

support for the Good Friday Agreement as the blueprint for lasting peace in Northern Ireland and support for continued police reform in Northern Ireland as a critical element in the peace process. I compliment the work of Subcommittee Chairmen ELTON GALLEGLY and CHRISTOPHER SMITH for improving and making the originally-introduced version even more constructive and stronger on policing. The Good Friday Agreement needs U.S. support and a push to fully implement all of its terms.

On the important issue of policing reform, the resolution before us wisely reflects the overall view of the Independent Monitoring Commission (IMC) for the north of Ireland, which has closely monitored paramilitary activities and made many critical suggestions for reform and change, especially in the area of a new beginning on policing.

The IMC is made up of highly respected representatives appointed by both the Irish and British Governments, and includes an American as well. In its May 2005 report to the two governments and interested parties, the IMC stated some key findings on the responsibilities of all of the political parties on criminal justice, and it has just reiterated these again in its February 2006 report.

The IMC said that all the parties should, among other things:

"Give credible vocal and practical support to all parts of the criminal justice system, including policing . . ."

"Play a full and constructive role in the participative organs of the criminal justice system, such as the Policing Board and the District Policing Partnerships."

These are some wise and constructive suggestions, which this resolution supports and fully endorses. We would encourage Sinn Fein and all the parties in the north to honor and live by these ideas for a better, more secure and democratic north of Ireland. There is no place for violence in the process.

Finally, my resolution also calls on both the Irish and British governments to fully implement the important Patten Commission police reform provision which calls for senior-level police officer exchanges between the Republic of Ireland and the Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI). These exchanges are clearly needed so that some of the cultural, religious, and other long-standing issues dividing communities and the police in the north can fully benefit from senior-level understanding and diversity.

I urge adoption of the resolution.

Mr. MURPHY. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 744, which honors the Good Friday Agreement of 1998 for being what I believe is, as the resolution states, "the blueprint for lasting peace in Northern Ireland."

Next Monday, April 10, 2006 will mark the 8th anniversary of the Good Friday Agreement, which has helped to bring nearly a decade of peace to Northern Ireland. As a result of the historic Good Friday Agreement, there is perhaps a greater potential for lasting peace in Northern Ireland now than perhaps ever, since the establishment of the Irish Republic. The Good Friday Agreement has outlined a plan for peace and reconciliation in the 21st century.

I believe the most significant result of the Good Friday Agreement was the revival of the Northern Ireland Assembly, a devolved government body that has facilitated important de-

bate between the political parties. Consequently, problems have been directly and civilly addressed through free and open debate. Unfortunately, as my colleagues know, due to disagreements between the political parties—the Social Democrat and Labor Party, the Ulster Unionist Party, the Democratic Unionist Party, and Sinn Fein—the Northern Ireland Assembly has been suspended since October of 2002. Ever since, the British government has taken direct control over the government to ensure stability. I would hope all sides can agree to terms in order to allow the Assembly to be reestablished.

Madam Speaker, I have met with the leaders of Sinn Fein, the DUP, the UUP and the SDLP, both here in the U.S. and in Ireland. All parties have conveyed to me that they agree it is vital for the future security of the North that new elections be held, an Executive put in place, and the legislative assembly reconvened. I agree with this view, and express the support of the U.S. House of Representatives to facilitate the peace process.

I thank the distinguished Chairman of the International Relations Committee, Mr. HYDE, for authoring this resolution.

Mr. KING of New York. Madam Speaker, today I rise in strong support of H. Res. 744, a resolution that expresses support for the Good Friday Agreement as the blueprint for lasting peace in the North of Ireland. H. Res. 744 is an expanded version of a resolution written by my colleagues JIM WALSH, RICHARD NEAL, JOE CROWLEY, and I last November. I appreciate Chairman HYDE sponsoring this new bill with its additional language which I believe strengthens our initial endeavor and moving it to the House floor promptly. I am also grateful for the opportunity to work with the Chairman and his staff on the drafting of this resolution.

H. Res. 744 expresses our strong commitment to the ideals of the Good Friday Agreement, a referendum that was endorsed by an overwhelmingly majority of the people living both in the North and the Republic of Ireland on April 10, 1998. As we approach the 8th anniversary of this date, I think it is important to recognize those groups and individuals who have committed themselves to peace, justice, and equality and worked to fully implement this agreement. Much progress has been made since 1998 but much still more needs to be done.

First, I'd like to commend (UK) Prime Minister Tony Blair and the (Irish) Taoiseach Bertie Ahern for their leadership in securing a peaceful resolution in the North of Ireland. We would certainly not be where we are today if it were not for these two great statesmen. I'd also like to thank our own government, including both the Clinton and Bush Administrations, for their dedication and efforts to move this process forward. We have been lucky to have fine diplomats such as George Mitchell, Tony Lake, Richard Haass, and Mitchell Reiss play vital roles during the past decade.

One of the most significant changes in the North recently related to the changes in policing. The new Police Service of Northern Ireland (PSNI) has adopted many of the Patten recommendations to become a much more integrated, professional, and impartial police force. Under the leadership of its chief constable, Sir Hugh Orde, and its ombudsman, Nuala O'Loan, the PSNI is a much more effective and accountable law enforcement agency

that promotes human rights and fosters community confidence.

Finally, I'd like to commend the leadership of Sinn Fein, specifically Gerry Adams and Martin McGuinness, for successfully urging the Irish Republican Army to end its armed campaign and verifiably put all of its weapons beyond use. This was a crucial step in the peace process to demonstrate the Republicans' commitment to an exclusively democratic and peaceful process. There is no place for any paramilitaries in the North of Ireland and it is my hope that the remaining private armies will follow the IRA's lead by destroying their weapons and signing up to the peace process.

Now is a critical time for the people and the political parties in the North of Ireland. This Thursday the British and Irish governments intend to publish their plans for a resumption of the Northern Ireland Assembly and Executive. It is long past due for this government to be back up and running. But for this to happen, all parties must agree to share power and commit themselves to the full implementation of the Good Friday Agreement.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. BIGGERT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 744.

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 question will be postponed.

COMMENDING THE PEOPLE OF THE REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS FOR THE CONTRIBUTIONS AND SACRIFICES THEY MADE TO THE UNITED STATES NUCLEAR TESTING PROGRAM IN THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

Mr. LEACH. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 692) commending the people of the Republic of the Marshall Islands for the contributions and sacrifices they made to the United States nuclear testing program in the Marshall Islands, solemnly acknowledging the first detonation of a hydrogen bomb by the United States on March 1, 1954, on the Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands, and remembering that 60 years ago the United States began its nuclear testing program in the Marshall Islands, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 692

Whereas between 1946 and 1958, the United States conducted 67 nuclear tests in the Marshall Islands, 66 of which resulted in atmospheric fallout;

Whereas the most powerful of these tests was the hydrogen weapons test codenamed

Bravo, a 15-megaton device detonated on March 1, 1954, at Bikini Atoll;

Whereas the Bravo detonation alone was the equivalent to 1,000 Hiroshima-sized bombs;

Whereas 17 other tests in the Marshall Islands were in the megaton range, and the total yield of the 67 tests was 108 megatons, the equivalent yield of more than 7,000 Hiroshima bombs and 93 times the total of Nevada atmospheric tests;

Whereas in July 1998, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimated that 6.3 billion curies of radioactive iodine-131 were released to the atmosphere as a result of the testing in the Marshall Islands;

Whereas the 12-year nuclear testing program has been the defining experience of the modern era for the people of the Marshall Islands, and these momentous events created a common bond between the people of the Marshall Islands and the United States military and civilian personnel who shared hardships and suffering with the people of the Marshall Islands during the testing program;

Whereas as a Member State of the United Nations, the world body that once had oversight of United States stewardship of the trusteeship for the people of the Marshall Islands and their island homelands, the Republic of the Marshall Islands has an unmatched record of working in conjunction with the leadership of the United States in the pursuit of international peace and security, the rights and well-being of the peoples of the world, and in the War on Terrorism: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) commends the people of the Republic of the Marshall Islands for the contributions and sacrifices they made to the United States nuclear testing program in the Marshall Islands;

(2) solemnly acknowledges the first detonation of a hydrogen bomb by the United States on March 1, 1954, on the Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands; and

(3) remembers that 60 years ago the United States began its nuclear testing program in the Marshall Islands.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Iowa.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LEACH. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days 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 Iowa?

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, first I would like to commend the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) for introducing this timely resolution which commemorates the six decades of friendship and strategic solidarity that the United States have shared with the people of the Marshall Islands.

