

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;

(ii) 12 at-large members of the Board of Governors are nominated by a Board committee and elected by the Board of Governors; and

(iii) 8 members of the Board of Governors are appointed by the President of the United States.

(C) The new method of selection described in the Governance Report reflects the single category of members of the Board of Governors that will result from the implementation of this Act:

(i) All Board members (except for the chairman of the Board of Governors) would be nominated by a single committee of the Board of Governors taking into account the criteria outlined in the Governance Report to assure the expertise, skills, and experience of a governing board.

(ii) The nominated members would be considered for approval by the full Board of Governors and then submitted to The American National Red Cross annual meeting of delegates for election, in keeping with the standard corporate practice whereby shareholders of a corporation elect members of a board of directors at its annual meeting.

(7) The United States Supreme Court held The American National Red Cross to be an instrumentality of the United States, and it is in the national interest that the Congressional Charter confirm that status and that any changes to the Congressional Charter do not affect the rights and obligations of The American National Red Cross to carry out its purposes.

(8) Given the role of The American National Red Cross in carrying out its services, programs, and activities, and meeting its various obligations, the effectiveness of The American National Red Cross will be promoted by the creation of an organizational ombudsman who—

(A) will be a neutral or impartial dispute resolution practitioner whose major function will be to provide confidential and informal assistance to the many internal and external stakeholders of The American National Red Cross;

(B) will report to the chief executive officer and the audit committee of the Board of Governors; and

(C) will have access to anyone and any documents in The American National Red Cross.

(b) SENSE OF CONGRESS.—It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) charitable organizations are an indispensable part of American society, but these organizations can only fulfill their important roles by maintaining the trust of the American public;

(2) trust is fostered by effective governance and transparency, which are the principal goals of the recommendations of the Board of Governors in the Governance Report and this Act;

(3) Federal and State action play an important role in ensuring effective governance and transparency by setting standards, rooting out violations, and informing the public;

(4) while The American National Red Cross is and will remain a Federally chartered instrumentality of the United States, and it has the rights and obligations consistent with that status, The American National Red Cross nevertheless should maintain appropriate communications with State regulators of charitable organizations and should cooperate with them as appropriate in specific matters as they arise from time to time; and

(5) while The American National Red Cross is and will remain a Federally chartered instrumentality of the United States, and it has the rights and obligations consistent with that status, The American National Red Cross nevertheless should maintain appropriate communications and collabora-

tions with local, community, and faith-based non-profit organizations, including those organizations that work within minority communities.

SEC. 3. ORGANIZATION.

Section 300101 of title 36, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by inserting “a Federally chartered instrumentality of the United States and” before “a body corporate and politic”; and

(2) in subsection (b), by inserting at the end the following new sentence: “The corporation may conduct its business and affairs, and otherwise hold itself out, as the ‘American Red Cross’ in any jurisdiction.”.

SEC. 4. PURPOSES.

Section 300102 of title 36, United States Code, is amended—

(1) by striking “and” at the end of paragraph (3);

(2) by striking the period at the end of paragraph (4) and inserting “; and”; and

(3) by adding at the end the following paragraph:

“(5) to conduct other activities consistent with the foregoing purposes.”.

SEC. 5. MEMBERSHIP AND CHAPTERS.

Section 300103 of title 36, United States Code, is amended—

(1) in subsection (a), by inserting “, or as otherwise provided,” before “in the bylaws”;

(2) in subsection (b)(1)—

(A) by striking “board of governors” and inserting “corporation”; and

(B) by inserting “policies and” before “regulations related”; and

(3) in subsection (b)(2)—

(A) by inserting “policies and” before “regulations shall require”; and

(B) by striking “national convention” and inserting “annual meeting”.

SEC. 6. BOARD OF GOVERNORS.

Section 300104 of title 36, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“§ 300104. Board of governors

“(a) BOARD OF GOVERNORS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The board of governors is the governing body of the corporation with all powers of governing and directing, and of overseeing the management of the business and affairs of, the corporation.

