

their anti-Israel obsession. Israel's appointment to the U.N. Committee on Program and Coordination is the first fruit of our labor. But we know there is a long way to go to end anti-Semitism at the United Nations.

I want to thank my friend, Mr. HASTINGS, for introducing this important resolution, and Chairman LANTOS and Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN for their continued leadership on this issue.

□ 1430

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I urge support of the resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time, urging all of our colleagues to vote for the resolution.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 624, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The title was amended so as to read: "A resolution congratulating the State of Israel on chairing a United Nations committee for the first time in history, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF THE HOUSE REGARDING SYRIA'S CONTINUED INTERFERENCE IN THE AFFAIRS OF LEBANON

Mr. ACKERMAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 738) expressing the sense of the House of Representatives regarding the Government of Syria's continued interference in the internal affairs of Lebanon.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 738

Whereas in 2004, Lebanon's current president had his term extra-legally extended through the interference of Syria in Lebanon's internal affairs;

Whereas former Lebanese Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri, the leading opponent of continued Syrian domination of Lebanon and the extra-legal extension of the president's term, was assassinated along with 22 people by a massive car bomb on February 14, 2005;

Whereas investigators from the United Nations have suggested that officials of Syria's government, at the highest levels, appear to be culpable for the assassination of Rafiq Hariri and the 22 other people;

Whereas the people of Lebanon, following the murder of Rafiq Hariri, engaged in a massive popular revolt known as the Cedar Revolution against Syrian interference in their internal affairs and suppression of their national sovereignty;

Whereas the Cedar Revolution, reinforced by international pressure, culminated in the rapid withdrawal of Syrian occupation forces and free elections;

Whereas the current Lebanese government has been under steady attack by domestic

and foreign forces that have been engaged in instigating riots and insurrection, suspending the operation of Lebanon's parliament, and perpetrating horrific acts of terror against the Lebanese people;

Whereas Syria and Iran are seeking to dominate Lebanon through their campaign of murder and intimidation aimed at the Lebanese parliamentary majority and other anti-Syrian public and political figures;

Whereas Syria and Iran, through their Lebanese proxies, have demanded the selection of another Lebanese president hand-picked by the Government of Syria;

Whereas Syria and Iran, in clear contravention of numerous United Nations Security Council resolutions, notably 1559 (2004), 1655 (2006), 1664 (2006), 1680 (2006), 1701 (2006), and 1757 (2007), have grossly violated Lebanon's sovereignty by continuing to provide arms to illegitimate Lebanese militias, Palestinian terrorist groups and other terrorist organizations; meddling in Lebanon's internal political affairs; and actively supporting efforts to prevent the election of a new president in accordance with Lebanese law; and

Whereas a sovereign and independent Lebanon is in the national security interest of the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) condemns the campaign of murder, terror, and intimidation aimed at overthrowing the democratically-elected government of Lebanon and establishing a new Lebanese government subservient to the will and interests of Syria and Iran;

(2) condemns Syria and Iran for their gross interference in Lebanon's internal political affairs, and particularly, the selection of a new president, and gross violations of United Nations Security Council resolutions protective of Lebanon's sovereignty and independence;

(3) condemns Lebanese political parties and actors who have allied themselves with Syria and Iran to the detriment of their own country and its national interests;

(4) condemns efforts by some Lebanese political figures to obstruct, delay, and impede the legal and established processes of their country for the selection of a new president according to the rule of law;

(5) affirms its continued strong support for Lebanon's democratically-elected government, people and national sovereignty, and its readiness to provide material support;

(6) calls on all nations to recognize and support Lebanon's sovereignty and independence; and

(7) urges the President to use all peaceful means at the disposal of the United States to help safeguard Lebanon's sovereignty and independence.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN) and the gentleman from South Carolina (Mr. WILSON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ACKERMAN. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members 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 New York?