June 30 marks the 60th anniversary of the U.S. nuclear testing program in the Marshall Islands. The program encompassed 67 atmospheric tests, in-

cluding the 15 megaton blast codenamed "Bravo," a detonation equivalent to a thousand Hiroshima-sized bombs, which occurred above Bikini Atoll on March 1, 1954.

The last nuclear test occurred in August of 1958. These massive detonations were considered critical at the time to the development of our nuclear deterrent during the Cold War and represent the most vivid examples of a strategic partnership that stretches back to the Pacific campaign of the Second World War.

They also symbolize the dangers of nuclear weapons and the unintended consequences of weapons development. Tragically, for instance, as this resolution points out, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimated that 6.3 billion curies of radioactive iodine-131 were released in the atmosphere as a result of the testing in the Marshall Islands.

Recently, the United States reaffirmed and extended aspects of its unique relationship with the Republic of the Marshall Islands in the amended Compact of Free Association which the Congress considered and approved during the 108th Congress. As we approach the anniversary of the commencement of the U.S. nuclear testing program in the Marshall Islands, it is fitting to recall the mutual sacrifices that our people shared during the last century and commit ourselves to maintaining our special friendship in the decades ahead. I urge support of this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution. First, I would like to commend my very good friend and distinguished colleague, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, for introducing this important measure concerning nuclear testing in the Marshall Islands.

His tireless leadership to strengthen the bonds between the United States and all the nations of the Pacific is deeply appreciated by all of us who have the privilege of serving with him on the International Relations Committee.

□ 1500

Madam Speaker, 60 years ago, the history of the Marshall Islands and its people was fundamentally altered. The residents of isolated Bikini Atoll were loaded aboard American military ships and sent to live on a distant atoll. The goal of this relocation was simple: to enable the testing of a hydrogen bomb equivalent to 1,000 Hiroshima-sized weapons. Bikini Atoll had drawn the short straw, and it would become ground zero for the famous Bravo detonation.

This blast in 1954 was not the first nor the last nuclear test in the Marshall Islands. Between 1946 and 1958, we conducted 67 nuclear tests in the Marshall Islands, but Bravo was the most

powerful of our nuclear tests and the one which caused the greatest impact on the long-term health of Marshallese citizens.

Despite the enormous after-effects of the U.S. nuclear testing program, the relationship between the Marshallese and the American people has only grown stronger over the past six decades. Through the Compact of Free Association, the United States provided substantial financial assistance to the Marshall Islands and medical aid to those directly impacted by the nuclear tests.

In return, the government of the Marshall Islands has been a steadfast ally of the United States since it obtained its independence in 1986. Young Marshallese citizens proudly serve in the United States military, and they have died alongside their American comrades in defense of liberty in Iraq. The government of the Marshall Islands has stood with us on vote after vote in the United Nations, when many of our other allies were more than happy to sideline their commitment to freedom and democracy, particularly in cases when the defense of the democratic State of Israel was at stake.

Mr. Speaker, over the past six decades, the people of the Marshall Islands and the United States have been on a long, but important, journey together, beginning with the liberation by American GIs of the Marshall Islands from Japanese occupation, continuing through 12 years of post-war atmospheric nuclear testing and resulting in a strong and mutually beneficial relationship between these two Pacific nations.

The 60th anniversary of the Bravo test is an important time to remember our shared history and to appreciate better the future positive relations we can surely expect between our two nations.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly support this resolution and urge all of my colleagues to do as well.

Mr. Speaker, I am delighted to yield as much time as he might consume to the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA), my distinguished colleague and good friend, author of this resolution and the ranking Democratic member of the Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific of the International Relations Committee.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend and colleague for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I also would like to offer my commendation to the chairman of our House International Relations Committee, Mr. HYDE, for his leadership and for his support of this resolution. I would also like to thank our senior Democratic ranking member on the committee, Mr. LANTOS from California, and especially also my good friend and chairman of the House Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific, the gentleman from Iowa, Chairman LEACH, for his support as well of this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 692, commending the people of the Republic of the Marshall Islands for the contributions and sacrifices they made to the United States nuclear testing program in the Marshall Islands.

I want to especially thank the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. FLAKE), my good friend and colleague. He and I also had the privilege of visiting the Marshall Islands a year ago, and is an original cosponsor with me on this legislation, as well as my dear friends and colleagues who have also. In the spirit of bipartisanship, I want to submit for the RECORD the list of the Members who have also signed on as cosponsors of this resolution.

