

resolution (H. Res. 534) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 1851) to reform the housing choice voucher program under section 8 of the United States Housing Act of 1937, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

CELEBRATING THE 500TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FIRST USE OF THE NAME "AMERICA"

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 287) to celebrate the 500th anniversary of the first use of the name "America", and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 287

Whereas Italian navigator Amerigo Vespucci was born in 1454 and traveled across the Atlantic Ocean 4 times between 1497 and 1504;

Whereas during his second voyage to the Western Hemisphere in 1499, Amerigo Vespucci realized that the land Christopher Columbus discovered in 1492 was not India but a new continent;

Whereas cartographer Martin Waldseemüller, a member of the research group *Gymnasium Vosagense* in Saint-Dié, France, first used the word "America" in his world map, which first appeared in public on April 25, 1507, and described the newly discovered Western Hemisphere as separated by the Atlantic Ocean and an ocean known now as the Pacific Ocean, in its first depiction;

Whereas Waldseemüller chose to honor Amerigo Vespucci by naming the new continent with Vespucci's name even while Vespucci was alive;

Whereas Waldseemüller described this decision in his "Cosmographiae Introductio", the book that accompanied the map, by writing, "I see no reason why anyone should justly object to calling this part ... America, after Amerigo [Vespucci], its discoverer, a man of great ability."; and

Whereas April 25, 2007, will be the 500th anniversary of this first public use of the word "America", which now serves as the root of the names of 2 continents: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) celebrates the 500th anniversary of the first use of the name "America" to describe areas in the Western Hemisphere;

(2) honors the explorations of Amerigo Vespucci and other navigators who contributed to the discovery of the Western Hemisphere;

(3) acknowledges the significance of Martin Waldseemüller's 1507 map of the world and accompanying book, "Cosmographiae Introductio", which forever changed the accepted geographical view of the world and first officially used the name "America"; and

(4) encourages the inhabitants of all countries of the Western Hemisphere who have the privilege to share this great name "America" to join with the House of Representatives and citizens of the United States of America in this historic celebration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. 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 gentlewoman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution and yield myself as much time as I may consume.

Let me first of all thank our colleague, Congressman ALCEE HASTINGS, for introducing this meaningful measure that speaks to the very heart of our Nation, as well as its history.

The resolution before the House today acknowledges the 500th anniversary of the use of the name "America" which first appeared on a map of the world drafted by a German cartographer, Martin Waldseemüller in 1507. The only known surviving copy of the first printed edition of this map is now housed in our own Library of Congress. It was the first map to depict the continent beyond Europe's western horizon, with the Pacific shown on its opposite shore as a separate ocean.

This measure also acknowledges the contribution of explorer Amerigo Vespucci in radically shifting human understanding of world geography. No longer was the globe thought to be divided only among Europe, Asia and Africa. This, in turn, inspired Martin Waldseemüller to adopt Vespucci's given name and to confer it on the newly charted Western Hemisphere. Mr. Speaker, this might be called the first act of immigration.

It is important that we celebrate this historic occasion because "America" has come to symbolize much more than a name placed on a map half a millennium ago. For centuries, it has been seen by many as a promised land, where a new start offers endless possibilities. So many have come to our shores, seeking opportunity, fleeing persecution, fleeing prosecution against those values that they hold so dear, and looking for economic opportunity. And for decades, this country has played a global leadership role, offering hope for relief from oppression and tyranny.

Our Independence Day festivities which we just celebrated with great gusto last week reminds Americans and the world every year of a unique place in history this country holds.

I, for one, held the first Citizenship Day in the history of Houston on Independence Day. It was a joyful celebration of the freedom and the independence of those great days of this great Nation.

I would like to acknowledge the Americans Abroad Caucus, which saw this resolution as an opportunity to promote international geographical

understanding and to celebrate the expansive symbolism of this great and wonderful country. As well, it comes as an opportunity to support and emphasize the symbolism of the word "America" and what it has come to signify.

I would also like to acknowledge the America 500th Birthday Organizing Committee and their "Who Named America" initiative which has coordinated a series of city, county and State proclamations consistent with the spirit of this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to support H. Res. 287.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution authored by my good friend and colleague, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, a resolution that commemorates the first use of the name "America" by European map makers.

When Italian photographer and navigator Amerigo Vespucci, the merchant, explorer and cartographer, set sail on his first westward bound voyage across the Atlantic, probably in the year 1497, he did so in search of a faster trading route to China. But in the course of his travels, he set foot instead in what is now the continent of South America.

