

47 States and the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico;

Whereas the States determine the allocation of nursing home beds in individual State veterans home facilities, and establish the eligibility of veterans and their dependents to occupy those beds, following Federal guidelines;

Whereas within the limits of their capacities, State veterans homes provide care for more than 27,500 veterans each day, accounting for more than 50 percent of the total national long-term care bed capacity for veterans, thereby sharing the enormous responsibility of caring for veterans with the Department of Veterans Affairs in an admirable partnership;

Whereas State veterans homes provide quality care for elderly and disabled veterans at an average daily cost that is significantly less than nursing homes operated by the Department of Veterans Affairs;

Whereas the number of elderly veterans, particularly those over age 85, continues to rise, and the need for long-term care services for those veterans will continue to rise in the coming years; and

Whereas the Nation's State veterans homes continue to achieve their purpose of improving and sustaining the health of elderly, sick, and severely disabled veterans by assuring access to affordable nursing care in settings that provide personal dignity to truly deserving veterans, often at the end of lives spent in service to the Nation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) honors the National Association of State Veterans Homes and the 119 State veterans homes providing long-term care to veterans that are represented by that association for their significant contributions to the health care of veterans and to the health care system of the Nation;

(2) commends the thousands of individuals who work in, or on behalf of, State veterans homes for their contributions in caring for elderly and disabled veterans;

(3) recognizes the importance of the partnership between the States and the Department of Veterans Affairs in providing long-term care to veterans; and

(4) affirms the support of Congress for continuation of the State homes program to address the known and anticipated needs of the Nation's veterans for institutional long-term care services.

SENATE RESOLUTION 418—DESIGNATING THE WEEK BEGINNING APRIL 2, 2006, AS “WEEK OF THE YOUNG CHILD”

Mr. SALAZAR (for himself, Mr. DEWINE, Mr. DODD, Ms. LANDRIEU, Mr. KERRY, Mr. BURR, Mr. LEVIN, Mrs. CLINTON, Mr. CONRAD, and Mrs. MURRAY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 418

Whereas there are 20,000,000 children under the age of 5 in the United States;

Whereas numerous studies, including the Abecedarian Study, the Study of the Chicago Child-Parent Center, and the High/Scope Perry Preschool Study, indicate that low-income children who have enrolled in quality, comprehensive early childhood education programs—

(1) improve their cognitive, language, physical, social, and emotional development; and

(2) are less likely to—

(A) be placed in special education;

(B) drop out of school; or

(C) engage in juvenile delinquency;

Whereas the enrollment rates of children under the age of 5 in early childhood education programs have steadily increased since 1965 with—

(1) the creation of the Head Start program carried out under the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.);

(2) the establishment of the Early Head Start program carried out under the Head Start Act (42 U.S.C. 9831 et seq.); and

(3) the enactment of the Child Care and Development Block Grant Act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. 9858 et seq.);

Whereas many children eligible for, and in need of, quality early childhood education services are not served due to inadequate funding;

Whereas over 4,000,000 children under the age of 5 live in poverty;

Whereas only about ½ of all preschoolers who are eligible to participate in Head Start programs have the opportunity to do so, and even fewer eligible babies and toddlers receive the opportunity to participate in Early Head Start;

Whereas only about 1 out of every 7 eligible children receives an amount of child care assistance sufficient to—

(1) enable the parents of the child to continue working; and

(2) provide the child with safe and nurturing early childhood care and education;

Whereas, although State and local governments have responded to the numerous benefits of early childhood education by making significant investments in programs and classrooms, there remains—

(1) a large unmet need for those services; and

(2) a need to improve the quality of those programs; and

Whereas, according to numerous studies on the impact of investments in high-quality early childhood education, the programs yield to the public a return of 4 dollars to 13 dollars for each dollar invested: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates the week beginning April 2, 2006, as “Week of the Young Child”;

(2) encourages the citizens of the United States to celebrate—

(A) young children; and

(B) the citizens who provide care and early childhood education to the young children of the United States; and

(3) urges the citizens of the United States to recognize the importance of—

(A) quality, comprehensive early childhood education programs; and

(B) the value of those services for preparing children to—

(i) appreciate future educational experiences; and

(ii) enjoy lifelong success.