H. RES. 692

Title: Commending the people of the Republic of the Marshall Islands for the contributions and sacrifices they made to the United States nuclear testing program in the Marshall Islands, solemnly acknowledging the first detonation of a hydrogen bomb by the United States on March 1, 1954, on the Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands, and remembering that 60 years ago the United States began its nuclear testing program in the Marshall Islands.

Sponsor: Rep Faleomavaega, Eni F. H. [AS] (introduced 2/16/2006) Cosponsors (36).

Latest Major Action: 2/16/2006 Referred to House committee. Status: Referred to the House Committee on International Relations.

Rep. Abercrombie, Neil [HI-1]—3/30/2006
Rep. Ackerman, Gary L. [NY-5]—3/30/2006
Rep. Baca, Joe [CA-43]—3/30/2006
Rep. Berman, Howard L. [CA-28]—3/30/2006
Rep. Blumenauer, Earl [OR-3]—3/30/2006
Rep. Bordallo, Madeleine Z. [GU]—3/30/2006
Rep. Brown, Corrine [FL-3]—3/30/2006
Rep. Brown, Sherrod [OH-13]—3/30/2006
Rep. Burton, Dan [IN-5]—3/30/2006
Rep. Cardoza, Dennis A. [CA-18]—3/30/2006
Rep. Castle, Michael N. [DE]—3/30/2006
Rep. Delahunt, William D. [MA-10]—3/30/2006
Rep. Engel, Eliot L. [NY-17]—3/30/2006
Rep. Flake, Jeff [AZ-6]—2/16/2006
Rep. Gallegly, Elton [CA-24]—3/30/2006
Rep. Gutierrez, Luis V. [IL-4]—3/30/2006
Rep. Honda, Michael M. [CA-15]—3/30/2006
Rep. Jackson-Lee, Sheila [TX-18]—3/30/2006
Rep. Kennedy, Patrick J. [RI-1]—3/30/2006
Rep. Kind, Ron [WI-3]—3/30/2006
Rep. Kucinich, Dennis J. [OH-10]—3/30/2006
Rep. Lantos, Tom [CA-12]—3/30/2006
Rep. Leach, James A. [IA-2]—3/30/2006
Rep. Lee, Barbara [CA-9]—3/30/2006
Rep. Lewis, John [GA-5]—3/30/2006
Rep. Miller, George [CA-7]—3/30/2006
Rep. Napolitano, Grace F. [CA-38]—3/30/2006
Rep. Payne, Donald M. [NJ-10]—3/30/2006
Rep. Ros-Lehtinen, Ileana [FL-18]—3/30/2006
Rep. Schiff, Adam B. [CA-29]—3/30/2006
Rep. Spratt, John M., Jr. [SC-5]—3/30/2006
Rep. Udall, Tom [NM-3]—3/30/2006
Rep. Waters, Maxine [CA-35]—3/30/2006
Rep. Watson, Diane E. [CA-33]—3/30/2006
Rep. Watt, Melvin L. [NC-12]—3/30/2006
Rep. Wexler, Robert [FL-19]—3/30/2006

Mr. Speaker, 60 years ago in 1946, the United States began testing nuclear weapons in the Marshall Islands. Over a 12-year period until 1958, the United States conducted 67 nuclear tests with the equivalent yield of more than 7,000 Hiroshima nuclear bombs. In fact, the nuclear test code-named Bravo was a 15-megaton hydrogen bomb that was

detonated on March 1, 1954, in the Marshall Islands and its equivalent yield was 1,000 Hiroshima-sized nuclear bombs. Acknowledged as the greatest nuclear explosion ever at that time detonated, the Bravo test vaporized six islands and created a mushroom cloud 25 miles in diameter.

Because people were living in these South Pacific islands during the time of the U.S. nuclear testing program, the people of the Republic of the Marshall Islands were exposed to severe radiation poisoning. Even today, 60 years after the U.S. nuclear testing program began, the people of the Rongelap Atoll, as well as other atolls, are still exiled from their own land due to the radioactive fallout.

Mr. Speaker, as the ranking member of the House International Relations Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific and as a Pacific Islander myself, I feel I have a special responsibility to look after the interests of our Pacific Island community, especially from the Marshall Islands which have sacrificed greatly for our common good.

