

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. 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 the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of House Resolution 545 regarding the arrest of Uzbek opposition leader Sanjar Umarov.

Mr. Umarov is a businessman and a leader of the Sunshine Coalition, an Uzbek opposition party that was formed in April in the wake of a popular uprising in neighboring Kyrgyzstan.

The group quickly gained recognition after its condemnation of the severe military crackdown on demonstrators in the eastern city of Andijon earlier this year.

On October 22, 2005, the Uzbek authorities launched a crackdown against the Sunshine Coalition that included a raid of its offices and a seizure of its records. Sanjar Umarov was then charged by the Uzbek regime. Press reports have alleged that Mr. Umarov was drugged and abused while at his pretrial confinement center.

The State Department has expressed its serious concern regarding this case, and last month the Senate passed a companion resolution regarding Mr. Umarov's case. The Congress remains deeply troubled about the overall state of human rights in Uzbekistan, as that regime has become one of the world's most repressive.

Freedom House and our own State Department rank Uzbekistan among some of the world's most notorious human rights violators. As an important first step toward addressing these underlying issues, this resolution calls on the Uzbek authorities to ensure that Mr. Umarov is accorded his full rights under Uzbek law and Uzbekistan's international obligations.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge my colleagues to support this important measure.

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.

I first would like to commend my good friend and colleague ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN for introducing this important measure relating to human rights in Uzbekistan.

Mr. Speaker, the dissolution of the Soviet Union marked an historic triumph for freedom, democracy, and openness throughout the former Soviet realm. Millions of oppressed citizens of the former Soviet Union, from the Baltics to Georgia and Armenia, finally

won the right to choose their leaders freely and openly and to speak publicly their minds about the future of their nation. This historic movement towards freedom and democracy was not uniform, and pockets of despotic totalitarianism remain within the realm of the former Soviet Union. The Central Asian nation of Uzbekistan is one such authoritarian pocket.

Since Uzbekistan won its independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, it has been ruled with an iron fist by Islam Karimov. Karimov came to power in 1991 in elections that our State Department characterized as "neither free nor fair," and I fully agree. His term in office has been repeatedly extended through sham referenda and actions taken by his rubber stamp parliament.

During Karimov's brutal tenure, there has been absolutely no progress towards democratic reform. The government has severely limited freedom of speech and the press, and few reporters there write articles critical of the government for fear of being tossed in jail. Independent human rights organizations are denied registration by the government, and their activities are severely limited.

It is in this context that Sanjar Umarov, a successful business leader in Uzbekistan, decided to form an opposition movement. His Sunshine Coalition raised questions about the lack of true democracy and freedom in Uzbekistan and the Uzbek government's abysmal performance running the nation. Umarov's party offices were raided in October. He was charged with grand larceny, following the Russian example of concocting alleged business crimes to justify the imprisonment of key opposition leaders. There have been reports that Mr. Umarov has been tortured while in custody and that his lawyer found him naked in his cell, covering his face with his hands, rocking back and forth.

Mr. Speaker, the resolution before the House has a simple message: It urges the government of Uzbekistan to accord Mr. Sanjar Umarov the right to defend himself in court according to the rights provided to him by the constitution of Uzbekistan and that the charges against him be publicly clarified and his whereabouts announced.

Mr. Speaker, the government's continued imprisonment of Mr. Umarov is yet another black eye for Uzbekistan internationally. I strongly urge the Uzbek government to reconsider their unwise action and release Mr. Umarov from jail immediately.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this important resolution.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, it is always a pleasure to work with my good friend from California, Mr. LANTOS.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree the resolution, H. Res. 545.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF CONGRESS WITH RESPECT TO THE 2005 ELECTIONS IN EGYPT

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 284) expressing the sense of Congress with respect to the 2005 presidential and parliamentary elections in Egypt, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 284

Whereas promoting freedom and democracy is a foreign policy and national security priority of the United States;