From widely published letters attributed to him at the time, Europeans first came to know of the vast continents of this new world, lands that would come to play such a dominant role in the history of the Old World during the next four centuries.

From these letters, Amerigo's destiny as a namesake for our home on the world maps that followed was assured.

This resolution of Mr. HASTINGS reminds us that no matter where we live in the northern or southern hemisphere, we are Americans, united by a common history.

I thank my colleague from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS) for offering this resolution.

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

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I'm delighted to yield such time as he might consume to the sponsor of this bill, Representative ALCEE L. HASTINGS, who is the chairman of the Rules Subcommittee on the Legislative and Budget Process and is also the international chairperson of the Helsinki Commission.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from Houston for yielding time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Resolution 287, a resolution, as has been stated by both my good friends, that celebrates the 500th anniversary of the first use of the name "America."

I'd like to especially thank the original cosponsors that worked with me to introduce the legislation: Majority Leader STENY HOYER; and the leaders

of the Americans Abroad Caucus, Congresswoman CAROLYN MALONEY and Congressman JOE WILSON.

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I also want to thank the chairman and ranking Republican of the Foreign Affairs Committee, my good friend, Chairman LANTOS, and my good friend from Florida, we came here together, my colleague, Representative ROS-LEHTINEN, for supporting this legislation and bringing it to the floor today.

Finally, I would like to express my deep appreciation to Representative ELIOT ENGEL and his staff for their help in moving this resolution forward. I would be terribly remiss if I did not mention a young man in my office, that this is among his first experiences, Alex Johnson, who found the work, not robbery, to bring this forward along with my legislative director, David Goldenberg.

It is important to recognize the collaborative community initiative that has emerged to commemorate this occasion. The Americans Abroad Caucus and the national initiative for similar proclamations in all 50 States coordinated by the America 500 Birthday Organizing Committee have established a foundation for this important resolution to be taken up for floor consideration today.

This resolution transcends the simple acknowledgment of the first use of a term on a map, but, rather, commemorates scientific achievement toward a shared understanding of the world. It is this world which increasingly exchanges culture, technology, and scientific advancement that thrives through shared understanding and the innovation we celebrate today.

This resolution transcends the simple acknowledgment of the first use of a term on a map, but, rather, commemorates scientific achievement toward a shared understanding of the world. It is this world which increasingly exchanges culture, technology, and scientific advancement that thrives through shared understanding and the innovation we celebrate today.

When German cartographer Martin Waldseemüller first used America to identify a previously uncharted continent on his, previously mentioned by Ms. JACKSON-LEE and Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN, 1507 map of the world, I doubt that he truly realized the magnitude of his achievement. His choice of the term "America" to memorialize the voyages of Amerigo Vespucci shifted the geographical understanding of the world and established a term that would be attributed with symbolic identity in the centuries to come.

This symbolic identity is the source of pride that continues to motivate me and all of us to serve this great Nation. It is this American spirit which guides our role in the world and should motivate all Americans to work towards a renewed commitment to positive international relations.

My colleagues should know that the last remaining copy, and I believe Ms. JACKSON-LEE pointed it out in her remarks, remains as a trust, as a top treasure of the Library of Congress. I would encourage my colleagues and citizens in this country to visit and see this treasure which established the geographical origin of the American identity.

Again, I thank Chairman LANTOS, Ranking Member ROS-LEHTINEN, and

Representative ENGEL for their work on this. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution and join me to commemorate the origin of the term which has resulted in an international American identity.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of our time.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Let me thank the distinguished gentleman from Florida. Again, let me acknowledge Mr. LANTOS, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN and Mr. ENGEL as well. This is an important piece of history, and I am very grateful for this legislation to provide us another chain link, if you will, another connection to the history of America.

Mr. Speaker, I ask my colleagues to support this legislation, which is H. Res. 287.

Mr. HOYER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to commemorate the 500th anniversary of the first use of the word "America"—a name that has come to symbolize liberty, opportunity and an unyielding hope for humanity.

In the 500 years that have passed since the word "America" was first used, the term has become more of a concept than a name—an idea that celebrates what is truly special about the world in which we live; a principle that defines what democracy, equality, freedom and unity are all about; and a goal that people all over the world have embraced since our country's inception.