From 1946 to 1958, the United States detonated 67 nuclear weapons in the Marshall Islands, representing nearly 80 percent of all atmospheric tests ever conducted by the United States. If one were to calculate the net yield of these tests, it would be equivalent to the detonation of 1.7 Hiroshima bombs every day for 12 years. These tests exposed the people of the Marshall Islands to severe health problems and genetic anomalies for generations to come.

The U.S. nuclear testing program in the Marshall Islands continues to devastate the Marshall Islands, and the funds provided by the United States under the Compact of Free Association I submit, Mr. Speaker, are grossly inadequate to provide for the health care, environmental monitoring, personal injury claims, or land and property damages.

Pursuant to the compact and the accompanying section 177 agreement, the United States accepted responsibility for the damage to the property and environment of the Marshall Islands and the health of its people. This agreement did not constitute a final agreement, as evidenced by the inclusion of article IX authorizing the government of the Marshall Islands to petition the U.S. Congress in the event of "changed circumstances that render the provisions of this agreement manifestly inadequate."

The government of the Republic of the Marshall Islands has submitted a request to Congress based on a changed circumstances claim. The administration, however, as represented by the State Department in its report evaluating the Marshall Islands' request, rejected the argument made in the Marshall Islands' petition, contending that the claims did not constitute changed circumstances as defined in the agreement.

For the record, Mr. Speaker, I want to make it clear that I take issue with

the State Department's position. While the State Department denies that there is no legal basis for Congress to hear this petition, the fact remains that we in Congress should decide this for ourselves.

Mr. Speaker, the State Department issued a report in November of 2004 evaluating the Marshall Islands' petition, concluding that the Marshall Islands' request does not qualify as changed circumstances within the meaning of the agreement, so there is no legal basis for considering additional payments.

Mr. Speaker, the State Department fails to explain how the declassified documents released 10 years after the agreement was reached, indicating a wider expanded radioactive fallout than previously disclosed, or that the National Cancer Institute study indicating that more cancers will surface do not constitute a legal basis for Congress to consider their circumstances.

Mr. Speaker, I submit this is much larger than a legal issue. This is a moral issue. The fact is the people of the Marshall Islands are still suffering severe, adverse health effects directly related to our nuclear testing program, and they are still unable to use their own lands because of the radiation poisoning. We have a moral obligation to provide for health care, environmental monitoring, personal injury claims, and the land and property damage in the Marshall Islands. This is the least we can do, Mr. Speaker, considering the historic contribution the people of the Marshall Islands have made in the Cold War struggle to preserve international peace and promote nuclear disarmament.

Mr. Speaker, the people of the Marshall Islands do not want handouts. They have brought these ongoing health environmental and loss of land issues to Congress for our consideration. While we may find that we cannot provide the amount of money requested, I believe we do have an obligation to examine carefully the application they have submitted to ensure that we live up to the responsibility we embraced over 50 years ago when we began nuclear testing in the Pacific. We should not be looking for ways to sidestep this responsibility. We should ask ourselves if we have done everything we can possibly do to make things right for the people of the Marshall Islands who have sacrificed their lives, their health and their lands for the benefit of the United States.

I have reviewed the petition. I have researched this issue extensively, and I believe enough evidence exists to justify a thorough review of the changed circumstances in the petition.

Mr. Speaker, I do not know if my colleagues can see this picture. These are some of the children who were born to mothers this day last year, deformed children, still as a result of nuclear testing that we conducted in the Marshall Islands, and how dare that our government say that we do not have

any further responsibility to the people of the Marshall Islands. It is still there, and we should pay attention to this.

Mr. Speaker, I am probably one of the few Members who has ever been to the Marshall Islands and have seen the results of our nuclear testing program. Some of our colleagues may ask how come we stopped our nuclear testing in the Marshall Islands. I will tell you why: because of the radiation, a nuclear cloud that floated all over to the United States and we found strontin-90 on milk products coming out of Minnesota and Wisconsin. That is why we stopped our nuclear testing there in the Marshall Islands.

I am probably one of the few Members who also visited the French nuclear testing in the South Pacific in French Polynesia where the French Government detonated over 220 nuclear bombs in the atmosphere, on the surface, under the ocean; and guess what, those atolls are beginning to leak now. The French Government refuses to allow international scientific teams to go down there and find out exactly the extent of the nuclear damage that the French Government has done to those people in the Pacific.