There was no objection.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Madam Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolu-

tion, and yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, when the House last discussed Lebanon on September 25, I said that Lebanon was being bullied. That statement, though true, is insufficient. Lebanon is not being harassed by invisible unworldly forces. Lebanon is not a victim of fate or destiny or bad luck. Lebanese politicians and public figures, beginning with Rafiq Hariri and continuing to this day, are not being assassinated and blown away by falling meteors or volcanic eruptions. Arms do not appear in Lebanon by magic. Hezbollah's billions do not fall from the sky like rain. Palestinian terrorist groups don't find rifles falling out of trees or by the side of the road. The Fatah al-Islam and its war against the Lebanese state were not the product of spontaneous auto-genesis. Like maggots, their origin can escape the casual observer, but their birth was no accident or mystery.

Madam Speaker, Syria and Iran are responsible for these crimes. Syria and Iran are responsible for the chaos. Syria and Iran are to blame for the shadow of civil war that hangs over Lebanon. Lebanese politics are complex, and the interaction within and among confessions is daunting for the outside observer to contemplate. Where interest and principle merge and depart is hard to judge. But we know some things about Lebanon for certain, and they are spelled out clearly in the resolution at hand.

Despite Lebanon's Constitution, Syria demanded the extension of President Emile Lahoud's term in 2004, and Damascus got its way. The principal opponent of this grotesque intrusion into Lebanon's affairs was Prime Minister Rafiq Hariri. There is credible evidence uncovered by U.N. investigators showing that Syrian President Bashar al-Assad first threatened and then ordered the assassination of Rafiq Hariri for his defiance of Syrian diktat.

Madam Speaker, in response to the murder of Hariri, and, let us remember, 22 other civilians, the Lebanese rose up against their Syrian overlords and demanded, with the full support of the international community, the expulsion of Syria's occupational forces. A new government was formed through a free and fair election led by Lebanese not in the service of Syria and not in the debt of Iran.

This development, both surprising and hopeful, of a Lebanon free to chart its own course, was one that Syria and Iran couldn't tolerate. In their minds, Lebanon is a fiefdom, a toy. Lebanon is a playground for their ambitions and a canvas on which to splash their rage and hatred for the United States and Israel in the modern world.

Madam Speaker, Lebanon, in the minds of Syria's overlords and Iran's ayatollahs, is not for the Lebanese. This intolerance, this greedy self-interest, this bitter contempt for the rights of others is why we are speaking of Lebanon in the U.S. House of Representatives again today.

Lebanon is in grave peril. Lebanon's independence and sovereignty are under attack by Syria and Iran and their bootlicking Lebanese proxies, Hezbollah, Amal and the Aounist bloc. Extralegally demanding control of the presidency, and threatening civil war, this coalition of the wicked and the selfish have again brought chaos, violence and terror to Lebanon. It need not be so. It should not be so.

Syria and Lebanon are responsible for the crisis in Lebanon. Syria and Iran are responsible for the crisis in Lebanon. They have trampled on Lebanon's sovereignty and clearly violated U.N. Security Council resolutions protective of Lebanon. They are the puppet masters pulling on the strings of Hezbollah, Amal and Aoun. The assassinations of Lebanese members of Parliament are their work. The bombings are their work. The threats to establish an extra-legal second government are their work.

Madam Speaker, there is no mystery here. There is evil, there is greed, there is indecency, and, were I Lebanese, I might say treason as well. But there is no mystery. Syria and Iran are attacking Lebanon's sovereignty no less than if they sent a fleet of bombers, or a wave of tanks, or a swarm of infantry. That this aggression, this naked aggression is being done by proxies, and by terrorists, by car bombs, by telephone threats does not make it any less aggression, or any less a crime.

Many vital interests of the United States are at stake. If we want every nation to be secure in its own borders, we cannot tolerate cross-border aggression. If we want to see the Middle East at peace, we cannot tolerate the resumption of Syrian and Iranian control of Lebanon. If we want to encourage self-governance around the world, we cannot tolerate Lebanon's democracy being subverted by thugs and fanatics. If we want to see people rising up against tyranny, as they are today in Burma, we cannot tolerate the reversal of Lebanon's glorious Cedar Revolution. If we want to see the United Nations become a true guardian of peace, we cannot tolerate the will of the international community being scorned by rogue states.

Madam Speaker, America must lead. Even today, even with Iraq, there is still no other state that can mobilize the international community as can the United States, and the hour is desperate. Only if they are convinced that the world will not tolerate their aggression against Lebanon, will Syria and Iran back down. This outcome is not impossible.