SENATE RESOLUTION 419—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT THE NEW UNITED NATIONS HUMAN RIGHTS COUNCIL FAILS TO ADEQUATELY REFORM THE UNITED NATIONS COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS, THUS PREVENTING THAT BODY FROM BECOMING AN EFFECTIVE MONITOR OF HUMAN RIGHTS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD

Mr. FRIST (for himself and Mr. INHOFE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 419

Whereas the United Nations Commission on Human Rights was created in 1946 to monitor and prevent the abuse of human rights throughout the world;

Whereas, since its creation in 1946, the United Nations Commission on Human Rights failed to consistently uphold the ideals contained in—

(1) the United Nations Charter; and

(2) the Universal Declaration on Human Rights;

Whereas the United Nations Commission on Human Rights had been particularly ineffective because the membership of the commission included some of the worst abusers of human rights in the world, including—

(1) Cuba;

(2) Sudan;

(3) Libya;

(4) Belarus;

(5) China; and

(6) Zimbabwe;

Whereas the United Nations Commission on Human Rights failed to act or speak out against numerous cases of egregious human rights abuses, including—

(1) the many abuses of communism;

(2) the genocide in Rwanda in 1994; and

(3) the ongoing genocide in Darfur caused by the Government of Sudan;

Whereas the United Nations Commission on Human Rights failed to condemn countries that sponsor terrorism, including—

(1) Iran;

(2) Syria; and

(3) North Korea;

Whereas the United Nations Commission on Human Rights had repeatedly singled out Israel, the only democracy in the Middle East, for criticism, while overlooking serious human rights abuses throughout that region of the world;

Whereas President Bush and the United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, have repeatedly emphasized that meaningful reform of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights is a key element for making the United Nations more accountable, effective, and efficient;

Whereas the creation of the new Human Rights Council on March 15, 2006, failed to address the serious shortcomings of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights and fell far short of creating the small standing body composed of appropriate countries that was initially envisioned by the United Nations Secretary-General, Kofi Annan, in his March 2005 report, “In Larger Freedom: Towards Development, Security and Human Rights For All”;

Whereas the new United Nations Human Rights Council succeeds only in making superficial changes to the structure of the United Nations Commission on Human Rights;

Whereas the new United Nations Human Rights Council does not—

(1) embody the recommended institutional reforms necessary to advance human rights;

(2) monitor cases of human rights abuse throughout the world; and

(3) prevent egregious human rights violators from being elected to the council;

Whereas the new United Nations Human Rights Council only reduces the number of seats on the council from 53 to 47, which is not enough to make the council more efficient or more effective;

Whereas the new United Nations Human Rights Council also maintains many geographical quotas that will only ensure that human rights abusers will continue to have access to membership on the council;

Whereas the new United Nations Human Rights Council is not supported by some of the leading non-governmental institutions in

the world that are dedicated to the promotion of freedom and human rights;

Whereas the United States, while voting against the resolution creating the United Nations Human Rights Council, was unable to ensure that the council would be structured to best promote and protect human rights around the globe; and

Whereas if the United States, working with other like-minded countries, is not able to adequately reform the corrupt United Nations Human Rights Commission, then the chances for the United States and other like-minded countries to effect the broader changes to the United Nations that are desired and needed to make the institution more effective are much reduced: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) affirms that the United Nations Human Rights Council should be a body that upholds the ideals contained in—

(A) the United Nations Charter; and

(B) the Universal Declaration on Human Rights;

(2) believes that countries charged with protecting the human rights of individuals throughout the world should be required to—

(A) hold regular, competitive, and democratic elections;

(B) allow for freedom of expression; and

(C) have a credible civil society;

(3) finds that the creation of the United Nations Human Rights Council fails to—

(A) adequately reform the United Nations Commission on Human Rights; and

(B) prevent the worst abusers of human rights in the world from attaining membership to the council;

(4) applauds the Administration for opposing the creation of the new council;

(5) believes that the United States should adhere to its principles and not seek membership on the new council, a move that would undermine the credibility of the United States and give the new council unwarranted legitimacy;

(6) urges the Administration to not support the United Nations Human Rights Council, and to advocate in favor of the withdrawal of any financial support that would be used to support the council until meaningful reforms are undertaken; and