“(2) NUMBER.—The board of governors shall fix by resolution, from time to time, the number of members constituting the entire board of governors, provided that—

“(A) as of March 31, 2009, and thereafter, there shall be no fewer than 12 and no more than 25 members; and

“(B) as of March 31, 2012, and thereafter, there shall be no fewer than 12 and no more than 20 members constituting the entire board.

Procedures to implement the preceding sentence shall be provided in the bylaws.

“(3) APPOINTMENT.—The governors shall be appointed or elected in the following manner:

“(A) CHAIRMAN.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—The board of governors, in accordance with procedures provided in the bylaws, shall recommend to the President an individual to serve as chairman of the board of governors. If such recommendation is approved by the President, the President shall appoint such individual to serve as chairman of the board of governors.

“(ii) VACANCIES.—Vacancies in the office of the chairman, including vacancies resulting from the resignation, death, or removal by the President of the chairman, shall be filled in the same manner described in clause (i).

“(iii) DUTIES.—The chairman shall be a member of the board of governors and, when present, shall preside at meetings of the board of governors and shall have such other

duties and responsibilities as may be provided in the bylaws or a resolution of the board of governors.

“(B) OTHER MEMBERS.—

“(i) IN GENERAL.—Members of the board of governors other than the chairman shall be elected at the annual meeting of the corporation in accordance with such procedures as may be provided in the bylaws.

“(ii) VACANCIES.—Vacancies in any such elected board position and in any newly created board position may be filled by a vote of the remaining members of the board of governors in accordance with such procedures as may be provided in the bylaws.

“(b) TERMS OF OFFICE.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The term of office of each member of the board of governors shall be 3 years, except that—

“(A) the board of governors may provide under the bylaws that the terms of office of members of the board of governors elected to the board of governors before March 31, 2012, may be less than 3 years in order to implement the provisions of subparagraphs (A) and (B) of subsection (a)(2); and

“(B) any member of the board of governors elected by the board to fill a vacancy in a board position arising before the expiration of its term may, as determined by the board, serve for the remainder of that term or until the next annual meeting of the corporation.

“(2) STAGGERED TERMS.—The terms of office of members of the board of governors (other than the chairman) shall be staggered such that, by March 31, 2012, and thereafter, $\frac{1}{2}$ of the entire board (or as near to $\frac{1}{2}$ as practicable) shall be elected at each successive annual meeting of the corporation with the term of office of each member of the board of governors elected at an annual meeting expiring at the third annual meeting following the annual meeting at which such member was elected.

“(3) TERM LIMITS.—No person may serve as a member of the board of governors for more than such number of terms of office or years as may be provided in the bylaws.

“(c) COMMITTEES AND OFFICERS.—The board—

“(1) may appoint, from its own members, an executive committee to exercise such powers of the board when the board is not in session as may be provided in the bylaws;

“(2) may appoint such other committees or advisory councils with such powers as may be provided in the bylaws or a resolution of the board of governors;

“(3) shall appoint such officers of the corporation, including a chief executive officer, with such duties, responsibilities, and terms of office as may be provided in the bylaws or a resolution of the board of governors; and

“(4) may remove members of the board of governors (other than the chairman), officers, and employees under such procedures as may be provided in the bylaws or a resolution of the board of governors.

“(d) ADVISORY COUNCIL.—

“(1) ESTABLISHMENT.—There shall be an advisory council to the board of governors.

“(2) MEMBERSHIP; APPOINTMENT BY PRESIDENT.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The advisory council shall be composed of no fewer than 8 and no more than 10 members, each of whom shall be appointed by the President from principal officers of the executive departments and senior officers of the Armed Forces whose positions and interests qualify them to contribute to carrying out the programs and purposes of the corporation.

“(B) MEMBERS FROM THE ARMED FORCES.—At least 1, but not more than 3, of the members of the advisory council shall be selected from the Armed Forces.

“(3) DUTIES.—The advisory council shall advise, report directly to, and meet, at least

1 time per year with the board of governors, and shall have such name, functions and be subject to such procedures as may be provided in the bylaws.

