

spread through poor hygiene caused by dirty water and unsanitary conditions. I could give all kinds of statistics.

As the gentlelady from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) said, I was proud that in my hometown of Knoxville recently, the city council, at the urging of our great Mayor Bill Haslam, passed a proclamation in support of World Water Day. This was done without my knowledge, and so I am pleased that other people are helping to call attention to what is one of the most serious problems that this world faces today.

And so I think that it is very appropriate that the Congress take up a resolution at this time, and I think that this will help lead to progress in this area, much, much needed progress; and I urge support for this resolution.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to my good friend from Ohio, the distinguished chairman of the Oversight and Government Reform Subcommittee on Domestic Policy, Mr. KUCINICH.

Mr. KUCINICH. I thank my friend, Mr. LANTOS.

I rise as a proud cosponsor of this bill emphasizing the importance of water. Despite the availability of advanced and inexpensive water treatment technologies and despite an aggregate level of wealth that should preclude injustice, one in six people in the world still lack access to safe drinking water. Global warming is expected to worsen the situation.

At the same time, privatization of our scarce water supplies is also proliferating. It drives up the price of a life-giving resource under the guise of making it cheaper. In its most egregious form, bottled water companies overpump a valuable water supply, restricting access to only those who can afford to pay more for water than for gas.

I represent an area of Cleveland that, like many nearby cities, relies on Lake Erie for drinking water. During negotiations by Great Lakes States over the conditions under which water could be withdrawn from Lake Erie and the surrounding Great Lakes, the bottled water industry slipped in their own language; it allowed exclusive, unlimited access to Great Lakes water by their industry. By weakening the agreement in this way, it also paved the way for any corporation to have full access to the lakes, even at the expense of the public water supply. This is happening at a time when both water quality and quantity are expected to decline as a result of global warming.

In Nottingham and Barrington, two small New Hampshire towns, a company called USA Springs is attempting to pump 310,000 gallons a day in an area populated with homes that get their water from small, private, household wells. The community is concerned about loss of their water supply, loss of water quality, degradation of nearby wetlands, but USA Springs is using their substantial resources to overwhelm the community. The result is

that this company, USA Springs, is now dangerously close to winning this battle it started in 2001. Similar battles are being fought in communities all over the country.

The basic building blocks of life, like water, must be accessible by people before corporations and must be managed as a public trust, not reduced to a commodity.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield 2 minutes to my friend and neighbor from California, Congresswoman LYNN WOOLSEY, chairwoman of the Education and Labor Subcommittee on Workforce Protections.

Ms. WOOLSEY. Madam Speaker, today I rise in support of the World Water Day resolution, H.R. 196, and I am proud to be a cosponsor of Congressman BLUMENAUER's resolution.

The district I represent includes Marin and Sonoma Counties just north of San Francisco. My district is very ecologically diverse. In fact, we are putting new life into our wetlands, we are expanding our wetlands. We have wastewater treatment plants that make it possible for us to send our wastewater and use our wastewater to water our grapes, and we have one of the best grape growing counties in the country.

In fact, in my very own backyard, my drip system that waters my yard is controlled by satellite because my town of Petaluma is experimenting. They picked 100 houses and asked us, would we let them use our drip systems as an experimental project; and it will indeed save me money and save water, I am sure. Along with that, many of our commercial and recreation activities in my district are focused around water.

So even with programs like this throughout our country, throughout the world, we are squandering. We still squander this precious resource called water.

World Water Day raises the profile of the issue. It means that we must keep on working, we must keep on paying attention to safe and sustainable water supplies, and we must make safe and sustainable water available without regard to any economic or any political boundaries.

Recently, there has been an entirely renewed attention to global warming, and with that, we are paying more attention to our water resources and what we need to do to keep a safe and liveable world, not just for Americans, not just for Petalumans, but for everyone.

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

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 196.

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. LANTOS. 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 question will be postponed.

