better. We can strengthen our efforts to apply proven safety techniques from other sectors and industries that have developed a culture of safety, like the aviation industry. By focusing on system changes, significant progress can be achieved in making our health care system safer.

As legislators, we have drafted a range of proposals to address and improve the systems factors that lead to medical errors. As we think about ways to create a safer health care system, we must continue to work with healthcare professionals, patients and their families to ensure our healthcare systems place an absolute premium on the safety of its patients. In this regard, Senator SNOWE and I have introduced a bill to reduce medication errors in hospitals and skilled nursing facilities. Other cosponsors of this resolution have supported legislation that would create a voluntary reporting system. As we consider these pieces of legislation, it is important to remember that medical errors are a multifaceted problem to which there are multiple solutions.

This resolution addresses another key element in our quest to make our health care system safer: that being to fuel the "power of partnership" between patients, families and healthcare professionals. The "power of partnership" is the theme of this year's Patient Safety Awareness Week, sponsored by the National Patient Safety Foundation. Our recognition of National Patient Safety Awareness Week is an important addition to our efforts to create a safer health care system by promoting increased patient education and highlighting the importance of partnership between healthcare providers and patients.

"Patient Safety Awareness Week" deserves the support of the United States Congress, and I urge my colleagues to support this Senate Resolution. While Patient Safety Awareness Week will not solve all the challenges associated with medical errors, it does launch us on a path of progress, and brings us one step closer.

Through a bipartisan partnership we can highlight the importance of patient safety and the role of the patient and their families in achieving a safer health care system.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution and preamble be agreed to en bloc, the motion to reconsider be laid upon the table, and that any statements relating thereto be printed in the RECORD as if read, without intervening action or debate.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 320) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 320

Whereas patient safety is an issue of significant importance to the United States;

Whereas 1 in every 5 citizens of the United States has experienced a medical error or has a family member who has experienced a medical error;

Whereas medical errors often have serious and profound consequences;

Whereas it is estimated that injuries from preventable medical errors cost the United States economy between \$17,000,000,000 and \$29,000,000,000 each year;

Whereas more people die annually from medical errors than from automobile accidents, breast cancer, and AIDS;

Whereas increased patient and provider education and collaboration can help avoid medical errors;

Whereas the Institute of Medicine has stated that a "critical component of a comprehensive strategy to improve patient safety is to create an environment that encourages organizations to identify errors, evaluate causes and take appropriate actions to improve performance in the future," and further, that "a more conducive environment is needed to encourage health care professionals and organizations to identify, analyze, and report errors without threat of litigation and without compromising patients' legal rights";

Whereas better systems can be implemented to reduce the factors that lead to medical errors;

Whereas innovative educational and research programs are being conducted by the National Patient Safety Foundation as well as by other public and private entities to develop methods for avoiding preventable injuries and to assess the effectiveness of new techniques to increase patient safety; and

Whereas education of the public on medical errors and the factors that typically lead to medical errors empowers patients to be more effective partners with health care providers in the battle against preventable injuries from medical errors: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week of March 7 through March 13, 2004, as "National Patient Safety Awareness Week"; and

(2) requests that the President issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe the week with appropriate programs and activities.

NATIONAL SAFE PLACE WEEK

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Judiciary Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 309 and that the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 309) designating the week beginning March 14, 2004, as "National Safe Place Week".

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table en bloc, and that any statements relating to the resolution be printed in the RECORD.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 309) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 309

Whereas today's youth are vital to the preservation of our country and will be the future bearers of the bright torch of democracy;

Whereas youth need a safe haven from various negative influences such as child abuse, substance abuse and crime, and they need to have resources readily available to assist them when faced with circumstances that compromise their safety;

Whereas the United States needs increased numbers of community volunteers acting as positive influences on the Nation's youth;

Whereas the Safe Place Program is committed to protecting our Nation's most valuable asset, our youth, by offering short term "safe places" at neighborhood locations where trained volunteers are available to counsel and advise youth seeking assistance and guidance;

Whereas the Safe Place Program combines the efforts of the private sector and non-profit organizations uniting to reach youth in the early stages of crisis;

Whereas the Safe Place Program provides a direct way to assist programs in meeting performance standards relative to outreach and community relations, as set forth in the Federal Runaway and Homeless Youth Act guidelines;

Whereas the Safe Place placard displayed at businesses within communities stands as a beacon of safety and refuge to at-risk youth;

Whereas more than 700 communities in 42 States and more than 14,000 locations have established Safe Place Programs;

Whereas more than 68,000 young people have gone to Safe Place locations to get help when faced with crisis situations;

Whereas through the efforts of Safe Place coordinators across the country each year more than one-half million students learn that Safe Place is a resource if abusive or neglectful situations exist; and

Whereas increased awareness of the program's existence will encourage communities to establish Safe Places for the Nation's youth throughout the country: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) proclaims the week of March 14 through March 20, 2004, as "National Safe Place Week"; and

(2) requests that the President issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States and interested groups to promote awareness of and volunteer involvement in the Safe Place Programs, and to observe the week with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

STAR PRINT—REPORT 108-225

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Report 108-225 be star printed with the changes at the desk.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

CAMBODIA

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I will close with a short statement on obser-

vations I made based on a recent article in the Boston Globe entitled "Cambodia's Rights Movement Faces Peril." I ask unanimous consent that the article be printed in the RECORD at the conclusion of my remarks.