The stakes are exceedingly high. It is my hope that the Lebanese Government and the Bush administration will see this debate in the House as proof that Congress is watching closely and that we stand ready to help secure Lebanon's future as an independent and sovereign state. If we want to end the bloodshed in Lebanon and foreclose the prospect of still greater violence, we

must act now and in concert with the community of nations.

There is wide support for Lebanon both in Europe and the Arab and Muslim world, just waiting for a catalyst to give it expression. America must be that catalyst. We are here today to sound the wake-up call. A brighter future for Lebanon, for the Middle East, and for ourselves awaits our clarion call.

Madam Speaker, I urge our colleagues to support the resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, I support this resolution, which condemns both Syria and Iran for their continuing campaign of murder and intimidation aimed at anti-Syrian politicians and public figures of Lebanon. It warns them against interfering either directly or through their many representatives in the Lebanese presidential elections scheduled for later this month.

Over 2 years after the Cedar Revolution, and despite the withdrawal of Syrian troops, Lebanon's fragile government continues to be targeted for destruction by internal and external threats. Hezbollah has continued to carry out its strategy of assassinating anti-Syrian Lebanese politicians. The aim is to gain a parliamentary majority that would allow both Syria and Iran to impose their choice for a president on the Lebanese people.

Furthermore, the inclusion of pro-Syrian, Iranian and terrorist organizations such as Hezbollah in the Lebanese political process only empowers the Syrian and Iranian regimes and holds Lebanon hostage to their whims. Allowing a terrorist entity to use the political process and legitimize itself without first demanding a renouncement of violence has only served to perpetuate and enhance the threat.

We support the underlying intent of this resolution, which is to advocate for the sovereignty and political independence of Lebanon. The Lebanese people deserve the right to be free of interference and intimidation by any outside country or terrorist group. However, despite supporting the resolution, we are concerned about language in this resolution referring to the entire Lebanese Parliament as "democratically elected," because it sets a dangerous precedent by both legitimizing and providing congressional approval for the role of a foreign terrorist organization in the political process in Lebanon. Sadly, it legitimizes current election law which was constructed by the Syrians and imposed on the Lebanese people.

Finally, it undermines the very essence of United Nations Security Council Resolution 1559, aimed at truly removing Syria from the Lebanese political process. Elections conducted under a Syrian-controlled electoral process

where foreign terrorist organizations are allowed to participate without first requiring them to lay down their weapons should not be considered "democratic" by this Chamber.

Madam Speaker, the United States and other responsible nations must encourage the Government of Lebanon and leading Lebanese policymakers not to compromise on their commitment to reform the political process by purging from it the influence of Syria, Iran and Hezbollah. Our support for the Lebanese people and the pro-democracy forces in Lebanon is vital to counterbalance the pressures surrounding Lebanon.

The brave people of Lebanon continue to stand against the tyrannical regime in Damascus, and they deserve nothing less than our support. It is for this reason that, despite reservations about the implications of some of the clauses in this resolution, I will vote for this resolution, and ask my colleagues to do the same.

I especially remember Congressman LAHOOD being prophetic. Last year I attended a White House meeting with the President of members of both parties giving reports on their recent trips to Iraq. Congressman LAHOOD pointed out progress in Iraq, but he also stated the public needed reassurance of the capture or killing of the al Qaeda leader in Iraq, Zawahiri. Just as he concluded, National Security Advisor Stephen Hadley, sitting next to me, received an important cell call which he took and then several hours later could announce: the butchering beheader Zawahiri had been killed by a successful American airstrike.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Madam Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY).

Ms. BERKLEY. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of this important resolution, and I thank the gentleman from New York for his continued leadership on this important issue. We often throw around compliments on the floor of the House thanking each other, but in this case, it is truly warranted. The gentleman from New York has been a giant on these issues, and I thank him so much for that.

Lebanon is at a critical juncture in its history. On the cusp of upcoming elections, it can go the way of democracy; or it can go the way of violence, terrorism and dictatorship. We therefore must stand side-by-side with the forces of democracy in that country and protect it from those who seek to unfairly and violently influence the results of their free election.