□ 1430

CONDEMNING RECENT VIOLENT ACTIONS OF GOVERNMENT OF ZIMBABWE AGAINST PEACEFUL OPPOSITION PARTY ACTIVISTS AND MEMBERS OF CIVIL SOCIETY

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 100) condemning the recent violent actions of the Government of Zimbabwe against peaceful opposition party activists and members of civil society, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 100

Whereas in 2005 the Government of Zimbabwe launched Operation Murambatsvina ("Operation Throw Out the Trash") against citizens in major cities and suburbs throughout Zimbabwe, depriving over 700,000 people of their homes, businesses, and livelihoods;

Whereas on March 11, 2007, opposition party activists and members of civil society attempted to hold a peaceful prayer meeting to protest the economic and political crisis engulfing Zimbabwe, where inflation is running over 3,000 percent and formal sector unemployment stands at 80 percent and in response to President Robert Mugabe's announcement that he intends to seek reelection in 2008;

Whereas opposition activist Gift Tandare died on March 11, 2007, as a result of being shot by police while attempting to attend the prayer meeting and Itai Manyeruke died on March 12, 2007, as a result of police beatings and was found in a morgue by his family on March 20, 2007;

Whereas under the direction of President Robert Mugabe and the Zimbabwe African National Union-Patriotic Front (ZANU-PF) government, police officers, security forces, and youth militia brutally assaulted the peaceful demonstrators and arrested opposition leaders and hundreds of civilians;

Whereas Movement for Democratic Change (MDC) leader Morgan Tsvangarai was brutally assaulted and suffered a fractured skull, lacerations, and major bruising; MDC member Sekai Holland, a 64-year old grandmother, suffered ruthless attacks at Highfield Police Station, which resulted in the breaking of her leg, knee, arm, and three ribs; fellow activist Grace Kwinje, age 33, also was brutally beaten, while part of one ear was ripped off; and Nelson Chamisa was badly injured by suspected state agents at Harare airport on March 18, 2007, when trying to board a plane for a meeting of Africa Caribbean Pacific (ACP) lawmakers in Brussels, Belgium;

Whereas Zimbabwe's foreign minister warned Western diplomats that the Government of Zimbabwe would expel them if they

gave support to the opposition, and said Western diplomats had gone too far by offering food and water to jailed opposition activists;

Whereas victims of physical assault by the Government of Zimbabwe have been denied emergency medical transfer to hospitals in neighboring South Africa, where their wounds can be properly treated;

Whereas those incarcerated by the Government of Zimbabwe were denied access to legal representatives and lawyers appearing at the jails to meet with detained clients were themselves threatened and intimidated;

Whereas at the time of Zimbabwe's independence, President Robert Mugabe was hailed as a liberator and Zimbabwe showed bright prospects for democracy, economic development, domestic reconciliation, and prosperity;

Whereas President Robert Mugabe and his ZANU-PF government continue to turn away from the promises of liberation and use state power to deny the people of Zimbabwe the freedom and prosperity they fought for and deserve;

Whereas the staggering suffering brought about by the misrule of Zimbabwe has created a large-scale humanitarian crisis in which 3,500 people die each week from a combination of disease, hunger, neglect, and despair;

Whereas the Chairman of the African Union, President Alpha Oumar Konaré, expressed "great concern" about Zimbabwe's crisis and called for the need for the scrupulous respect for human rights and democratic principles in Zimbabwe;

Whereas the Southern African Development Community (SADC) Council of Non-governmental Organizations stated that "We believe that the crisis has reached a point where Zimbabweans need to be strongly persuaded and directly assisted to find an urgent solution to the crisis that affects the entire region.;"

Whereas Zambian President Levy Mwanawasa has likened Zimbabwe to a "sinking Titanic" and has urged southern Africa to take a new approach to Zimbabwe, stating that "quiet diplomacy has failed to help solve the political chaos and economic meltdown in Zimbabwe";

Whereas European Union and African, Caribbean, and Pacific lawmakers strongly condemned the latest attack on an opposition official in Zimbabwe and urged the government in Harare to cooperate with the political opposition to restore the rule of law; and

Whereas United States Ambassador to Zimbabwe, Christopher Dell, warned that opposition to President Robert Mugabe had reached a tipping point because the people no longer feared the regime and believed they had nothing left to lose: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) it is the sense of Congress that—

