

H.R. 241. An act to accelerate the income tax benefits for charitable cash contributions for the relief of victims of the Indian Ocean tsunami.

H. Con. Res. 2. Concurrent resolution providing for a conditional adjournment of the House of Representatives and a conditional recess or adjournment of the Senate.

ELECTION REFORM

(Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I said earlier, as I see my good friend and colleague on the floor, that this was a sacred and historic day, and I am gratified of the leadership of the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS), my ranking member, who joined together with many of us in Washington and Ohio to acknowledge the sanctity and sacredness of the right to vote and the Constitution.

We did not stand in bitterness or opposition to a person. We did not stand to undermine the presidency of the United States of America. But what we did do was to stand to uphold the Constitution and our oath of office taken on January 4, 2005, and that was to uphold the laws of this Nation. I am grateful for this debate and the process of democracy so that the world can see in Afghanistan, Iraq, in Africa, South America, in Asia, and around the world that America stands for equality and justice. We have work to do, Madam Speaker. There is no paper trail in our process. There is an unequal system of justice of voting in the States. This Congress must work in a bipartisan way to reform the election system of America, and I ask my colleagues to do so.

□ 1730

AGREEMENT BETWEEN UNITED STATES AND RUSSIAN FEDERATION EXTENDING MUTUAL FISHERIES AGREEMENT—MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES (H. DOC. NO. 109-5)

The SPEAKER pro tempore laid before the House the following message from the President of the United States; which was read and, together with the accompanying papers, without objection, referred to the Committee on Resources and ordered to be printed: *To the Congress of the United States:*

Consistent with the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act (16 U.S.C. 1801 et seq.), I transmit herewith an Agreement between the Government of the United States of America and the Government of the Russian Federation extending the Agreement Between the Government of the United States and the Government of the Russian Federation on Mutual Fisheries Relations of May 31, 1999, with annex, as extended (the "Mu-

tual Fisheries Agreement"). The present Agreement, which was affected by an exchange of notes in Moscow on March 3, 2003, and January 30, 2004, extends the Mutual Fisheries Agreement to December 31, 2008.

In light of the importance of our fisheries relationship with the Russian Federation, I urge the Congress to give favorable consideration to this Agreement at an early date.

GEORGE W. BUSH.
THE WHITE HOUSE, January 6, 2005.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BLACKBURN). Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WOOLSEY) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Ms. WOOLSEY addressed the House. Her remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PALLONE) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. PALLONE addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

ISSUES CONCERNING AMERICA AND THE WORLD

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 4, 2005, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) is recognized for 60 minutes as the designee of the minority leader.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, I will begin my remarks as I started this morning and as I continued on the floor just a few minutes ago.

It is good to be an American, and it is certainly good to have Americans value their freedom, their justice, their democracy, and their Constitution.

I said earlier that the debate regarding the election of a President had nothing to do with any personal statement on the executive. But what it did have to do with is, I believe, a value for all Americans, and that is the value of valuing a vote; one vote, one person; one vote counted and not uncounted.

The reason why I rise is because I co-chair the Afghan Caucus, and I was very proud to see the work that was done by all of those around the world that helped contribute to the election process in Afghanistan.

I was equally proud of those who have sacrificed their lives; those who tried to vote but were undermined by terrorists and others who were distracted away from the voting process. And even though there is much disagreement many times about the proc-

ess, we welcome democracy; President Karzai now has begun to turn Afghanistan into a nation that welcomes the education of all people, that welcomes the empowerment of women and the protection of human rights.

So it is important today, January 6, 2005, to reinforce that for our Nation, for if we were to look at some of the infractions, in my own county, in Harris County, Texas, 270 voting failures; the lack of voting places and voting equipment; equipment breaking down; voter intimidation; voter suppression; equipment showing one name, as in my particular election of the Eighteenth Congressional District, constituents voting for me and my opponent's name showing up, who happened to be in the other party. So it is very vital, Madam Speaker, for us to take very seriously the democratic process.

Let me also say in the backdrop of a terrible tragedy in Iraq, and when I say tragedy, obviously what I mean is no reflection on the brave men and women who fight every day, those who I visited and those whose greetings I bring home to their families, but the tragedy of a misdirected war, a war based on weapons of mass destruction that did not exist, a war that was based on liberation, and we are still struggling for that, a war that is ongoing with no end in sight. We still are looking for an election on January 30 and hoping and praying that the Iraqi people will have the opportunity to take up their own destiny.

But that is why this day was so very important and why it was important for Members of Congress, not of any caucus or any one group, to be engaged in the debate and the democracy. I thank the two signers of the petition, as I indicated, the gentlewoman from Ohio (Mrs. JONES) and the Senator from California, Ms. BOXER.

But I also thank the ranking member of the Committee on the Judiciary, the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS), for the insight he had; for the hearings I participated in in Washington and also the hearings that others participated in in Ohio. It allowed us to hear firsthand the pain of people who tried to vote and could not vote. It allowed us to hear firsthand about those who stood in line until 4 a.m., those who were turned away, those who had fewer machines in their community than those in others.

Madam Speaker, I think in this year we are to reauthorize portions of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. It is clearly urgent that we not disregard and disrespect the voting process.

Might I say that my heritage is one that is different from many Americans. My ancestors came here as slaves. When the Constitution was written, they were less than one person. It took constitutional amendments, the 13th, 14th and 15th, one to eliminate slavery, the others to provide equal process and equal protection and due process. And certainly it took the Constitution to acknowledge every citizen's right to vote.

Therefore, I do not take lightly the responsibility of fighting for voting rights, and that is why I stand today at the conclusion of this day to say to this House that we hope no one left here embittered, believing that this should not have been done; that I will get you in the appropriations process; I will make sure your bill does not pass; I will see you in the committee room.