Two years ago at the United Nations, the world called on Syria to remove its troops from Lebanon and recognize Lebanon's independence. While perhaps most of Syria's troops are out of Lebanon, its continued dangerous influence is undeniable.

Syria's proxies in Lebanon have waged a campaign of terror throughout the country against those who oppose its interference. They have bombed,

they have rioted, they have assassinated, and they have terrorized, and it is undeniable Syria's hand is behind it all.

Iran too has involved itself in Lebanon with its support of Hezbollah, a terrorist group whose military is stronger than the Lebanese Army. Iran has threatened unspecified consequences if the anti-Syrian majority has the gall to freely elect its own president. It has launched attacks against Israel to destabilize the region and the Lebanese Government. Hezbollah continues to bring arms shipments in from Iran through Syria with impunity.

Lebanon's stability could be the key to the future of the Middle East. If the Lebanese can establish a democracy in their country, then it would spread to other countries in that region, Syria's influence would be weakened and Iran's plans for regional supremacy and control would suffer a serious setback. The supporters of terrorism know this, Madam Speaker. That is why they have unleashed this campaign of terror to stop Lebanon's development and influence its upcoming election.

We too must unleash our own campaign to support the forces of democracy and freedom and stability. We must not let the forces of democracy be defeated or intimidated in Lebanon. The Middle East hangs in the balance, and we must not back away from a growing democracy that needs our help.

Madam Speaker, I urge support for this resolution.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD), an esteemed member of the Committee on Appropriations and a distinguished American of Lebanese heritage.

Madam Speaker, prior to yielding, I want to note that Mr. LAHOOD has announced he will not be running for reelection next year. I want all of us to acknowledge that he will truly be missed. When I was elected 6 years ago, one the first persons I found out who has the respect of the Members here is indeed RAY LAHOOD. He has made such a great difference for the people of the United States.

(Mr. LAHOOD asked and was given permission to revise and extend his remarks.)

□ 1445

Mr. LAHOOD. Madam Speaker, I thank the gentleman very much for his kind remarks.

Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 738, a resolution that strongly condemns the ongoing campaign of violence and assassination directed towards the people of Lebanon and their democratically elected government.

We have all seen the horrific news reports of the assassinations and attempted assassinations of anti-Syrian lawmakers in Lebanon. The brave men

and women who are struggling to move Lebanon forward have become targets in their own country. Hezbollah and the pro-Syrian factions in Lebanon know they are in the minority, and have begun a desperation campaign to kill as many of their opponents as possible. Members of the parliament have had to go into hiding outside of Lebanon, and lay their lives on the line when they return to conduct government business.

Others in Lebanon have embarked on a campaign to delay and obstruct the presidential election process, now delayed since September, late September into October. Rather than face the fact that those who wish for Lebanon to be independent and free will be successful, they choose instead to upend the entire political process rather than see democracy succeed. This was clearly evident in 2004 when the current president of Lebanon had his term extended with the help of Syria and other outside forces, an act that was quickly condemned by the United States and the United Nations. Unfortunately, these forces continue to try to impose their will on Lebanon today.

The Cedar Revolution in 2005 led to the withdrawal of Syrian forces that had occupied Lebanon for more than three decades. After the withdrawal, the government of Prime Minister Siniora committed to creating a strong, democratic Lebanon, free of occupation or outside influence. Lebanon is fighting many enemies of freedom, both within and outside the country.

As Lebanon prepares for presidential elections, hopefully in a few weeks, I believe it is vital that we reiterate our support for Lebanon and the people of Lebanon. This resolution reaffirms our support of the many United Nations resolutions that condemn Syria and Iran for their continued roles in arming the enemies of a free Lebanon, and expresses our appreciation to the many countries who have contributed funding and personnel to the United Nations Interim Force in Lebanon.

Our Lebanese friends must know that we stand beside them as they continue to strengthen their government. I want to particularly compliment President Bush, Secretary Rice, and the whole Bush team for the interest they have expressed in Lebanon, for the interest they have shown in this country and their ability to have a democracy and to hold elections.