“(e) ACTION WITHOUT MEETING.—Any action required or permitted to be taken at any meeting of the board of governors or of any committee thereof may be taken without a meeting if all members of the board or committee, as the case may be, consent thereto in writing, or by electronic transmission and the writing or writings or electronic transmission or transmissions are filed with the minutes of proceedings of the board or committee. Such filing shall be in paper form if the minutes are maintained in paper form and shall be in electronic form if the minutes are maintained in electronic form.

“(f) VOTING BY PROXY.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—Voting by proxy is not allowed at any meeting of the board, at the annual meeting, or at any meeting of a chapter.

“(2) EXCEPTION.—The board may allow the election of governors by proxy during any emergency.

“(g) BYLAWS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The board of governors may—

“(A) at any time adopt bylaws; and

“(B) at any time adopt bylaws to be effective only in an emergency.

“(2) EMERGENCY BYLAWS.—Any bylaws adopted pursuant to paragraph (1)(B) may provide special procedures necessary for managing the corporation during the emergency. All provisions of the regular bylaws consistent with the emergency bylaws remain effective during the emergency.

“(h) DEFINITIONS.—For purposes of this section—

“(1) the term ‘entire board’ means the total number of members of the board of governors that the corporation would have if there were no vacancies; and

“(2) the term ‘emergency’ shall have such meaning as may be provided in the bylaws.”.

SEC. 7. POWERS.

Subsection (a)(1) of section 300105 of title 36, United States Code, is amended by striking “bylaws” and inserting “policies”.

SEC. 8. ANNUAL MEETING.

Section 300107 of title 36, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

§ 300107. Annual meeting

“(a) IN GENERAL.—The annual meeting of the corporation is the annual meeting of delegates of the chapters.

“(b) TIME OF MEETING.—The annual meeting shall be held as determined by the board of governors.

“(c) PLACE OF MEETING.—The board of governors is authorized to determine that the annual meeting shall not be held at any place, but may instead be held solely by means of remote communication subject to such procedures as are provided in the bylaws.

“(d) VOTING.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—In matters requiring a vote at the annual meeting, each chapter is entitled to at least 1 vote, and voting on all matters may be conducted by mail, telephone, telegram, cablegram, electronic mail, or any other means of electronic or telephone transmission, provided that the person voting shall state, or submit information from which it can be determined, that the method of voting chosen was authorized by such person.

“(2) ESTABLISHMENT OF NUMBER OF VOTES.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—The board of governors shall determine on an equitable basis the number of votes that each chapter is entitled to cast, taking into consideration the size of the membership of the chapters, the popu-

lations served by the chapters, and such other factors as may be determined by the board.

“(B) PERIODIC REVIEW.—The board of governors shall review the allocation of votes at least every 5 years.”.

SEC. 9. ENDOWMENT FUND.

Section 300109 of title 36, United States Code is amended—

(1) by striking “nine” from the first sentence thereof; and

(2) by striking the second sentence and inserting the following: “The corporation shall prescribe policies and regulations on terms and tenure of office, accountability, and expenses of the board of trustees.”.

SEC. 10. ANNUAL REPORT AND AUDIT.

Subsection (a) of section 300110 of title 36, United States Code, is amended to read as follows:

“(a) SUBMISSION OF REPORT.—As soon as practicable after the end of the corporation’s fiscal year, which may be changed from time to time by the board of governors, the corporation shall submit a report to the Secretary of Defense on the activities of the corporation during such fiscal year, including a complete, itemized report of all receipts and expenditures.”.

SEC. 11. COMPTROLLER GENERAL OF THE UNITED STATES AND OFFICE OF THE OMBUDSMAN.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 3001 of title 36, United States Code, is amended by redesignating section 300111 as section 300113 and by inserting after section 300110 the following new sections:

§ 300111. Authority of the Comptroller General of the United States

“The Comptroller General of the United States is authorized to review the corporation’s involvement in any Federal program or activity the Government carries out under law.

§ 300112. Office of the Ombudsman

“(a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The corporation shall establish an Office of the Ombudsman with such duties and responsibilities as may be provided in the bylaws or a resolution of the board of governors.