Whereas free, fair, and transparent elections constitute a foundation of any meaningful democracy;

Whereas Egypt is the largest Arab nation comprising over half the Arab world's population;

Whereas Congress has long supported Egypt as a partner for peace and stands ready to support Egypt's emergence as a democracy and free market economy;

Whereas a successful democracy in Egypt would definitely dispel the notion that democracy cannot succeed in the Arab Muslim world;

Whereas in his 2005 State of the Union Address, President George W. Bush stated that "the great and proud nation of Egypt, which showed the way toward peace in the Middle East, can now show the way toward democracy in the Middle East";

Whereas in her June 20, 2005, remarks at the American University in Cairo, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice stated: "[T]he Egyptian Government must fulfill the promise it has made to its people—and to the entire world—by giving its citizens the freedom to choose. Egypt's elections, including the Parliamentary elections, must meet objective standards that define every free election.";

Whereas on February 26, 2005, Egyptian President Mubarak proposed to amend the Egyptian Constitution to allow for Egypt's first ever multi-candidate presidential election;

Whereas in May 2005, President Bush stated that Egypt's presidential election should proceed with international monitors and with rules that allow for a real campaign;

Whereas Egypt prohibited international monitoring in the presidential election, calling such action an infringement on its national sovereignty;

Whereas domestic monitoring of the election became a major point of contention between the government, the judiciary, and civil society organizations;

Whereas in May 2005, the Judges Club, an unofficial union for judges, took the provisional decision to boycott the election if their demand for a truly independent judiciary was not met;

Whereas the Judges Club initially insisted that the 9,000 to 10,000 judges were in no position to monitor the election if plans proceeded for polling at 54,000 stations on one day;

Whereas the government responded to their demands by grouping polling stations to decrease their number to about 10,000, more or less matching the number of available judges;

Whereas on September 2, 2005, a majority of the general assembly of the Judges Club decided that the judges would supervise the election and report any irregularities;

Whereas several coalitions of Egyptian civil society organizations demanded access to polling stations on election day and successfully secured court rulings granting them such access;

Whereas the Presidential Election Council, citing its constitutional authority to oversee the election process, reportedly ignored the court order for several days, before they granted some nongovernmental organizations access to polling stations a few hours before the polls opened;

Whereas the presidential campaign ran from August 17 to September 4, 2005;

Whereas the presidential election held on September 7, 2005, was largely peaceful, but reportedly marred by low turnout, general confusion over election procedures, alleged manipulation by government authorities, and other inconsistencies;

Whereas the presidential election was a potentially important step toward democratic reform in Egypt and a test of President Mubarak's pledge to open the country's authoritarian political system;

Whereas Mr. Mubarak promised to allow during the presidential campaign a free press and independent judiciary, lift emergency laws that stifle political activity, reduce presidential powers in favor of a more freely elected parliament, and allow a slow but steady transition to a liberal democracy;

Whereas parliamentary elections were held in Egypt in November and December 2005;

Whereas several local human rights and civil society organizations issued a joint statement declaring unease over the Egyptian Government's criticism of independent judges, stating that the government was trying to deprive the organizations of the right of free expression;

Whereas reports prepared by judges who monitored the parliamentary elections indicated that numerous violations occurred in the second and third rounds of voting, including the physical prevention of voters from casting their votes, the closure of roads and streets leading to polling stations, and assaults on several judges as they oversaw the elections and protested the security agencies measures to prevent voters from reaching polling stations;

Whereas other Egyptian nongovernmental election monitors also have complained that security forces blocked thousands of eligible voters from entering polling stations during the parliamentary elections;

Whereas poll monitors and human rights organizations reported that violence initiated by Egyptian security forces, coupled with wide-scale arrests, contributed to poor turnout across the country during the parliamentary elections;

Whereas violence during the parliamentary elections, including reports of excessive force by Egyptian security services, resulted in the deaths of several demonstrators and the wounding of dozens more;