We have come a long way since 1507—from a simple name on a map, to a moral, political and economic leader among nations. It gives me great pride to mark this 5th centenary of the name "America," and to express my sincere hope that the next 500 years of our country's history provide just as many benefits to the people of the world as the last 500.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, today we celebrate the 500th anniversary of the first use of the name America, to describe areas in the Western Hemisphere. These areas are named after Amerigo Vespucci, an Italian Explorer on a quest to find new lands. He is one of many from that era who craved the exploration of new worlds and ideas. Although Vespucci's intention was to conquer land for Italy, he ultimately helped to create a place that today is one of the most diverse places on earth. Vespucci took a bold step, defying previous thinking that the land we live on was part of India.

Today we recognize the anniversary of Amerigo's discovery as a reminder of how important it is to challenge preconceived notions, and how critical it is that we keep exploring new ideas and sciences.

We are a people who live and breathe discovery. Our history holds many examples of our desire to explore. This country has gone to the Moon and intertwined computers into our everyday lives. We have created vaccines to help eradicate polio and other life threatening diseases. We use our ambition to explore, and as a means to be competitive in the world we live in.

Today we must continue to honor our historical drive for exploration. Unlike Vespucci's quest which was to only benefit a small subset of people, today we must give anyone the opportunity to be involved with the exploration and to partake in the benefits of our successes. Only about 6 percent of practicing

physicians are Latino, African American and Native American today, and according to an analysis by the Commission on Professionals in Science and Technology, the percentage of African Americans receiving bachelor's degrees in engineering is only 4.7 percent of all engineering graduates. Minorities and women are often left out of these fields. There is no reason for these discriminations. We should push all young people to discover science and mathematics and to understand there are jobs that interact with those fields. We especially need to push minorities and women who have not gotten those opportunities to achieve in those fields.

We have made progress since the last election in helping every young person to become involved with math and science. The house recently passed The 21st Century Competitiveness Act of 2007, which establishes, revises, and extends specified science, mathematics, education, engineering, technology, research, and training programs, however; we need to keep improving math and science education for young people. We should increase computer interaction in poverty stricken areas and increase young minority student's interactions with math and science at a younger age.

In the celebration of America and Amerigo Vespucci, let us pledge to continue our quest for exploration and discovery. Let us continue to take bold steps as he once did to move in a direction where we can use new technology and discoveries to improve the lives of millions not just those in positions of power, but for even the most underprivileged in our society.

Mrs. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 287 which honors the 500th Anniversary of the name "America."

The story of the origin of our country's name is one of great discovery and dedication that embodies our national spirit.

On April 25, 1507 cartographer Martin Waldseemüller of the research group Gymnasium Vosagense in Saint-Die, France changed the way Europeans perceived the world by first depicting the Western Hemisphere in his 1507 World Map. He labeled the land "America," marking the first official use of the word. The only remaining copy of this map is housed next door in the Library of Congress.

Waldseemüller named the land after Italian navigator Amerigo Vespucci. Although explorers like Christopher Columbus already discovered what we now know to be the Western Hemisphere, Vespucci was the first to realize that it was not India but an entirely new continent.

Mr. Speaker, I am proud to honor the name "America." Truly encompassing the American spirit, this name was derived from those challenging the status quo to improve our world and persevering in the face of doubt. Today we are not only honoring the name America but all Americans who have the great privilege of sharing this name and all it embodies.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 287 and thank our colleague, Congressman ALCEE L. HASTINGS, for sponsoring this excellent resolution.

In 1507, German cartographer Martin Waldseemüller [VALD-say-meuller] drafted a map of the world that inaugurated the use of the name "America," acknowledging the contributions of explorer Amerigo Vespucci, which forever altered the accepted geographical view of the world.

As Chair of the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, with jurisdiction over the Americas—Latin America and Central America, North and South America—I am keenly aware that the use of this name has forever defined the region where we all live.

As we commemorate 500 years of the use of the name “America”, let us rededicate ourselves to promoting better and closer relations between the United States and the countries of the Americas and hope that the next 500 years will be an era of peace and prosperity throughout the hemisphere.

I urge Committee Members to support H. Res. 287.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 287, 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.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

RECOGNIZING 2007 AS THE YEAR OF THE RIGHTS OF INTERNALLY DISPLACED PERSONS IN COLOMBIA

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 426) recognizing 2007 as the Year of the Rights of Internally Displaced Persons in Colombia, and offering support for efforts to ensure that the internally displaced people of Colombia receive the assistance and protection they need to rebuild their lives successfully, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 426

Whereas Colombia has experienced the internal displacement of more than 3,800,000 people over the past 20 years, representing approximately 8 percent of Colombia's population;

Whereas Colombia's internally displaced population is one of the worst humanitarian crises in the Americas, and the second largest internally displaced population in the world, after Sudan;