I hope that does not happen, Madam Speaker. I hope that the collegiate response of the Speaker of the House, the gentleman from Illinois (Speaker HASTERT), who presided, who I give great accolades for his demeanor and temperament, I hope that will be the temperament of the Republican leadership throughout this body's time. I hope that individual Members will not take it personally. I hope that they will not undermine their oath of office and demean the dignity of this place by punishing people for utilizing democracy.

Then I would simply say that in the backdrop of the tragic loss of our good friend and colleague, Bob Matsui, and the passing of our former colleague, Shirley Chisholm, two Members that were so different in time and age but yet represented the focus of this body, and that is representing the people, today we attempted to represent the people. We represented people not only in Ohio, but where people felt they were disenfranchised all over the Nation. So in that representation, I am proud.

As we look to the future and the backdrop of the tragedy that is going on in Asia, people now who have no places to live, no places to vote, no places to eat, no places to go and get medical care, no places to be educated, we in America should be highly grateful for what has transpired in this country on this very day.

As we do so, might I say that I congratulate those who are now engaged in the humanitarian help going on for the tsunami victims.

I would also like to applaud the efforts of a group that has founded itself in Houston, Houston's Solution for Tsunami Victims. There are many other groups that have formulated in Houston as well, but this group in particular came together in less than 48 hours after the tragedy, and they are representatives from Indonesia, Sri Lanka, Bangladesh, Vietnam, India, Pakistan, Thailand and all over our community, those who came together to find out what they could do.

I am gratified that on this Sunday they will come together again. January 9, 2004, we will be at the University of Houston Wellness Center in Houston, Texas, inviting all the community to come out and provide medical relief and as well to save the children by providing diaper items and bottles and other dry items for children who are in need in these devastated areas.

I look forward as well to joining my colleagues in visiting Sri Lanka in the days to come and hopefully bringing a

sense of hope to the people who are now hopeless.

This is an important democracy in which I stand in the most powerful lawmaking body in this Nation.

I am gratified to be able to stand here, one, to salute the process today that was one founded in democracy, equal protection and due process; but I am also very grateful to stand here today to salute America and all of those who have risen to the occasion in aid of those in the Asian area that are suffering from the tsunami devastation.

I will also make mention of the legislation that is now gaining great bipartisan support, the temporary protective status to be given to those nationals from those areas so devastated who are not able to go back and their legal documents are expired. I hope we will move swiftly on that legislation, because it will add to the humanitarian stance of the President of the United States, the Secretary of State, the United States Congress, and the American people.

We all can do better, and we can do better united together. I want to applaud Houston's Solution for Tsunami Relief Victims. I want to applaud all of the relief efforts going on around the Nation and all of the international aid groups in the United Nations for rising to the occasion.

As I close, let me admonish those who are participating in this relief effort that this is a short-term stance that we are taking right now. We will need a long-term investment. The \$350 million that the United States has offered, it may not be enough; and I hope this Congress will rise to the occasion and make it sufficient.

On that, let me say, Madam Speaker, I am grateful that we have a Constitution that allows me to speak under the first amendment. I am grateful that we have a process that allows democracy to follow through today. I am more grateful that we have a large heart in the United States that is drawn together from every nook and cranny, every hamlet, every city, every rural area, that is now participating in this massive relief effort for those so devastated.

Let me also ask for prayers for families who have lost loved ones, including those Americans that have now died, and let us ask for prayers for those who are now suffering. We hope that we can stand in the doorway and prevent more disease and more death that may come from this terrible disaster.

I ask as I go to my seat that God bless the United States of America, God bless this process, and God bless those that are suffering today in the world.

LEAVE OF ABSENCE

By unanimous consent, leave of absence was granted to:

Mr. BACA (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of personal reasons.

Mr. DEFAZIO (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of duties in the district.

Mr. KIND (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of personal reasons.

Mr. ORTIZ (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of important business in the district.

Mr. STARK (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of escorting the Matsui family to Sacramento, California, where the late Honorable Robert T. Matsui will lie in state in the California State capitol.

Mr. STUPAK (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of travel problems.

Mrs. TAUSCHER (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of official business.

Mr. WYNN (at the request of Ms. PELOSI) for today on account of personal reasons.

Mrs. BIGGETT (at the request of Mr. DELAY) for today on account of official travel overseas.

Ms. GRANGER (at the request of Mr. DELAY) for today on account of being out of the country on official business.

Mr. SHADEGG (at the request of Mr. DELAY) for today on account of a death in the family.

Mr. SHIMKUS (at the request of Mr. DELAY) for today on account of his traveling with a congressional delegation to Jordan.

SPECIAL ORDERS GRANTED

By unanimous consent, permission to address the House, following the legislative program and any special orders heretofore entered, was granted to:

(The following Members (at the request of Mrs. JONES of Ohio) to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material:)

Ms. WOOLSEY, for 5 minutes, today.

Mr. PALLONE, for 5 minutes, today.

EXTENSION OF REMARKS

By unanimous consent, permission to revise and extend remarks was granted to:

Mr. CONYERS and to include extraneous material, notwithstanding the fact that it exceeds two pages of the RECORD and is estimated by the Public Printer to cost \$5,867.

ADJOURNMENT

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Madam Speaker, pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 2, 109th Congress, I move that the House do now adjourn.

The motion was agreed to.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Accordingly, pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 2, 109th Congress, the House stands adjourned until 10 a.m. on Thursday, January 20, 2005.

Thereupon (at 5 o'clock and 42 minutes p.m.), pursuant to House Concurrent Resolution 2, the House adjourned until Thursday, January 20, 2005, at 10 a.m.