Last week, the son of Rafiq Hariri was in Washington and had an opportunity to meet with many officials of the Congress and of the Bush administration. I know he was gratified by the support he has received from Congress and from the Bush administration. As he returned to Lebanon, I know he went reassured that our country is with Lebanon, that our country is for free elections as soon as possible.

I also want to compliment Speaker PELOSI who has personally discussed this issue with me and has a great deal of interest in Lebanon, and recently

took the time to travel to Lebanon on a recent trip to the Middle East. Her interest in this country is something that we should all commend. And so I urge the adoption of this resolution.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Madam Speaker, I just want to add to the comments by our good friend Mr. LAHOOD. He will surely be missed in this great Chamber. He has added much to the dignity, fairness, objectiveness and to the thoughtfulness of this body. And I hope when decency, security and peace does return to Lebanon, he will be in this Chamber with us to share in that moment.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, I have no more speakers, I urge support for the resolution promoting the Cedar Revolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Madam Speaker, I too want to thank Speaker PELOSI for her leadership, for taking her time during her trip to the Middle East to visit Lebanon, and also to try to talk sense to the people in Syria as well.

Ms. PELOSI. Madam Speaker, the United States has a long and deep history of supporting the sovereignty and independence of the Lebanese people. That is why we must condemn in the strongest terms possible continued Syrian and Iranian interference in Lebanese affairs.

The Lebanese parliament is currently engaged in the process of selecting a new president, a task unfortunately complicated by the meddling of outsiders, most notably Syria and Iran, and their terrorist proxy in Lebanon, Hezbollah. Syrian and Iranian interference in Lebanon must be condemned by the international community in the strongest possible terms and it must immediately end.

The resolution before the House chronicles the tragic toll exacted on Lebanon and its people by its neighbors. It is a tale of a peaceful people seeking a better future who again and again have seen their hopes dashed due to the cruel and opportunistic machinations of Iran and Syria.

I recently met for the second time this year with Sheikh Saad Hariri, the leader of the majority in the Lebanese parliament, whose family has given so much for the freedom of the Lebanese people. Mr. Hariri made an eloquent appeal for help from the Congress of the United States and other parliamentary bodies to expose the interference of non-Lebanese groups in the selection of Lebanon's next president. I commend the bipartisan leadership of the House Foreign Affairs Committee for acting quickly so the House could go on record against these tactics before the next meeting of the Lebanese parliament later this month.

The politically-motivated violence that has been so much a part of Lebanon's recent history has not dampened the desire of the Lebanese people for self-determination.

The Cedar Revolution was an eloquent and powerful testament to that fact; a fact which deserves the respect of all nations. Passage of this resolution puts the House squarely on the side of the freedom-loving people of Lebanon and I urge its adoption.

Mr. ACKERMAN. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. CAPPS). The question is on the motion

offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 738.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. LAHOOD. Madam 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 motion will be postponed.

25 BY 25 RESOLUTION

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 25) expressing the sense of Congress that it is the goal of the United States that, not later than January 1, 2025, the agricultural, forestry, and working land of the United States should provide from renewable resources not less than 25 percent of the total energy consumed in the United States and continue to produce safe, abundant, and affordable food, feed, and fiber.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 25

Whereas the United States has a quantity of renewable energy resources that is sufficient to supply a significant portion of the energy needs of the United States;

Whereas the agricultural, forestry, and working land of the United States can help ensure a sustainable domestic energy system;

Whereas accelerated development and use of renewable energy technologies provide numerous benefits to the United States, including improved national security, improved balance of payments, healthier rural economies, improved environmental quality, and abundant, reliable, and affordable energy for all citizens of the United States;

Whereas the production of transportation fuels from renewable energy would help the United States meet rapidly growing domestic and global energy demands, reduce the dependence of the United States on energy imported from volatile regions of the world that are politically unstable, stabilize the cost and availability of energy, and safeguard the economy and security of the United States;

Whereas increased energy production from domestic renewable resources would attract substantial new investments in energy infrastructure, create economic growth, develop new jobs for the citizens of the United States, and increase the income for farm, ranch, and forestry jobs in the rural regions of the United States;

Whereas increased use of renewable energy is practical and can be cost effective with the implementation of supportive policies and proper incentives to stimulate markets and infrastructure; and

Whereas public policies aimed at enhancing renewable energy production and accelerating technological improvements will further reduce energy costs over time and increase market demand: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that it is the goal of the United States that, not later than January 1, 2025, the agricultural, forestry, and working land of the United States should provide from renewable resources not less than 25 percent of the total energy consumed in the United States and continue to produce safe, abundant, and affordable food, feed, and fiber.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. PETERSON) and the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. GOODLATTE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Minnesota.

Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 25, and urge its adoption by the House. H. Con. Res. 25 embodies the vision of farmers and ranchers who have been leaders in renewable energy and land conservation activities, and recognizes that forestry and agriculture will play a leading role in our country's transitions to energy independence. The 25x'25 Resolution sets a national energy independence goal that by the year 2025, 25 percent of the total energy consumed in the United States should come from homegrown, renewable sources.

This resolution has received strong bipartisan support, was passed out of the House Agriculture Committee under my good friend, Mr. GOODLATTE's leadership last year, and again in May under the new Congress. The 25x'25 Resolution has been carefully crafted to set national renewable energy production targets, while allowing farmers, ranchers, entrepreneurs and industry the flexibility needed to reach these important goals.

Madam Speaker, the new face of energy security and rural development is in the form of a biofuels plant, a gasifier, a windmill, a methane digester or any other technology that will reduce dependence on foreign energy sources. In times of high energy prices, I can think of no one better to supply the United States with a renewable source of energy than the same American farmers and ranchers who have provided the United States and the world with an abundance of safe food and fiber.

Expanding the production and the use of renewable energy is an important priority, not just for agriculture, but for the entire country in our pursuit of energy independence. The 25x'25 Coalition has grown over the past several years, and now includes endorsements from more than 590 business, conservation, agriculture and forestry organizations. As renewable energy use continues to expand, new innovations, including the promising growth of cellulosic ethanol, will not only provide for our energy needs; they will also produce environmental and conservation benefits.

I think the future of energy production from agriculture and forestry is

the most exciting thing that has happened in rural America in my lifetime. The 25x'25 Resolution states our commitment to support the development of renewable energy sources. I believe we can not only meet but exceed the goal of 25 percent by the year 2025.

But every journey starts with a first step, and this resolution is a very important first step that we can take in achieving this energy independence.

Madam Speaker, I thank my colleagues for their support and again urge the support of the House for the passage of this resolution.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I would first like to thank the gentleman from Minnesota, the chairman of the committee, for his leadership in bringing this resolution before the Congress again, and the gentleman from Pennsylvania, Mr. HOLDEN, for his involvement in this as well.

The resolution, also known as 25x'25, recognizes the importance of agriculture in meeting our energy needs and sets a noble goal for American agriculture: to produce 25 percent of the total energy consumed in the United States from the renewable resources of our agriculture, forestry and working lands by the year 2025.

We have made significant progress in developing a robust industry using agricultural crops as well as animal waste to produce ethanol and biodiesel. In 2006 alone, the renewable fuels industry added more than 1.05 billion gallons of new ethanol to the marketplace. It is projected that without any new technological breakthroughs, the industry already has the potential to produce more than 11 billion gallons per year within the next decade.

While the domestic production of energy has been exciting, there are still many renewable energy sources yet to be explored and developed. There are a wide variety of agricultural products and by-products that can be converted to clean, renewable energy sources. In fact, there are sources of renewable energy in every one of our 50 States, including wind, solar, hydropower and biomass. The development of cellulosic technology has enormous potential to bolster the renewable fuel market inside the corn belt and well beyond.

I am particularly excited about the opportunity to use forest biomass as a component of our renewable energy supply. Forest biomass is plentiful and available in many States. Almost two-thirds of the Commonwealth of Virginia is forested, as is much of the southeastern United States. In fact, today we have roughly the same amount of forest land as we had 100 years ago. Trees are an abundant resource and are available for conversion into both wood products and biofuels year-round.

Every year we grow almost twice as much forest biomass as we harvest.