(A) the state-sponsored violence taking place in Zimbabwe represents a serious violation of fundamental human rights and the rule of law and should be condemned by all responsible governments, civic organizations, religious leaders, and international bodies; and

(B) the Government of Zimbabwe has not lived up to its commitments as a signatory to the Constitutive Act of the African Union and African Charter of Human and Peoples Rights which enshrine commitment to human rights and good governance as foundational principles of African states; and

(2) Congress—

(A) condemns the Government of Zimbabwe's violent suppression of political and human rights through its police force, security forces, and youth militia that delib-

erately inflict gross physical harm, intimidation, and abuse on those legitimately protesting the failing policies of the government;

(B) holds those individual police, security force members, and militia involved in abuse and torture responsible for the acts that they have committed;

(C) condemns government harassment and intimidation of lawyers attempting to carry out their professional obligations to their clients and repeated failure by police to comply promptly with court decisions;

(D) condemns the harassment of foreign officials, journalists, human rights workers, and others, including threatening their expulsion from the country if they continue to provide food and water to victims detained in prison and in police custody while in the hospital;

(E) commends United States Ambassador Christopher Dell and other United States Government officials and foreign officials for their support to political detainees and victims of torture and abuse while in police custody or in medical care centers and encourages them to continue providing such support;

(F) calls on the Government of Zimbabwe to cease immediately its violent campaign against fundamental human rights, to respect the courts and members of the legal profession, and to restore the rule of law while adhering to the principles embodied in an accountable democracy, including freedom of association and freedom of expression;

(G) calls on the Government of Zimbabwe to cease illegitimate interference in travel abroad by its citizens, especially for humanitarian purposes; and

(H) calls on the leaders of the Southern African Development Community (SADC) and the African Union to consult urgently with all Zimbabwe stakeholders to intervene with the Government of Zimbabwe while applying appropriate pressures to resolve the economic and political crisis.

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

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LANTOS. 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 California?

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, first I want to thank my good friend from Florida, Ranking Member ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Chairman DONALD PAYNE and Ranking Member CHRIS SMITH, and all the other cosponsors of this resolution for joining me in condemning the egregious violence perpetrated against innocent civilians by the Government of Zimbabwe.

For the past 6 years, the Government of Zimbabwe has been on a path of failed policies and distorted vision. As the economy of the country spiraled downward, the Central Bank has been unresponsive and reckless.

Zimbabwe was once known as Southern Africa's bread basket. But after years of disastrous misrule, the people there now find themselves eating field mice to stave off hunger. Zimbabwean officials have the temerity to declare to the world that they eat field mice because they are a delicacy.

On March 11, many segments of Zimbabwe's society joined together to hold a prayer breakfast to focus attention on the country's desperate situation. The government reacted swiftly, violently cracking down on the gathering. In this incident, six opposition activists were shot, and over 50 had to be hospitalized, including key opposition leaders, many of whom did not get proper treatment for their severe injuries.

This latest incident underscores a disturbing pattern of recent years. The Zimbabwean Government pledges peace, then commits human rights violations against its own people, and it precipitates humanitarian crisis after humanitarian crisis. In response to legitimate protests, the government has retaliated with draconian legislation and harsh security enforcement. It transformed Zimbabwe's poor children into violent militia members, not unlike child soldiers in other ravaged African countries.

In 2005, the Zimbabwean Government launched its infamous Operation Throw Out the Trash against citizens in major cities, driving some 700,000 innocent people from their homes, businesses, and livelihoods.

So I ask Mugabe, the dictator of this country, what kind of human being called himself a "leader," yet is willing to commit atrocities against the very people he is supposed to lead?

In spite of Zimbabwe's embittered rhetoric toward the United States, our Congress passed, 6 years ago, the Zimbabwe Democracy and Economic Recovery Act, offering significant economic and political aid to Zimbabwe if it would reverse its anti-democratic and anti-people ways.

Zimbabwe had invaded a neighboring country, grossly mismanaged its economy, flaunted the rule of law and democratic practices. Using the diplomatic tools at our disposal, our government imposed travel and economic sanctions against individuals who were responsible for the grossest violations.