Whereas Ayman Nour, Mr. Mubarak's only serious challenger in the presidential election, was declared in the parliamentary elections to have lost his seat—in a Cairo district that elected him twice before—to a

former state security official with reported ties to President Mubarak;

Whereas it was reported that Mr. Nour, a secular liberal, was harassed repeatedly by Mr. Mubarak's proxies and slandered by the Egyptian media, and local election observers reported numerous irregularities in Mr. Nour's Cairo district;

Whereas the Egyptian Government's apparent manipulation of the electoral system resulted in a weakening of the secular opposition and a strengthening of the Islamist opposition in Egypt; and

Whereas it is in the national interests of the United States and Egypt that Egypt be governed by a truly representative, pluralist, and legitimate national parliament: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) recognizes the presidential election held on September 7, 2005, as a potential first step toward greater political reforms in Egypt;

(2) expresses grave concern over the widely reported irregularities during the Egyptian presidential election and parliamentary elections held in November and December 2005, including interference by Egyptian security forces, and the apparent failure of the Government of Egypt to ensure that the elections were free, fair, and transparent;

(3) calls on the Government of Egypt to take immediate steps to address these reported violations of the fundamental freedoms of the Egyptian people and hold those responsible for such violations accountable;

(4) recognizes that the development of a democratically-elected representative and empowered Egyptian national parliament is a fundamental reform needed to permit real progress toward the rule of law and democracy in Egypt;

(5) calls on the Government of Egypt to separate the apparatus of the National Democratic Party from the operations of government, to divest all government holdings in Egyptian media, and to end the government monopoly over printing and distribution of newspapers;

(6) calls on the Government of Egypt to repeal the 1977 emergency law which took effect in 1981, as promised by President Mubarak, and in the development of any future anti-terrorism legislation to allow peaceful, constitutional political activities, including public meetings and demonstrations, and to allow full parliamentary review of any such legislation;

(7) expresses disappointment over the failure of the Government of Egypt to ensure that the presidential election was free, fair, and transparent;

(8) calls on the Government of Egypt, in future elections, to—

(A) ensure supervision by the judiciary of the election process across the country and at all levels;

(B) ensure the presence of accredited representatives of all competing parties and independent candidates at polling stations and during the vote-counting; and

(C) allow local and international election monitors full access and accreditation;

(9) urges the President of the United States to take into account the progress achieved by the Government of Egypt in meeting the goals outlined in this resolution when determining—

(A) the type and nature of United States diplomatic engagement with the Government of Egypt; and

(B) the type and level of assistance to be requested for the Government of Egypt;

(10) given the responsibility of the Government of Egypt for the outcome of the 2005 presidential and parliamentary elections, calls on the Government of Egypt not to use the strength of the Islamist opposition in

Egypt to justify the failure of the Egyptian Government to comply with its international human rights obligations or to undertake the reforms to which it has committed; and

(11) urges the President and other officers of the Government of the United States to speak with unmistakable clarity in expressing the disappointment of the people and Government of the United States with respect to the behavior of the Government of Egypt during the 2005 presidential and parliamentary elections.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. 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 the concurrent resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 284, as amended. Prior to this year's election in Egypt, that country's leader, Hosni Mubarak, promised to undertake a series of steps toward a slow but steady transition to a free and democratic society. However, in the wake of the parliamentary elections it is explicitly clear that those commitments remain unfulfilled.

This concurrent resolution, initially drafted amid an atmosphere of hope, had to be updated from the version passed by the House Committee on International Relations in order to reflect the grave developments that have taken place and to express congressional disappointment with the behavior of the Egyptian government and security forces during the parliamentary elections.

Election monitors complained that polling and counting stations were blocked and that wide-scale arrests were also used as a means of manipulating the electoral process. There were reports of excessive force by Egyptian security services resulting in the deaths of several demonstrators and the wounding of dozens more.