Whereas more than 200,000 people continue to be displaced internally every year;

Whereas Colombia's internally displaced people are often forced from their homes multiple times, and fear repercussions if they identify their attackers;

Whereas the International Committee of the Red Cross and the World Food Program have found internally displaced people in Colombia to be poorer and more disenfranchised than the general population, with 70 percent suffering from food insecurity, inadequate shelter, or limited health care services;

Whereas Afro-Colombian and indigenous peoples are disproportionately affected by displacement, representing almost one-third of the internally displaced;

Whereas women and children also comprise a large majority of the internally displaced;

Whereas very few internally displaced Colombians have been able to return to their original homes due to ongoing conflict throughout the country, and when returns take place they should be carried out voluntarily, in safety and with dignity;

Whereas, in 1997, the Government of Colombia passed landmark legislation, known as Law 387, to guarantee rights and assistance to its internally displaced population;

Whereas the Government of Colombia has expanded its ability to assist internally displaced people through its own agencies, and with the financial, technical, and operational support of the international community;

Whereas the Constitutional Court of Colombia has handed down multiple decisions recognizing the insufficient nature of the government's efforts to meet the basic needs of internally displaced persons and upheld the importance of implementing law 387 in light of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement;

Whereas the Constitutional Court of Colombia, in consultation with the Government of Colombia, civil society, and the United Nations, has developed an extensive set of measurements to ensure government compliance with Law 387;

Whereas the Government of Colombia, the international community, and civil society are engaged in the London-Cartagena Process to develop coordinated responses to domestic problems, including humanitarian assistance and internal displacement;

Whereas the Government of the United States provides valuable, but limited, humanitarian assistance through Plan Colombia, and has programs targeted specifically for internally displaced people; and

Whereas the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, Antonio Guterres, on a visit to Colombia in March 2007, urged greater attention to the issue, stating that it should be a “national priority” and asked for “greater coherence” in programs to address the needs of the internally displaced: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that—

(1) the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Colombian Catholic Church, and the Consultancy for Human Rights and Internal Displacement should be commended for their initiative to declare the Year of the Rights of the Internally Displaced People in Colombia;

(2) the Government of Colombia and the international donor community should be encouraged to prioritize discussion of humanitarian assistance and internal displacement with the international donor community, especially within the context of the London-Cartagena Process; and

(3) the Government of the United States should increase the resources it makes available to provide emergency humanitarian assistance and protection through international and civilian government agencies, and assist Colombia's internally displaced people in rebuilding their lives in a dignified, safe, and sustainable manner.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Texas (Ms. JACKSON-LEE) and the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROSLEHTINEN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their re-

marks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this legislation and yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would first like to express our appreciation to our colleagues, Congressman JIM MCGOVERN and Congressman JOE PITTS, for introducing this important legislation. Let me also thank the Chair of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee, Mr. ELIOT ENGEL, and the Chair and ranking member of the Africa and Global Health Subcommittee, Mr. PAYNE and Mr. SMITH, for bringing this issue to our attention. For those who have recently visited Colombia, I can assure the sponsors of this legislation that this is a timely and important and constructive addition to the assistance of displaced persons in Colombia.

The McGovern resolution brings long overdue attention to the continuing plight of Colombia's internally displaced people. Ongoing violence over the last 20 years among paramilitary groups, guerillas and government security forces has forced millions of civilians to leave their homes, wander the streets and the countryside and simply struggle to survive. It has to be a miserable existence.

Colombia's internally displaced population represents one of the worst humanitarian crises in the hemisphere and the second largest population of internally displaced in the world after Sudan. While the entire world knows about the hardships facing the people of Sudan, Colombia's internally displaced suffer in great silence.

For this reason, the United Nations' High Commissioner for Refugees has deemed it the greatest hidden humanitarian crisis in the world. Over the past two decades, approximately 3.8 million Colombians, or about 8 percent of Colombia's entire population, have been displaced from their homes due to violence and conflict and through no fault of their own.

President Uribe is a solid ally of the United States in South America. He has made enormous strides in protecting his own people, but clearly he faces an uphill battle. In our conversations, in my visit to Colombia, along with several Members, including Congressman GREG MEEKS, we made this a very strong point, meeting with some of the internally displaced persons and recognize that this is an enormous challenge that this Congress must confront and provide assistance to these people and to the government to do what is right.

Sadly, an estimated 200,000 people are forced to flee their homes or places of refuge each year. For these people, Colombia is home, but Colombia has no