The United States remains open to change in Zimbabwe, hopeful about prospects and ready to reward its arrival. We clearly provided an opportunity for Zimbabwe to reverse course and to reap generous economic benefits from the American people.

Unfortunately, the Zimbabwean leaders are bent on a bitter and disastrous course that no sane or rational appeal from its own citizens or the community of nations has been able to reverse.

Today Zimbabwe, once one of the most promising countries of Africa, is a dismal shadow of its former self. It faces an unfathomable inflation rate of

3,000 percent, the highest on the planet, and a shocking 80 percent of the people of the country are unemployed.

Our resolution condemns the economic and political madness that is gripping Zimbabwe and urges the government to return to sanity, end the state-sponsored violence, and address the needs of its people.

I, again, want to thank all of those who cosponsored my resolution and urge all of my colleagues to vote in support of H. Con. Res. 100.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I am very pleased to be an original cosponsor of House Concurrent Resolution 100, authored by the esteemed Chair of our Foreign Affairs Committee, the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS). And this resolution, Madam Speaker, condemns the Government of Zimbabwe for its latest assault against political freedom and human rights in that country.

Once hailed by some as a liberator, President Mugabe of Zimbabwe has been exposed as a tyrant and a thug.

Under his authoritarian rule, Zimbabwe boasts the highest rate of inflation in the world, currently standing at an estimated 3,000 percent. Formal sector unemployment stands at 80 percent. Literacy rates are declining, and life expectancy has plummeted to 38 years. Thirty-eight years is the life expectancy in that country.

Large scale commercial farming has been effectively destroyed by a disastrous land reform program which ultimately displaced poor black farmers in favor of political cronies, and acute food shortages which have since left Zimbabweans dependent on international food aid.

The very same party that emerged from a hard-fought struggle for majority rule, shouting slogans of equality and justice, has now taken to arresting, to beating and to intimidating anyone who dares to challenge its policies.

It is clear that, absent meaningful corrective measures, Mugabe's legacy will be defined by his responsibility for the ruinous policies and draconian laws that have brought untold suffering to his people and the near collapse of Zimbabwe as a nation.

Rather than address the underlying inequities that have driven Zimbabwe to economic and political ruin, Mugabe prefers to engage in soapbox demagoguery and espouse conspiracy theories of Western imperialism.

He interferes with the work of non-governmental organizations that are attempting to aid Zimbabweans in need. He harasses, he threatens foreign diplomats, and he even revokes the visas of congressional staffers from our Foreign Affairs Committee attempting to travel to the region to get a clear understanding of what is happening in Zimbabwe.

Mugabe thumbs his nose at Western nations that condemn his assault on basic human rights, particularly those who appear committed to helping Zimbabwe realize its potential through true democratic reform.

Zimbabwe's neighbors and the African Union should take proactive measures to help resolve this crisis, including by pressing the Mugabe regime to immediately halt its brutal crackdown, to release political prisoners, and to engage in meaningful dialogue with the opposition and with civil society.

The President of Zambia already has stepped up to the plate in this regard, and South Africa would be well advised to follow suit.

I thank the gentleman from California again, our chairman of our Foreign Affairs Committee, for introducing this very important and timely resolution. And I urge the full support of our House.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I am delighted to yield 5 minutes to my good friend from New Jersey, chairman of the Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Africa and Global Health, Mr. PAYNE.

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

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, I rise to speak in support of H. Con. Res. 100, and commend Mr. LANTOS and the ranking member for this H. Con. Res. 100, condemning the violence and the violent action taken against the peaceful opposition party activists and members of civil society in Zimbabwe just a few months ago, last month in March.

Zimbabwe has faced a number of political and economic challenges over the past 7 years. Every time I begin to believe that the situation in Zimbabwe has calmed down, something happens which reminds me of how volatile the situation really is.

The March 11 crackdown on people who were gathering at a prayer meeting was a disturbing display of violence. Two people were killed. The leader of the Movement for Democratic Change, Morgan Tsvangari, and other members of the MDC were tortured while in police custody.

Two women were beaten so severely they needed specialized medical care that was only available in South Africa. One of them, Sekai Holland, had her leg broken in three places, her knee broken and her arm and three ribs broken. I cannot understand what possessed security forces to beat a 64-year-old woman so brutally.