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We must send a clear message to the Egyptian leadership that such behavior is unacceptable and that the concerns contained within this resolution need to be addressed if our bilateral relations are not to suffer.

The resolution before us therefore calls on the government of Egypt to take immediate steps to address the reported violations of fundamental freedoms of the Egyptian people and to hold those accountable for those actions and it urges the President to take

into account what, if any, progress has been achieved by the Government of Egypt in meeting the goals outlined in this resolution when determining diplomatic engagement with and the type of level of assistance to the Government of Egypt.

This resolution is also forward looking, calling on the Government of Egypt to take a series of confidence-building measures in future elections.

Mr. Speaker, it is in the U.S. national security interest and in the interest of the Egyptian people for Egypt to be governed by a representative freely elected and legitimate national government. I ask my colleagues to render their full support to this measure.

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 H. Con. Res. 284 and commend my good friend, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN and my colleague Mr. ACKERMAN of New York, for sponsoring it.

Mr. Speaker, Egypt held a series of elections this year, both presidential and parliamentary. They were the most competitive elections Egypt has conducted in many decades; and, broadly speaking, I commend President Mubarak for that. But that judgment, of course, is rendered against the background of the decidedly noncompetitive and unfree elections that have previously marked the quarter century of the Mubarak era.

Accordingly, this resolution is absolutely on target in expressing the deep disappointment and grave concern of this body with the heavy-handed and often violent tactics that the Government of Egypt and its security forces continue to employ in order to ensure their unbroken dominance. This government-initiated violence apparently was intended to limit voting in certain antigovernment districts. It resulted in nearly a dozen deaths. In other cases, polling stations were simply shut down by the security forces or shadowy groups of nonuniformed thugs.

But many of the problems associated with these elections, arguably the most serious problems, had nothing to do with violence. These include the Egyptian Government's refusal to allow international election monitors and even domestic NGOs meaningful access to polling stations and its transparent and successful effort to eviscerate any meaningful secular opposition to the ruling party.

For example, in seeking to convince Egyptians and the world that the ruling National Democratic Party is the only bulwark against Islamic fundamentalism, the government trumped up legal charges against Mr. Ayman Nour, whose secular reformist agenda catapulted him to a second-place finish in the September presidential elections. This theater-of-the-absurd legal case crippled Nour's ability to conduct a parliamentary campaign, and he even lost his own parliamentary seat under highly questionable circumstances.

In light of all these problems, Mr. Speaker, it is hardly surprising that barely one-quarter of the Egyptian electorate even bothered to vote, a dismal participation rate which compares most unfavorably with the almost-70 percent of the electorate voting in Iraq.

Mr. Speaker, this body has every right and obligation to take a deep interest in the process of democratization and human rights reform in Egypt, the recipient yet again this year of some \$2 billion of military and economic support from the pockets of American taxpayers. We have every right to expect that when Egypt pledges to hold free elections, these elections will be truly free.

As our Secretary of State, Dr. Condoleezza Rice, said at the American University in Cairo in June: "Egypt's elections must meet objective standards that define every free election." Unfortunately, the elections of 2005 fell far short of those standards.

Mr. Speaker, the administration is set to be seriously contemplating the opening of negotiations for a free trade agreement with Egypt next month. I think that would be a most regrettable step. It would be construed as a signal that the United States is satisfied with the State of Egypt's progress toward democratization; and as I am confident the vote on this resolution will show, this body decidedly is not satisfied at all.

Mr. Speaker, I do not want to minimize the problems Egypt faces in moving towards democracy in a society where income is extraordinarily low and the illiteracy rate is unbelievably high, nor should we be unconcerned that these elections have revealed that the Fundamentalist Brotherhood, which thrives with the impoverished and ill-educated, remains a powerful force in Egypt. But I remain convinced that true democratization, buttressed by free, fair, transparent and truly competitive elections, will allow for the emergence of a secular opposition. That is the right way to go about creating a prosperous and healthy Egypt.