Last year, Mr. Speaker, I was invited by the President of Kazakhstan to visit that country; and to my surprise, I did not realize that this is where the Soviet Union conducted their nuclear testing program. They detonated 500 nuclear devices in Afghanistan before Afghanistan became independent; and as a result of the Soviet Union nuclear testing, 1.5 million Kazakhs were exposed to nuclear radioactivity, very similar to the problems that we have just had a resolution on on Chernobyl.

It is madness. It is madness, Mr. Speaker, and I submit this is something we should at least do for the people of the Marshall Islands. They are not asking for handouts, Mr. Speaker. They are just simply asking for fairness. If we were so deliberate in our efforts to fund the Cold War, let us give the Marshall Islands people at least what they deserve, a good medical treatment for the mothers that still continue to have cancers in thyroid glands, cancers all over, several hundred, and their descendants still continue to be exposed because of what we had done to these people 60 years ago.

Mr. Speaker, I submit and I ask my colleagues, I request with all due respect that the least we could do is to pass this resolution. With this resolution, Mr. Speaker, we want to acknowledge the historic contribution the people of the Marshall Islands have made in the Cold War struggle to preserve the peace that we are seeking throughout the world. We commend the people of the Marshall Islands for the contributions and sacrifices they made, and we hope and I hope, sincerely hope, that my colleagues will join me in providing for appropriate legislation so that we can give these people the proper medical care that they deserve.

With that, Mr. Speaker, again, I thank my good friend, the chairman of

our Asia Pacific Subcommittee, Mr. LEACH, and my good friend, senior Democratic member, Mr. LANTOS, for their support and management of this bill.

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

I would just like to conclude briefly with three thoughts. One, I think it is absolutely imperative that this body emphasize its friendship to the people of the Marshall Islands and affirm, as Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA has suggested, our obligation to take care of those whose health we are responsible for affecting.

□ 1515

Secondly, I want to express my deep regard and friendship for the two Members who have spoken, Mr. LANTOS, our ranking member, and Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA.

And, thirdly, I want to make a constitutional point. People listening to the debate maybe do not understand that this is a body of 435 voting Members plus five delegates, and the importance of delegates is often not noted in the American constitutional system. But this is a classic example of an individual leader, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, who comes from American Samoa, who is bringing a resolution that would otherwise not have been brought to this House except for his leadership. It is resolution of seminal importance and one that intriguingly looks to the problems of our times and also to the history of the 20th century in a unique and profound way.

So I want to express my deepest regard for this initiative, and I thank the gentleman from American Samoa.

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

Mr. LANTOS. Before yielding back the balance of our time, I want to express my appreciation to the chairman of our Pacific and Asian Subcommittee for his extraordinary work on this and all other issues, and I want to identify myself with the powerful and persuasive statements of my friend and colleague, ENI FALEOMAVAEGA.

Mr. CASE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 692, a resolution introduced by my esteemed colleague from American Samoa and Ranking Member of the House International Relations Subcommittee on Asia and the Pacific—Congressman ENI FALEOMAVAEGA—commending the people of the Republic of the Marshall Islands for their incalculable contributions and sacrifices they made to the United States nuclear testing program throughout the 1940s and 1950s in the Marshall Islands.

This year will mark the 60th anniversary of the United States' commencement of nuclear testing in the Marshall Islands. Over a period of twelve years, from 1946 to 1958, the United States of America conducted sixty-seven atmospheric nuclear weapons tests in the Marshall Islands. The tests resulted in a combined yield of 108 megatons, roughly the destructive force of over 7,000 times that of the bomb used on Hiroshima. The worst of these tests, the Bravo shot, was a 15-megaton thermonuclear device, which in itself carried 1,000 times the destructive power of the Hiroshima

bomb. It was detonated on March 1, 1954, on Bikini Atoll, and caused dangerous levels of radioactive fallout to be released over 7,000 square miles, including the populated atolls of Rongelap and Utrik.

It is vital that our country remember the contributions of the Marshallese to our national security and to world peace.

While recognizing such contributions, our country over the years has sought to address the legacy of our nuclear testing in the Marshall Islands in our initial Compact with the Republic of the Marshall Islands in 1986 and in our ongoing bilateral relations with the RMI government. Just recently, our governments renegotiated the compact agreement.

I am aware that the RMI government has filed a "changed circumstances" petition with the U.S. government, which still must be negotiated. It is time our country come to closure on the changed circumstances petition and address our country's long-standing nuclear legacy in the Marshall Islands and its ramifications on the lives of its residents, particularly those of the affected atolls. I also believe that we must ensure that the U.S. Department of Energy's medical assistance program is fulfilling its obligation to its beneficiaries in the Marshall Islands.

I urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 692 and to work on addressing these crucial remaining issues.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 692, a resolution to commend the people of the Republic of the Marshall Islands for the contributions and grave sacrifices they made to the United States nuclear testing program in the Marshall Islands.

In 1947, the Republic of the Marshall Islands (RMI) became one of six entities in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands established by the United Nations with the U.S. as the Trustee. This began a decades-long relationship between the U.S. and RMI that has proven to be resilient and enduring.

In particular, I'd like to highlight the U.S. nuclear testing program in RMI which began in 1946. Over the years, the U.S. detonated 67 nuclear weapons on the islands of Bikini and Enewetak. These tests comprise 80 percent of all atmospheric tests conducted by the United States. On March 1, 1954, the hydrogen weapons test code-named "Bravo" yielded explosive power approximately 1,000 times greater than the weapon used in the 1945 wartime nuclear attack on Hiroshima, Japan. The Bravo test created a mushroom cloud 25 miles in diameter, produced a crater 6,000 feet in diameter, and vaporized 6 islands at the Bikini Atoll. Radiation from the test forced the evacuation of Marshallese and U.S. military personnel on Rongelap, Rongerik, Utrik and Ailinginae. This responsibility shouldered by the Marshallese people allowed a majority of all tests to be conducted as far from densely populated areas as possible and helped bring about a peaceful end to the Cold War.

Over the years, the Marshallese have faced very serious consequences as a result of the nuclear testing. The health and property effects have proved to be extensive and in many cases, immeasurable. The U.S. has recognized this and set up a fund to compensate those affected by the testing. However, the consequences of this testing, especially the health of the Marshallese people, continue to be impacted.

In particular, the Section 177 Health Care Program is in urgent need of increased funding. Intended to provide comprehensive medical care, including cancer care, for the four communities most affected by the nuclear weapons testing program, this healthcare program has fallen woefully short of its intended goals. Spending approximately \$12 per patient per month, the needs of this program are immediate and urgent.

Mr. Speaker, I am sure that our countries will continue to work on this issue and find a resolution. I also have no doubt that the relationship between our governments will continue to be productive and mutually beneficial. As our alliance continues in the coming decades, I urge the United States to step up and meet its obligations to the people of the RMI. With all the sacrifices they have made for the United States and continue to make each day, it is the very least the United States can do.

I urge my colleagues to join me in commending the people of the Marshall Islands and acknowledge their profound sacrifices. We must continue our efforts to restore the health and lands of the people of the Marshall Islands.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 692 which commends the people of the Republic of the Marshall Islands for their contributions and sacrifices associated with the United States nuclear testing program. The first nuclear detonation was made on the Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands on March 1, 1954. This test, and the subsequent testing program, established the nuclear deterrent that has served to ensure the security of our Nation and our allies throughout the Cold War. The people of the Marshall Islands sacrificed in a particularly unique way for our security, one that is both immense and somber. Today we continue to honor their contribution.

Further, Mr. Speaker, the contributions of the people of the Republic of the Marshall Islands have continued to this very day. Today we can find Marshallese serving in the United States Armed Forces around the world. Some are serving in Iraq and Afghanistan as we speak and many others are contributing to the well being of the United States in other new and unique ways throughout the Global War on Terror.

The Republic of the Marshall Islands stands today with America as one of the Freely Associated States in the Pacific, and our strong bonds of friendship are a testament to our mutual commitment to freedom and democracy.

To my friends and neighbors, the Marshallese, I extend the thanks of a grateful Nation. To borrow from your beautiful language, "kommol tata," or thank you very much.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 692, commending the people of the Republic of the Marshall Islands for their contributions and sacrifices to the United States nuclear testing program.

Mr. Speaker, as fellow islander, I feel a kinship to the people of the Marshall Islands and sympathize with them for the suffering they endured for our benefit. Between June 30, 1946 and August 18, 1958, our government, after evacuating the residents, conducted an intensive program of nuclear testing on Bikini and Enewetak atolls in the Republic of the Marshall Islands.