“(b) REPORT.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—The Office of the Ombudsman shall submit annually to the appropriate Congressional committees a report concerning any trends and systemic matters that the Office of the Ombudsman has identified as confronting the corporation.

“(2) APPROPRIATE CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEES.—For purposes of paragraph (1), the appropriate Congressional committees are the following committees of Congress:

“(A) SENATE COMMITTEES.—The appropriate Congressional committees of the Senate are—

“(i) the Committee on Finance;
“(ii) the Committee on Foreign Relations;
“(iii) the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions;

“(iv) the Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs; and

“(v) the Committee on the Judiciary.

“(B) HOUSE COMMITTEES.—The appropriate Congressional committees of the House of Representatives are—

“(i) the Committee on Energy and Commerce;
“(ii) the Committee on Foreign Affairs;
“(iii) the Committee on Homeland Security;

“(iv) the Committee on the Judiciary; and

“(v) the Committee on Ways and Means.”.

(b) CLERICAL AMENDMENT.—The table of sections for chapter 3001 of title 36, United States Code, is amended by striking the item relating to section 300111 and inserting the following:

“300111. Authority of the Comptroller General of the United States.

“300112. Office of the Ombudsman.

“300113. Reservation of right to amend or repeal.”.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

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 bill 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.

I rise in strong support of this legislation. Wherever disaster strikes, the American Red Cross is on the scene to lend a helping hand in any immediate aftermath. In times of crisis, its staff of 35,000 and over 1 million Red Cross volunteers take on the daunting task of translating the compassion of the American people into shelter, clothing, medical help, and food. Be it a fire that puts a family out of its home or a tornado that tears through an entire community, the Red Cross responds immediately, answering the call of an astonishing 75,000 incidents last year alone.

The relief work of the Red Cross is not limited to our borders. The Red Cross responds to tsunamis and earthquakes and other natural disasters across the globe, providing much-needed assistance to victims. Earlier this month, the Red Cross quickly mobilized to provide the Solomon Islands with safe drinking water, medical care, and emergency shelter after that country was hit with a tsunami.

But the American Red Cross, Madam Speaker, like so many disaster relief organizations, has come under heightened scrutiny after 9/11 and the gulf coast hurricanes of 2005. Particularly, the disaster that New Orleans and the gulf coast suffered and the response to it crystallized the need for reform of this venerable organization, which had not changed its governance structure in over half a century. The leadership of the American Red Cross undertook a 6-month, top-to-bottom comprehensive governance and performance audit. After over 100 interviews of past and present Red Cross officers, volunteer chapter leaders, donors, and many others, the verdict was in: Red Cross governance required a major overhaul.

Last October, Madam Speaker, the Red Cross board of governors unanimously approved a series of changes to improve the governance and the accountability of the organization. But such changes cannot be implemented

without amending the Red Cross charter, and for that to occur, congressional action is needed. That is the reason for our legislation.

Last month the other body acted with urgency by passing the American National Red Cross Organization Act. This House aims to act with similar urgency as we consider this bill just 3 weeks after it was introduced by my good friend, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN of Florida, and myself.

Madam Speaker, H.R. 1681 amends the Red Cross charter in a number of significant ways. First, the board of governors will be reduced to 25 members. Where previously some board members were selected by local chapters, some elected by the board, others appointed by the President, our legislation requires governors to be elected solely by delegates to the Red Cross' annual meeting. The responsibilities for day-to-day operations will be delegated exclusively to the Red Cross management rather than to the board. Our legislation requires the Red Cross to establish an office of ombudsman, who will report to Congress, to raise the profile of the whistleblower process for employees and volunteers and to make improvements to it.

Madam Speaker, while these changes would not directly affect the organization's disaster response, it will help promote the kind of leadership needed to make Red Cross management and operations run smoothly and effectively for the balance of this century.

□ 1500

I would like to express my appreciation to my friend and distinguished colleague, the ranking member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs, ILEANA ROS-LEHTINEN, for cosponsoring this legislation; and I want to thank her for her commitment to ensuring that the American Red Cross remains accountable to the American people.