So, Mr. Speaker, these elections may represent a step forward, but a much shorter and far clumsier step than this body, the American people and, most importantly, the Egyptian people have every right to expect. That is why I support this resolution and urge my colleagues to do so.

Mr. ISSA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 284, a resolution expressing the sense of Congress with respect to the 2005 presidential and parliamentary elections in Egypt.

I consider myself a friend of Egypt and while I believe Egypt deserves praise and recognition for the steps toward democracy it has made this year by moving to a direct vote on the election for the office of President and the reforms that followed I must also, as a friend, express some disappointment and concern about missed opportunities.

Specifically, I was disappointed to see that more was not done to ensure that domestic

election monitoring officials would be granted full access to polling and counting stations. I have also been disappointed to learn about the continued severe limitations placed on respected international election observing organizations to gain accreditation and reasonable access to polling and counting sites. The International Republican Institute, which had a team of international election experts on the ground for the recent parliamentary elections reported, "The November 2005 parliamentary election process does not support the claim that Egypt is in a process of democratic transformation."

Mr. Speaker, this resolution rightfully focuses Congress's attention on a number of different aspects of the electoral process in Egypt. While there are many areas where improvement is needed in Egypt, I would like to give credit to Egypt where credit is due. The International Republican Institute made the following assessment in the conclusion section of its "2005 Parliamentary Election Assessment in Egypt" about positive developments in the most recent round of elections:

Despite negative aspects of the 2005 Parliamentary elections, it is possible to highlight several notable achievements when compared with elections in the past. First, the role played by the domestic monitoring groups and the Judges' Club—as with the Presidential election—has been important, as elements of civil society begin to take a more active role in advocating for greater democratic freedom and pluralism.

In addition, between monitoring groups and independent media, the government has permitted a new level of scrutiny from the domestic and international community.

Several of IRI's delegates had spent time in Egypt in the late 1980's and early 1990's, and noted that the public debate about political reform and criticism of the ruling party and the government would have been unthinkable 10 or 15 years ago. The relative freedom with which state-run and independent press can debate these issues is an indicator of progress that should not go unmentioned.

In closing, I stand ready to support Egypt as it moves toward truly competitive democratic elections. This movement is rarely easy, and I will be among the first to recognize progress made by Egypt as it occurs.

I would also note that despite all shortcomings in the recent elections, Egypt—despite the work that needs to be done—remains a leader in the Middle East when it comes to democracy, its relationship with the United States, and its positive relationship with Israel. I believe it is, in fact, Egypt's close relationship with the United States that gives this Congress the responsibility to ensure that this relationship enhances the security, prosperity, and the democratic freedoms of both peoples.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. LATHAM). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 284, 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.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. 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 question will be postponed.

PASSPORT SERVICES ENHANCEMENT ACT OF 2005

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4501) to amend the Passport Act of June 4, 1920, to authorize the Secretary of State to establish and collect a surcharge to cover the costs of meeting the increased demand for passports as a result of actions taken to comply with section 7209(b) of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 4501

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 "Passport Services Enhancement Act of 2005".

SEC. 2. AUTHORITY OF SECRETARY OF STATE TO ESTABLISH AND COLLECT A SURCHARGE TO COVER THE COSTS OF MEETING THE INCREASED DEMAND FOR PASSPORTS.

Section 1 of the Passport Act of June 4, 1920 (22 U.S.C. 214) is amended—

(1) in the first sentence, by striking "There shall be collected and paid" and inserting "(a) There shall be collected and paid"; and

(2) by adding at the end the following new subsection:

"(b)(1) The Secretary of State may by regulation establish and collect a surcharge on applicable fees for the filing of each application for a passport in order to cover the costs of meeting the increased demand for passports as a result of actions taken to comply with section 7209(b) of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004 (Public Law 108-458; 8 U.S.C. 1185 note). Such surcharge shall be in addition to the fees provided for in subsection (a) and in addition to the surcharges or fees otherwise authorized by law and shall be deposited as an offsetting collection to the appropriate Department of State appropriation, to remain available until expended for the purposes of meeting such costs.