And according to the people in Zimbabwe, abductions and killings continue. However, there are encouraging developments. What is most encouraging is that the regional leaders in Southern Africa have spoken out publicly. As recently mentioned, the President of Zambia has likened Zimbabwe to the Titanic, a sinking ship. Officials at the South African De-

partment of Foreign Affairs expressed concern about the situation as well.

The leaders of Southern Africa's Development Community held a meeting of extraordinary heads of state in Tanzania in the wake of violence and asked South African President Thabo Mbeki to help resolve the situation.

This is an important step, and we should support SADC's effort. It is imperative that Congress do all we can to ensure that human rights and the rule of law are respected in Zimbabwe across the political spectrum.

As Mr. LANTOS mentioned, Zimbabwe had great promise. When the struggle to end white rule of Ian Smith was led by Mr. Nkomo and Mr. Mugabe, the ZANU and ZAPO leaders, they finally were able to break the stranglehold of Ian Smith's government. And education was the order of the day, and the Zimbabweans went ahead to build a country.

But something happened in the meantime, and the move from multi-partyism to single-party system, and Mr. Mugabe taking all of the power, that was a move in the wrong direction. And so we have seen multi-partyism come back again. But this brutal behavior of the security forces must end.

In conclusion, I think that we should take a look at the Lancaster House Accords because this was an agreement between Zimbabwe and Great Britain where there would be willing seller-willing buyer purchase of the land that was in the hands of the very small minority of the white Rhodesians.

□ 1445

And there has to be a program of some land distribution. However, the way that Mr. Mugabe has been doing it, as Mr. LANTOS mentioned, in the past there was an attempt to assist Zimbabwe to see if we could help in that process, but we were denied.

So I just ask my colleagues if they would support this resolution, and, hopefully, Mr. Mugabe and the people of Zimbabwe will finally see the light.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I am pleased to yield such time as he may consume to the former Chair of the Africa Subcommittee, now the ranking member, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I thank my good friend and colleague for yielding.

I rise in very strong support of H. Con. Res. 100. I want to thank Chairman LANTOS for sponsoring it. I think it sends a very clear and nonambiguous message to all parties, including the barbaric Mugabe regime.

Madam Speaker, 2 years ago almost to this date, April 21, I chaired a hearing of the House Subcommittee on Africa, Global Human Rights and International Operations entitled "Zimbabwe: Prospects for Democracy after the March, 2005, Elections." At that time, I noted that "Robert Mugabe was a hero to his people and to

his fellow Africans for successfully standing up to racism and oppression. More than two decades later, however, he has so tarnished his image that it must now resemble the fictional portrait of Dorian Gray, showing an increasingly repugnant picture of a hero who has gone astray."

During the Mugabe reign, approximately 2.4 million people have been literally thrown out of their homes, and their homes have been bulldozed. There have been a number of killings and politically motivated kidnappings and torture. The government has relied on repressive laws to suppress freedom of speech, press, assembly, movement, association, and academic freedom. The Zimbabwean people have suffered greatly as a result of the government's extremely misguided economic policies, and many have died from preventable diseases. The U.S. Department of State concluded in its Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2006 that Zimbabwe and its government have "engaged in pervasive and systematic abuse of human rights."

Unfortunately, the situation has only worsened in 2007. The world community was shocked by the photos of beaten members of the political opposition who gathered on March 11 for a peaceful prayer meeting. Mugabe has continued to crack down on any political opposition and even threatened foreign diplomats who offered food and water to jailed opposition leaders.

It is essential that the entire international community raise its voice in support of those seeking democratic reforms in Zimbabwe. Among other measures, this resolution calls upon the Southern African Development Community, or SADC, and the African Union to consult urgently with all Zimbabwe stakeholders to intervene with the Government of Zimbabwe while applying appropriate pressures to resolve the economic and political crisis.

I must express my deep disappointment that SADC has failed to take decisive action with regard to Zimbabwe. Following consultations in Zimbabwe earlier this month, the executive director of SADC stated, "What's good for Zimbabwe is good for the region. What's bad for Zimbabwe is bad for the region. I think it's time we did less talk and do the work." On that point, I could not agree more.