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Without objection, it is so ordered.

(See exhibit 1.)

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, this article describes ongoing political violence and intimidation in Cambodia against democracy and human rights advocates and the oppressive environment in which these courageous individuals work. Kem Sokha, Sam Rainsy, and all champions of freedom, have my respect and my support.

While I recognize their bravery and selflessness, I also hear their concerns for their own safety. Tragically, the body count of peaceful advocates murdered in the line of duty continues to grow. Alliance of Democrats spokesman Sam Ung Bung-Ang is right on the mark in saying:

It's not a bloody step forward when we go from 1 million dead [under the Khmer Rouge regime] to 200. Life is life, and one murder is too many.

Caretaker Prime Minister Hun Sen and the Cambodian People's Party have failed to uphold the rule of law or to create conditions conducive to the growth of democracy and prosperity. I add my voice to those calling for new leadership in Cambodia.

Let me close by recognizing the work of the International Republican Institute in Cambodia. For over a decade, through grenade attacks, a coup d'etat, and several flawed elections, the institute has stood shoulder to shoulder with those struggling for freedom.

In such a hostile environment and witness to countless injustices, the institute's Cambodia director, Jackson Cox, is right to ask of the international community: Where's the outrage?

It is past time the world's democracies stood up to champion liberty in Cambodia. While Cambodia may seem small and unworthy of the world's attention, we should not forget terrorism thrives in lawless and chaotic conditions, the very kind we find in Cambodia today. It is a warning and a plea. I urge my colleagues to support reform in this troubled land.

EXHIBIT 1

[From the Boston Globe, Feb. 29, 2004]

CAMBODIA'S RIGHTS MOVEMENT FACES PERIL;
RECENT SLAYINGS RENEW OLD FEARS

(By Rafael D. Frankel)

PHNOM PENH, CAMBODIA.—On a recent trip to a village along the banks of the Mekong River, Kem Sokha brought along not only his trusted bodyguard but also a private American security specialist.

Kem Sokha is not a politician, a big businessman, or a diplomat, but a leader in Cambodia's fledgling human rights movement. And he believes his life is in danger.

The recent brazen killings of a prominent labor organizer, Chea Vichea, and several others affiliated with an opposition political group have heightened the sense of lawlessness in Cambodia, where murder is seen as a

common political tool—and the rich and powerful seem above the law.

The nation's police, judiciary, and elections institutions are controlled by the ruling party, led by Prime Minister Hun Sen, and many Cambodians and foreign aid workers have little confidence that justice can be served.

"I fear the killing fields in Cambodia are still open," said Kem Sokha, president of the Cambodia Center for Human Rights, referring to the place the genocidal Khmer Rouge regime would kill its victims of torture from 1975 to 1979.

Hun Sen, a former Khmer Rouge member who deserted the regime and joined the resistance, has maintained his grip on power in one form or another for nearly two decades through collaboration with Vietnam, military coups, and elections deemed by international observers as lacking "free and fair" standards.

The most recent elections, in July, saw the ruling Cambodian People's Party win a majority of seats in Parliament, but not the two-thirds required to form a government. Since then, a tense political drama has heated up between the CPP and the Democratic Alliance, made up of two opposition parties. Although both sides talk of reaching a settlement soon, the stalemate persists.

The government crisis has coincided with a wave of high-profile murders the past few months.

Chea Vichea, 36, who was affiliated with the opposition Sam Rainsy Party, was killed Jan. 22 in broad daylight in a drive-by shooting in Phnom Penh. A radio journalist, a famous actress, and her mother—all associated with the Democratic Alliance—were gunned down in a similar fashion.

Human rights workers and opposition leaders have seized on what they called a questionable investigation into Chea Vichea's killing, saying it shows the history of impunity that has plagued Cambodia for decades is still prevalent. Two suspects are being held; one accused police of beating him to force a confession.

Accusations have been leveled by the opposition and democracy organizations that the killings were intended as a warning to opposition leaders to join the prime minister in a government.

A ruling-party spokesman, Khieu Kanharith, rejected any idea that the killings were ordered by members of his party, saying the allegations were political ploys. "If we wanted to use violence, why wouldn't we have hit someone higher up in the party?" he said.

But outside of the government, the killings have raised alarms.

"They certainly appear to be politically motivated," said Jackson Cox, the Cambodia director of the International Republican Institute, an American organization that promotes democracy around the world. "The political situation here is tense, and members of the opposition, both high and low, are being murdered."

The recent killings have foreign relief workers and many Cambodian wondering whether Cambodia's development as a democracy has foundered after making great strides since the United Nations launched a \$2 billion relief effort in 1992.

The government points out that Cambodia was rebuilding from total disaster. While many problems remain, the political situation is much less violent than in the past, Khieu Kanharith said.

The opposition rejects such reasoning. "It's not a bloody step forward when we go from 1 million dead to 200," said Sam Ung Bung-Ang, a spokesman for the Democratic Alliance. "Life is life, and one murder is too many."