"(2) The authority to collect the surcharge provided under paragraph (1) may not be exercised after September 30, 2010.

"(3) The Secretary of State shall ensure that, to the extent practicable, the total cost of a passport application during fiscal years 2006 and 2007, including the surcharge authorized under paragraph (1), shall not exceed the cost of the passport application as of December 1, 2005."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Mem-

bers may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H.R. 4501.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, this bill represents a bipartisan and bicameral measure. We have worked with our colleagues on the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to draft a bill that will assist the State Department in meeting the ever-increasing demand for U.S. passports. The 9/11 bill required that Americans carry a passport when reentering the United States from travel to countries in the Western Hemisphere. This requirement is greatly increasing the demand for passport services.

This bill, which has been approved by OMB, will allow the State Department to collect and retain a surcharge of approximately \$5 to \$8 on each passport. Because the State Department expects there to be a decline in the actual cost of issuing each passport, there will not be an increase in the current price for issuing passports, which is now \$97.

Presently, the U.S. Treasury receives the revenues from fees charged for the issuance of a passport. As a result of this legislation, the State Department will keep part of the passport fee. The bill narrowly defines the uses permitted of the proceeds from this surcharge. It is for the cost of additional personnel, mailing and similar operational costs that are necessary to keep up with the increased passport workload. The authority for the Department to collect this surcharge will expire in the year 2010. Congress will be able to assess whether this surcharge continues to be necessary.

This is an important measure that has been requested by the Secretary of State, and the text has been worked out between the majority and the minority of both the House International Relations Committee and the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee. I urge support for H.R. 4501, as amended.

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 support of this measure. The measure before us would amend the Passport Act of June 4, 1920, to authorize the Secretary of State to establish and collect a surcharge to cover the costs of meeting the increased demand for passports as a result of actions taken to comply with section 7209(b) of the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act of 2004.

Mr. Speaker, the Intelligence Reform and Terrorism Prevention Act requires U.S. citizens to obtain and utilize passports when reentering the United States from other foreign jurisdictions within the Western Hemisphere. The

Department of State, therefore, is facing a massive increase in demand for passports in anticipation of this new security requirement. Our Secretary of State estimates that demand could grow from less than 9 million applicants in fiscal year 2004 to over 17 million a year by the end of fiscal year 2008.

Mr. Speaker, the Department of State desperately needs the resources to increase its passport adjudication and production capabilities to meet this demand. Our measure will enable the State Department to collect the new surcharge from passport fees and provides the Secretary with the authority to use the proceeds from this surcharge to pay for the staff, equipment, and facilities she will need to meet this critical national security mandate.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this critical piece of legislation.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4501, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AUTHORIZING TRANSFER OF ITEMS IN WAR RESERVES STOCKPILE FOR ALLIES, KOREA

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 1988) to authorize the transfer of items in the War Reserves Stockpile for Allies, Korea.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 1988

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. WAR RESERVES STOCKPILE FOR ALLIES, KOREA.

(a) AUTHORITY TO TRANSFER ITEMS IN STOCKPILE.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Notwithstanding section 514 of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961 (22 U.S.C. 2321h), the President is authorized to transfer to the Republic of Korea, on such conditions as the President may determine, any or all of the items described in paragraph (2).

(2) COVERED ITEMS.—The items referred to in paragraph (1) are munitions, equipment, and materiel such as tanks, trucks, artillery, mortars, general purpose bombs, repair parts, barrier material, and ancillary equipment if such items are—

(A) obsolete or surplus items;

(B) in the inventory of the Department of Defense;

(C) intended for use as reserve stocks for the Republic of Korea; and

(D) as of the date of the enactment of this Act, located in a stockpile in the Republic of Korea or Japan.