These tests, which were the equivalent of more than 7,200 Hiroshima bombs, caused

significant damage to the health of the people of the Marshall Islands, as well as, to the lands, vegetation, lagoons and surrounding ecosystems. In addition to rendering all of Bikini and most of Enewetak uninhabitable, radioactive fallout from nuclear testing on Bikini and Enewetak accidentally spread to other populated areas of the RMI.

It is believed that these tests on Bikini and Enewetak caused high rates of thyroid, cervical and breast cancer throughout the Marshall Islands, with more than a dozen Marshall Islands atolls seriously affected. In 1998, the U.S. Centers for Disease Control estimated that 6,300,000,000 billion curies of radioactive iodine-131 were released to the atmosphere as a result of the testing in the Marshall Islands.

Mr. Speaker, the U.S. government accepted responsibility for the injuries to the people of the Marshall Islands and provided financial and other assistance to the RMI as compensation for the harm done as a result of our nuclear testing.

Six years ago, the Republic of the Marshall Islands government submitted a Changed Circumstances Petition to the United States Congress related to U.S. nuclear testing on the Marshall Islands atolls of Bikini and Enewetak during the 1940s and 1950s. The Petition requests additional compensation for personal injuries and property damages and restoration costs, medical care programs, health services infrastructure and training, and radiological monitoring.

The Petition bases its claims for compensation upon "changed circumstances" pursuant to Section 177 of the Compact of Free Association. The Compact of Free Association, enacted in 1986, governs the economic and strategic relationships between the United States and the RMI. The Section 177 Agreement granted \$150 million as part of a "full and final settlement" of legal claims against the U.S. government, and provided for possible additional compensation, if loss or damages to persons or property arose or were discovered that could not reasonably have been identified as of the effective date of the agreement, and if such injuries rendered the provisions of the Compact "manifestly inadequate." The Petition argues that "new and additional" information since the enactment of the Compact—such as a wider extent of radioactive fallout than previously known or disclosed and more recent radiation protection standards—constitute "changed circumstances."

Mr. Speaker, we should support the petition of the RMI calling for recognition of a "changed circumstances". Our country owes a great debt to the people of the RMI for the sacrifices they made on our behalf and we must, as called for by H. Res. 692, assist them in extricating themselves from the legacy of the nuclear age and the burden of providing testing grounds for nuclear weapons.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I want to congratulate Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA for sponsoring H. Res. 692, which commends the people of the Republic of the Marshall Islands for the contributions and sacrifices they made to the United States nuclear testing program in the Marshall Islands 60 years ago.

When I served as the Ambassador to the Federated States of Micronesia, I had the opportunity to visit the Marshall Islands on several occasions and to get to know the people, their land, and their history.

During the period of June 20, 1946 to August 18, 1958, the United States conducted 67 nuclear tests in the Marshall Islands. The vast majority of the tests were atmospheric. The most powerful of these tests was the "Bravo" shot, a 15 megaton device detonated on March 1, 1954, at Bikini atoll. The test was equivalent to 1,000 Hiroshima bombs.

While the Bravo test is the probably the best known, it should also be acknowledged that 17 other tests in the Marshall Islands were in the megaton range with a combined yield estimated to be 174 megatons. Approximately 137 megatons of the that total was detonated in the atmosphere. This represents nearly 80 percent of the atmospheric nuclear tests detonated by the U.S.

Mr. Speaker, we must also acknowledge that the people of the Marshall Islands paid a steep price for the nuclear testing program. Many Marshallese who lived through the period of nuclear testing have been relocated to other areas and have been waiting for decades to return to their homes. Residents of the Rongelap Atoll, the island closest to ground zero, still remain in exile. Other Marshallese, including their offspring, have suffered from medical conditions associated with increased levels of radioactivity.

Despite the hardships endured by the people of the Marshall Islands, the Republic of the Marshall Islands has an exemplary record of working with the United States and supporting U.S. security concerns, including efforts to stamp out terrorism around the world.

H. Res. 692 acknowledges the debt that all Americans owe for the sacrifice as well as loyalty of the people of the Marshall Islands.

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

Mr. LEACH. Mr. Speaker, I move adoption of the resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. CAMPBELL of California). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Iowa (Mr. LEACH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 692, 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 question will be postponed.

RECOGNIZING THE BENEFITS AND IMPORTANCE OF SCHOOL-BASED MUSIC EDUCATION

Mr. KELLER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 355) recognizing the benefits and importance of school-based music education, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 355

Whereas school music programs enhance intellectual development and enrich the academic environment for students of all ages;