I strongly support this legislation, and I urge all of my colleagues to do the same.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, as always, it is a delight and a joy to work with our chairman, TOM LANTOS of California. And I join him as an original co-sponsor of The American Red Cross Governance Modernization Act of 2007.

The American Red Cross, as Mr. LANTOS has pointed out, is an institution with a unique status. It has been assigned the responsibility by Congress of fulfilling the obligations of the United States under the Geneva Convention for carrying out peacetime and disaster relief functions. This obligation has not been a small undertaking. The Red Cross has been helping victims of war and natural disasters since its founding in 1881.

As a Member of Congress from Florida's 18th District, I am well aware of

the great job, the amazing efforts of Red Cross as an organization made up of volunteers, and in the way that they have responded to numerous hurricanes in my State and tropical storms. And so on behalf of the residents of my district and my State, thank you to the Red Cross and its many volunteers.

And it is precisely because of this, Madam Speaker, I applaud the Red Cross for the hard work that it has done to review its internal governance structures and proposed changes to its charter that will make it an even stronger organization so they can help more people that will reform the organization and take it into its next century of service.

I am pleased that the Red Cross was willing to accept additional significant proposed changes that will provide even more accountability and transparency in the manner in which it will report its findings regarding audits and investigations to the general public.

In the future, Madam Speaker, anyone will be able to log on to the Red Cross Web site and view the results of its finding for audits and investigations that are conducted by the ombudsman's office. This act alone will provide even further assurances necessary for the American public to feel confident that the Red Cross handles donations with the utmost care.

I urge my colleagues to unanimously support H.R. 1681. And I thank the chairman for his leadership on this issue.

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

Mr. LANTOS. 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 pass the bill, H.R. 1681, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS HIGHLIGHTED THROUGH NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 293) supporting the goals and ideals highlighted through National Volunteer Week.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 293

Whereas National Volunteer Week will be observed during the week of April 15 through 21, 2007;

Whereas the National Volunteer Week theme, "Inspire By Example", truly reflects the power volunteers have to inspire the people they help and to inspire others to serve;

Whereas about 61.2 million people volunteered through or for an organization at least once between September 2005 and September 2006, according to a recent survey by the United States Bureau of Labor Statistics, and the proportion of people who volunteered was 26.7 percent, more than a quarter of the total United States population;

Whereas the estimated dollar value of volunteer time was \$18.04 in 2005, according to the latest information provided by Independent Sector, a nonpartisan leadership forum, and the coalition estimates the value of volunteer time for 2005 to be \$280 billion;

Whereas volunteers have contributed to the enhancement and improvement of communities across the United States, especially with respect to the aftermath of the hurricanes on the Gulf Coast; and

Whereas National Volunteer Week will continue to build awareness of the role that volunteers play in local, national, and international communities, and their commitment and dedication to improving lives, strengthening communities, and fostering civic engagement through service and volunteering; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the goals and ideals highlighted through National Volunteer Week;

(2) acknowledges the diligent efforts of our major federally funded community service and volunteer programs;

(3) recognizes with gratitude the contributions of the millions of dedicated and caring individuals who have chosen to serve others through volunteerism; and

(4) encourages all American people, of any age and background, to seek out opportunities to serve through volunteerism.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from New Hampshire (Ms. SHEA-PORTER) and the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. PLATTS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from New Hampshire.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. Madam Speaker, I request 5 legislative days during which Members may insert material relevant to House Resolution 293 into the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from New Hampshire?

There was no objection.

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

(Ms. SHEA-PORTER asked and was given permission to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. SHEA-PORTER. House Resolution 293 is a bipartisan bill recognizing the important role of volunteers in local, national, and international communities and their dedication to improving lives, strengthening communities, and fostering civic engagement through service and volunteering.

April 15–21, 2007 is recognized as National Volunteer Week. The theme is Inspire by Example, which reflects the power volunteers have to inspire the people they help and to inspire others to serve.

Inspire by Example has been the theme throughout our history. We have 61 million volunteers out of a population of 300 million who volunteer some time each day to serve others.