Unfortunately, rather than getting to work and pressing Mugabe to undertake meaningful reforms and halt his latest assault on human beings, on political and human rights, this statement was followed by a plea of support for the Mugabe regime by the International Monetary Fund.

Is the complete retraction of political and human rights and the beating to death of innocent civilians not bad for Zimbabwe? Are Mugabe's disastrous economic policies, which have resulted in inflation rates of up to 3,000 percent, unemployment rates of 80 percent, and the flight of thousands of economic and

political refugees from Zimbabwe into other SADC countries not bad for the region? And what does the continued coddling of Mugabe say about the SADC members' commitment to a "new vision" of responsible governance under the New Economic Partnership for Africa Development, which was championed by South Africa?

Madam Speaker, the Mugabe government has used every means of suppression, every tool that they could muster, to crush those who disagree with that regime.

I urge the passage of this resolution in order to send an urgent message to SADC and to the rest of the international community to do everything necessary to resolve this crisis currently crippling Zimbabwe and provide any and all assistance that the Zimbabwean people so desperately need to achieve democratic reform, peace, and economic prosperity.

Again, I thank the author, Mr. LANTOS, and the ranking member for bringing to the floor this timely and extremely important piece of legislation.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 100, as amended.

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. LANTOS. 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 question will be postponed.

THE AMERICAN NATIONAL RED CROSS GOVERNANCE MODERNIZATION ACT OF 2007

Mr. LANTOS. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 1681) to amend the Congressional Charter of The American National Red Cross to modernize its governance structure, to enhance the ability of the board of governors of The American National Red Cross to support the critical mission of The American National Red Cross in the 21st century, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill. The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 1681

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

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as "The American National Red Cross Governance Modernization Act of 2007".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS; SENSE OF CONGRESS.

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

(1) Substantive changes to the Congressional Charter of The American National Red Cross have not been made since 1947.

(2) In February 2006, the board of governors of The American National Red Cross (the "Board of Governors") commissioned an independent review and analysis of the Board of Governors' role, composition, size, relationship with management, governance relationship with chartered units of The American National Red Cross, and whistleblower and audit functions.

(3) In an October 2006 report of the Board of Governors, entitled "American Red Cross Governance for the 21st Century" (the "Governance Report"), the Board of Governors recommended changes to the Congressional Charter, bylaws, and other governing documents of The American National Red Cross to modernize and enhance the effectiveness of the Board of Governors and governance structure of The American National Red Cross.

(4) It is in the national interest to create a more efficient governance structure of The American National Red Cross and to enhance the Board of Governors' ability to support the critical mission of The American National Red Cross in the 21st century.

(5) It is in the national interest to clarify the role of the Board of Governors as a governance and strategic oversight board and for The American National Red Cross to amend its bylaws, consistent with the recommendations described in the Governance Report, to clarify the role of the Board of Governors and to outline the areas of its responsibility, including—

(A) reviewing and approving the mission statement for The American National Red Cross;

(B) approving and overseeing the corporation's strategic plan and maintaining strategic oversight of operational matters;

(C) selecting, evaluating, and determining the level of compensation of the corporation's chief executive officer;

(D) evaluating the performance and establishing the compensation of the senior leadership team and providing for management succession;

(E) overseeing the financial reporting and audit process, internal controls, and legal compliance;

(F) holding management accountable for performance;

(G) providing oversight of the financial stability of the corporation;

(H) ensuring the inclusiveness and diversity of the corporation;

(I) ensuring the chapters of the corporation are geographically and regionally diverse;

(J) providing oversight of the protection of the brand of the corporation; and

(K) assisting with fundraising on behalf of the corporation.

(6)(A) The selection of members of the Board of Governors is a critical component of effective governance for The American National Red Cross, and, as such, it is in the national interest that The American National Red Cross amend its bylaws to provide a method of selection consistent with that described in the Governance Report.

(B) The new method of selection should replace the current process by which—

(i) 30 chartered unit-elected members of the Board of Governors are selected by a non-Board committee which includes 2 members of the Board of Governors and other individuals elected by the chartered units themselves;