(7) believes the United States should strengthen, deepen, and operationalize the work of the international community of democracies by establishing an effective human rights oversight body outside the United Nations system, so as to make it the primary means for examining, exposing, monitoring, and redressing human rights abuses throughout the world.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, yesterday, I wrote a letter to President Bush expressing my strong opposition to the United States participating in the United Nations Human Rights Council. I believe the newly established body represents little improvement over the old and discredited commission it is intended to replace. Furthermore, any U.S. participation or financial support of the Council undermines our credibility as defenders of human rights around the world. I believe many of my colleagues share my assessment, which is why this resolution expresses the Senate's opposition to the Council and our strong belief that the United States should take no part. The United Nations Commission on Human Rights was established by the United States and our allies in 1946 to monitor and prevent human rights abuses throughout the world. It was charged to uphold

the ideals embodied in the U.N. Charter and the Universal Declaration on Human Rights. However, in the intervening years, the Commission fell far short of these noble expectations. In particular, the Commission consistently granted membership to some of the world's worst human rights abusers. Sudan, Cuba, Libya, China, and Zimbabwe all have demonstrated egregious disregard for the human rights of their own citizens and shamefully were all Commission members. Moreover, the Commission repeatedly failed to act or condemn numerous cases of intolerable human rights abuses. These include the many abuses perpetrated by Communist states, the 1994 Rwanda genocide, and even the ongoing genocide in Sudan's western region of Darfur. Many of our colleagues by now have had the opportunity to travel to that Darfur region. I, for one, have been there, as well as Chad, the country immediately west, and seen the terrible tragedies that are being created by this ongoing genocide. The Commission refused to condemn state sponsors of terrorism, such as Iran, Syria, and North Korea. They consistently singled out the only democracy in the Middle East, Israel, for criticism, while overlooking serious cases of human rights abuse in neighboring countries. The Commission repeatedly proved itself ineffective, unaccountable, and inefficient. It failed to achieve the goals and uphold the ideals for which it was created. Now, to their credit, the United States and many at the United Nations recognized the need for serious reform of the Commission in order to restore the U.N.'s credibility. However, the U.N.'s new Human Rights Council, established just 2 weeks ago, fails to do just that. It falls far short of the standards envisioned by President Bush and Secretary General Kofi Annan. It glosses over its deficiencies and offers only superficial changes to the former Commission structure.

Fundamentally, the Council lacks the mechanisms and standards necessary to prevent flagrant human rights violators from gaining membership. It maintains the geographical quotas that will, once again, ensure that human rights abusers continue to have access to membership. It is wrong. It does not make sense. In short, the new Council fails to improve over the old Commission, and it is destined to fail in its core mission of monitoring and preventing human rights abuses around the world.

I applaud President Bush and our Ambassador at the U.N., John Bolton, for opposing the resolution establishing the Council. I personally urge the administration, as does this resolution, to oppose U.S. participation in and deny American support for the U.N.'s new Human Rights Council. This would uphold America's credibility and reputation as a protector of human rights and deny the Council unwarranted legitimacy.

I also believe that the United States should lead a group of like-minded de-

mocracies to establish an effective human rights oversight body outside of the U.N. system. At a minimum, countries charged with protecting human rights should themselves hold regular, competitive, democratic elections; allow for freedom of expression; and have a credible civil society—all of which was not the case for the old U.N. Commission, nor is it now the case for the new Council.

Regrettably, the U.N. and many of its member states have shown that they are not serious about reform. Therefore, the United States and those committed to protecting human rights must adhere to our principles and work toward a solution outside of the United Nations.

For too long, the world's worst human rights abusers have successfully shielded themselves from scrutiny. It is time for change. It is time for sunlight. I believe that under the leadership of America, we should create a new, a stronger, a more credible body to protect the human rights of all of those who are vulnerable around the world.

AMENDMENTS SUBMITTED AND PROPOSED

SA 3214. Mr. SANTORUM (for himself and Ms. MIKULSKI) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2454, to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide for comprehensive reform and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3215. Mr. ISAKSON proposed an amendment to amendment SA 3192 submitted by Mr. SPECTER (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. HAGEL) to the bill S. 2454, *supra*.

SA 3216. Mr. ALLARD submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3192 submitted by Mr. SPECTER (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. HAGEL) to the bill S. 2454, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3217. Ms. MIKULSKI (for herself and Mr. WARNER) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3192 submitted by Mr. SPECTER (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. HAGEL) to the bill S. 2454, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3218. Mr. KENNEDY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed to amendment SA 3192 submitted by Mr. SPECTER (for himself, Mr. LEAHY, and Mr. HAGEL) to the bill S. 2454, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

SA 3219. Mr. KENNEDY submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2454, *supra*; which was ordered to lie on the table.

TEXT OF AMENDMENTS

SA 3214. Mr. SANTORUM (for himself and Ms. MIKULSKI) submitted an amendment intended to be proposed by him to the bill S. 2454, to amend the Immigration and Nationality Act to provide for comprehensive reform and for other purposes; which was ordered to lie on the table; as follows:

At the appropriate place, insert the following:

SEC. . . DESIGNATION OF POLAND AS A VISA WAIVER COUNTRY.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress makes the following findings: