

under intense political pressure from powerful political leaders and the ruling party." Furthermore, press reports quote the Kenya Electoral Commission Chairman Samuel M. Kivuitu as stating that "the day he went to deliver the certificate declaring Kibaki the winner, he saw the chief justice already at the State House reportedly waiting to swear in Kibaki." The swearing-in ceremony itself was so rushed that it is said organizers forgot to include the national anthem in the program. Mr. Speaker, to call these events "irregularities" as the ECK commissioners and ECK staff have conceded, is a vast understatement. In order for Kenya to continue moving forward on its current democratic trajectory, elections must be transparent, free, and fair, none of which were seen in the December 27 election. This legislation calls upon the two leading presidential candidates to accept offers of external and internal assistance to help find a solution to the current crisis that has the support of the people of Kenya.

What is equally disturbing was the United States' reaction to this electoral crisis. While the EU observers criticized the election for its myriad of inconsistencies, on December 30, the United States government reportedly congratulated President Kibaki for his victory. In a recently released report, the EU concluded, "the 2007 general elections have fallen short of key international and regional standards for democratic elections. Most significantly, they were marred by a lack of transparency in the processing and tallying of presidential results, which raises concerns about the accuracy of the final results of this election." Following both regional and international uproar, the United States seemingly changed its position in January as Assistant Secretary of State for African Affairs, Jendayi Frazer, declared that "serious flaws in the vote tallying process damaged the credibility of the process." Such inconsistency on the part of diplomatic corps of the United States sends a poor message to our friends and allies struggling for democracy across the sea.

As outrage over the electoral results permeated throughout the country, so too did spontaneous demonstrations of anger and ultimately violence. Recent statistics reported by the UN and Kenyan sources state that since late December more than 900 people have been killed and an estimated 300,000 displaced, including some 80,000 children under the age of five. International observers have proclaimed that while some protestors died due to mob violence, many others were reportedly shot and killed by police. While the Kenya military did not engage in riot control for most of January, press reports and Kenyan sources state that Kenyan police and security were given authority to use lethal force to disperse mobs. In the wake of the disputed election results, the Kenyan government banned demonstrations and initiated media restrictions, which seem to have further stoked the fire.

Mr. Speaker, with the intolerable number of Kenyans dead and displaced, it is imperative that the United States play a meaningful role in resolving the current crises. With two failed international missions, it is time that we rethink our strategy in addressing the current crisis.

The ongoing violence as a means to achieve political objectives in Kenya must come to a halt. We need the superior support of the United Nations to assist those affected

by violence, and use all the diplomatic means to persuade relevant political actors to commit to a peaceful resolution to the crisis. This legislation emphasizes precisely these issues.

I strongly urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this extremely important legislation that arbitrates for the Kenyan people.

□ 1600

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 283, 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. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

CONGRATULATING LEE MYUNG-BAK ON ELECTION TO PRESIDENCY OF THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 947) congratulating Lee Myung-Bak on his election to the Presidency of the Republic of Korea and wishing him well during his time of transition and his inauguration on February 25, 2008.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 947

Whereas the United States and the Republic of Korea share a longstanding and comprehensive alliance rooted in the common principles of freedom and democracy;

Whereas on June 11, 2007, the House of Representatives passed H. Res. 295 recognizing "the strong alliance between the Republic of Korea and the United States and expresses appreciation to the Republic of Korea for its contributions to international efforts to combat terrorism";

Whereas on December 19, 2007, the Senate passed S. Res. 279 recognizing that "the strength and endurance of the alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea should be acknowledged and celebrated";

Whereas, since 2000, the United States House of Representatives and the Republic of Korea National Assembly have engaged in an interparliamentary exchange to discuss issues central to the U.S.-Republic of Korea relationship;

Whereas there are deep cultural and personal ties between the peoples of the United States and the Republic of Korea, as exemplified by the large flow of visitors and exchanges each year between the two nations, as well as the nearly two million Korean-Americans;

Whereas Congress recognizes January 13 as Korean-American Day, honoring the con-

tributions of Korean-Americans in forging stronger bilateral ties between our two countries;

Whereas the Republic of Korea is the United States seventh largest trading partner and the United States is the third largest trading partner of the Republic of Korea with nearly \$80 billion in annual trade volume;

Whereas the United States and the Republic of Korea are working closely together to promote international peace and security, economic prosperity, human rights, and the rule of law; and

Whereas Lee Myung-Bak, upon winning the election to become the next President of the Republic of Korea, stated that he would seek to further strengthen the relationship with the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives congratulates Lee Myung-Bak on his election to the presidency of the Republic of Korea and wishes him well during his time of transition and on his inauguration on February 25, 2008.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) and the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New Jersey?

There was no objection.

Mr. PAYNE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I would like to first thank my friend Mr. ROYCE of California for introducing this resolution which congratulates President-elect Lee Myung-Bak on his victory in the South Korean presidential elections.

In electing Lee Myung-Bak, the South Korean people have selected a man of exceptional accomplishment and proven leadership. During his 27 years at the helm of Hyundai Group, Mr. Lee transformed the company from a successful but relatively small local corporation into South Korea's largest industrial conglomerate with a dominant worldwide presence.

Mr. Lee and Hyundai's success helped drive the Republic of Korea's dramatic success as an East Asian economic "tiger" in the seventies, eighties and nineties. The parallel is particularly appropriate since in English the Korean word "hyundai" means "modern." As Mr. Lee led the company to new heights, he played a direct role in the spectacularly rapid modernization of the Republic of Korea.

Mr. Lee's extraordinary professional career is right at home among the American Dream stories of our Nation. The son of a cattle rancher who fell onto hard times, Mr. Lee was born into poverty and worked his way through

college as a garbage collector. Relying on his talents and work ethic, he eventually rose to the pinnacle of the business world.

Committing himself to politics, he became the mayor of Seoul and applied his leadership skills and his no-nonsense approach to improve that important city. Now as South Korea's president, he is uniquely able to lead and further strengthen his country, one of the United States' closest and most significant allies.

Mr. Lee's story is a potent reminder that the friendship between the United States and the Republic of Korea is based not only on our shared interest but also our shared values. For over 50 years, our two countries fought together against common threats such as communism, but the foundation of our alliance is a common commitment to democracy, individual liberties, and human rights.

The end of the Cold War did not end the critical role of our alliance in promoting and protecting political and economic freedoms in Asia and around the world. Today, we work side by side to combat international terrorism, denuclearize the Korean Peninsula, and promote peace and stability in northeast Asia. This work relies on our strong military alliance, bolstered by 28,000 military personnel stationed in the Republic of Korea.

We also share a dynamic economic relationship. With two-way trade approaching \$80 billion, South Korea is the United States' seventh largest trading partner, and the United States is the fourth largest trading partner of the Republic of Korea. Our shared commitment to free, fair, and open political systems is reinforced by our commitment to free, fair, and open markets.

Further strengthening our bilateral relationships and our bonds of friendship are the millions of South Korean visitors that come to the United States and the millions of visitors from the United States that travel to South Korea every year. Many South Koreans who come to the United States do so to visit their Korean American family members, who make up a vitally important part of the United States' social and economic fabric.

Based on these shared interests and values, the U.S.-Republic of Korea relationship is strong and is poised to grow even stronger.

With this resolution, we in Congress rightly congratulate Mr. Lee Myung-Bak on becoming the next president of South Korea, welcome his inauguration on February 25, and look forward to the opportunity to work with him to further strengthen the relationship between our two countries.

I strongly support this resolution, and I encourage my colleagues to do the same.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution, House Resolution 947, which I authored and which has the support of Chairman LANTOS and Ranking Member ROS-LEHTINEN and Mr. PAYNE and Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA of the Foreign Affairs Committee, among others.

I serve as a member of the Asia Subcommittee and as the vice chairman of the U.S.-Republic of Korea Interparliamentary Exchange. This resolution congratulates Lee Myung-Bak on his election as president of the Republic of Korea and wishes him well during his time of transition.

In this country, Korean Americans watched the Korean presidential campaign with great interest, and their community has played a very important role in bringing greater attention to issues of mutual importance, and I would like to recognize their efforts.

The U.S. partnership with Korea dates back to 1882 with the signing of the Treaty of Peace, Amity, Commerce, and Navigation between the Kingdom of Chosun and the United States. This treaty contemplates everlasting amity and friendship between our two peoples, and for over 125 years, we have worked to achieve this.

One of the truest tests of our partnership with South Korea came in June of 1950 when Communist North Korea invaded the South. American and South Korean forces fought valiantly side by side and they warded off that Communist onslaught.

In the 60 years since, the U.S.-South Korean relationship has blossomed in every respect: economic, political, militarily. Nearly 30,000 U.S. troops stand along with the South Korean Army to preserve stability in northeast Asia. South Korea has grown into the seventh largest trading partner with the United States.

And on February 25 of this year, Lee Myung-Bak will assume the presidency of the Republic of Korea. He does so at a critical time during our partnership. The Republic of Korea and the U.S. once again face a great challenge in dealing with a nuclear-armed North Korea, a regime that denies its citizens the most basic of human rights. The Six Party Talks have stalled, and Kim Jong-Il's regime has continually failed to come clean on the extent of its nuclear programs. Yesterday, Admiral Michael McConnell, Director of National Intelligence, testified that "while Pyongyang denies a program for uranium enrichment, and they deny their proliferation activities, we believe North Korea continues to engage in both."

I am hopeful that President-elect Lee Myung-Bak will offer a new, effective approach to these challenges. To date, Lee Myung-Bak has argued that the previous administrations gave too much unconditional aid to buy reconciliation with the North. In a recent press conference, President-elect Lee said he would like to discuss human rights and the whereabouts of abducted

South Koreans with Pyongyang. Such "controversial" issues, amazingly, were taboo to previous governments which sat out a U.N. condemnation of North Korea's human rights abuses just last fall.

Importantly, President-elect Lee is a strong proponent of the U.S. trade agreement. As the South Korean Army continues to strengthen, the economic relationship between our two countries will increasingly define this overall relationship. That is why I heard so much about the trade agreement on my trip to Korea last summer in my role as the vice chairman of the U.S.-Republic of Korea Interparliamentary Exchange.

At a time when many are worried about the future of our economy, it is essential that we expand into foreign markets. The Korea-U.S. FTA will do just that, opening up Korean markets to U.S. products. If KORUS isn't passed, it won't just be our economy that will suffer, but our relationship with the Republic of Korea.

In closing, I would like to congratulate President-elect Lee on his victory. In the past 60 years, the U.S.-Republic of Korea alliance has helped move both countries forward. I know many of us in Congress greatly look forward to the opportunity to work together to further our already-strong partnership.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. ROYCE. Madam Speaker, I would like to yield to the ranking member, Mr. SMITH, for as much time as he may consume.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I congratulate the gentleman on his authorship of this fine resolution. I rise today to express my support for the resolution honoring the upcoming inauguration of Mr. Lee Myung-Bak as 17th President of the Republic of Korea.

South Korea's rise from the ashes of war and subsequent evolution as a vibrant and prosperous democracy is truly one of the miracles of the second half of the 20th century.

I believe that our Korean war veterans, who sacrificed so much and fought so valiantly, and all of the American people, can take great pride in the assistance that we provided for that remarkable evolution.

Today, the bright lights in the night sky on the southern half of the Korean peninsula stand in marked contrast to the shadow of darkness that enfolds North Korea. North Korea is a tragic failed state and is one of the great losers of the Cold War; yet its starving yearn to breathe free and share in the prosperity of South Korea.

The peaceful, democratic reunification of North Koreans with their southern brothers is a noble endeavor to which we should give our full and unflinching support.

Mr. Lee's inauguration comes at a time when we have reached a crossroads on the Korean peninsula.

North Korea must decide whether to completely and unconditionally renounce its nuclear weapons program and finally join the family of nations. Its alternative is to slip slowly into the abyss as a dynamic South Korea leaves it farther and farther behind.

The fact that President Lee has given a firm indication that he wishes to work together with the United States and our allies as a team to resolve the North Korean nuclear crisis is welcome news indeed. Mr. Lee has also said that it is his priority to strengthen an alliance which was forged in the crucible of the Korean War.

From the dark days of the Pusan perimeter to the brilliant Inchon landing, American, Allied, and South Korean troops all fought together in the drive to victory with the liberation of Seoul. This is in part the shared history of our two countries which has linked us in a common destiny.

I would especially like to commend President Lee for raising the long-forgotten issue of the old soldiers of South Korea, left behind as POWs in the North and held against their will for over 50 years since the signing of the armistice. I would also like to note with extreme sadness that more than 8,000 U.S. servicemen remain missing in action from that conflict.

Finally, the alliance and friendship between the Republic of Korea and the United States have been promoted and deepened by the many contributions of our own vibrant Korean American community. While ever mindful of the old country from which they came, Korean Americans have stepped forward in innumerable ways, in science, medicine, religion, business, education, music, athletics, and culture, to make invaluable contributions to the United States.

In saluting President-elect Lee and the strength of our alliance, we also honor those Korean Americans who have ensured that the links between our two countries are truly the ties that bind.

So, President-elect Lee, we wish you and your country Godspeed as you approach your inauguration on February 25.

□ 1615

Mr. PAYNE. Let me once again say that I certainly support this very timely resolution and urge that our two countries continue to forge strong relations.

We, as has been mentioned, have a very strong Korean American community, even in my State of New Jersey. But also, I'd just like to mention, now that I'm thinking about it, several years ago I had the opportunity to visit a hospital in Ethiopia. A Christian organization built a hospital. Much of the funds came from individual businesspeople from South Korea. The Myung Sung Christian Hospital in Addis is the finest hospital in all of Ethiopia, and it was built by the Koreans who wanted to show their apprecia-

tion for Ethiopian soldiers who fought with them in the Korean War.

And, as a matter of fact, it's very interesting that the South Korean Government still pays veterans a monthly stipend, those who are still alive, of course, and who served in that war, they send them a check every month to show their appreciation for the Ethiopians who fought. I don't know of many countries that have done anything like that.

So, Mr. ROYCE, I certainly support your resolution.

Mr. GARRETT of New Jersey. Madam Speaker, I am pleased that the House is considering H. Res. 947 today, congratulating Lee Myung-Bak on his election to the Presidency of the Republic of Korea. I was proud to co-sponsor this resolution and I join with my fellow Members in wishing him well during his time of transition this month.

When Lee Myung-Bak is inaugurated on February 25, I am confident that he will do much to broaden the longstanding relationship between the Republic of Korea and the United States of America. In the past month, he has already met with President Bush and Vice President CHENEY, as well as several members of the President's Cabinet and Members of Congress.

President-elect Myung-Bak is well-qualified to assume his new role. He earned a B.A. in Business Administration at the Korea University and later served as a Visiting Scholar at George Washington University here in Washington, DC before being awarded two Honorary Doctor of Economics degrees.

Additionally, President-elect Myung-Bak's past professional experience has honed his vital business, diplomatic, and political skills. For 15 years, he was the CEO of 10 Hyundai Group affiliated companies. He then served as a National Assemblyman from 1992 to 1998 before being elected Mayor of Seoul in 2002.

I applaud President-elect Myung-Bak for expressing his commitment to free market policies that encourage both foreign and domestic investors. I look forward to the ratification of the United States-South Korea Free Trade Agreement and I welcome his proposed plans to reduce trade restrictions and lower tax rates. Furthermore, as the Republic of South Korea assists in negotiating Pyongyang's denuclearization, I urge the President-elect to closely integrate U.S. and Japanese initiatives related to the Democratic People's Republic of Korea.

Today, I join my colleagues in congratulating President-elect Myung-Bak, and I wish him, his wife and four children success in the years ahead.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Madam Speaker, I rise today in strong support of House Resolution 947, sponsored by my friend and colleague from California, Mr. ROYCE, which offers the House of Representatives' congratulations to Lee Myung-Bak on his election to the presidency of the Republic of Korea.

Additionally, this resolution recognizes the very special and longstanding relationship between South Korea and the United States; a relationship whose modern day form was first forged in the heat of battle as U.S. and South Korean soldiers fought to defend South Korea from aggression by Communist North Korea. In fact, our history of friendship reaches beyond the past century; and just last year we

celebrated the 125th anniversary of the Korean American Treaty of Peace, Amity, Commerce and Navigation which was signed in 1882.

In my opinion, it is hard to overestimate the importance of the close bond between the United States and South Korea. The United States and Korea have a mutual defense treaty that dates back to 1953, and Korea has supported U.S. military efforts abroad, as recently as in both Iraq and Afghanistan. Korea has been one of only four partners and allies that stood with us through all four major conflicts since World War II. In addition, South Korea demonstrated her great friendship and generosity in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina, pledging over \$30 million in aid for relief and recovery efforts—the fourth largest amount donated by any foreign country.

On June 30, 2007, representatives of both governments signed the historic United States-Korea Free Trade Agreement. If and when this agreement is approved by Congress I believe it will increase trade and investment flowing through our agriculture, industrial, consumer products, automobile and financial services sectors. I believe this agreement will enhance the strong partnership between two great democratic nations and will open the door wider to the exchange of science and ideas that will cause us both to continue to prosper.

This agreement is a natural extension of the strong affinity between our two countries, marked by extraordinary diplomatic, political, military, and economic cooperation. Although the devil is always in the details, I understand that this agreement could potentially be the most commercially-significant free trade agreement signed by the United States in more than a decade.

As many of my colleagues already know, South Korea is already the United States' seventh largest export market and sixth largest market for U.S. agricultural products. In fact, according to the latest statistics, our annual bilateral trade totals nearly \$80 billion. Any agreement that can open up more Korean markets to U.S. goods and services can only have a positive effect on the American economy by creating more and better jobs, enriching consumer choice, and boosting U.S. industry and manufacturing.

Koreans have invested nearly \$20 billion in the United States, and have created American jobs through companies like Hyundai Motors, Samsung Electronics, and Kia Motors. And as the largest investor in Korea, the United States already has a leading presence in that country.

As I have said before and will continue to say, I think it is important to note that trade relationships do more than just facilitate economic growth; this FTA recognizes our special relationship with South Korea that I mentioned before and makes the strong statement that we will continue to stand with our allies.

South Korea is the fifth largest tourism-generating country to the United States with over 800,000 Koreans visiting the U.S. every single year. This number is expected to double (at the minimum) when South Korea joins the Visa Waiver Program. According to the Department of Homeland Security, South Korea also has the largest foreign student population in the U.S. Nearly 2 million Americans of Korean descent live in communities all across our Nation, representing all walks of life and making innumerable contributions to the enrichment of our Nation's culture and economy.

South Korea is a strong, unwavering ally in the U.S.-led Global War on Terror, having dispatched the third largest contingent of troops to Iraq, and to Afghanistan (where a South Korean soldier was killed during hostile action), and to Lebanon in support of peacekeeping operations; and South Korea is a key partner in the Six-Party Talks to resolve North Korea's nuclear issue.

I firmly believe that South Korea may be the premier success story of U.S. foreign policy in the post-World War II period. Having assisted South Korea in transforming itself from a war-torn, impoverished economy into a successful democracy with a free enterprise economy (the world's 11th largest), South Korea is now an indispensable partner with the United States in promoting democracy, a free market economy and respect for the rule of law around the world.

I believe that President-Elect Myung-Bak understands and appreciates the important history behind our bilateral relations. His desire to better relations with the United States through an emphasis on free market solutions encourages me that the work we have begun will continue to grow under his leadership. I look forward to a continuation of the United States-South Korean partnership during the President-Elect's term and for many years beyond.

I strongly urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 947 and join me in congratulating President Lee Myung-Bak, and extending to him the very best wishes of the House of Representatives as he assumes office later this month.

Mr. FALOMAVAEGA. Madam Speaker, let me first commend our distinguished colleague and member of the Committee on Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific and the Global Environment, my good friend and colleague, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) for being the author of and introducing this important resolution.

The underlying context for this important resolution, which congratulates President-elect Lee Myung-Bak and wishes him well as he assumes his new duties on February 25, 2008, is that the Republic of Korea has, through the industrious will of its people and the unyielding leadership of its elected officials, transformed itself into a successful democratic nation.

As the twentieth century taught us all too well, democratic governance is a fragile enterprise. That the Republic of Korea, in merely six decades, emerged from the ashes of colonial rule and war torn poverty to become the eleventh largest economy in the world and America's seventh largest trading partner, is a tribute to their strong democratic principles and indelible desire to live peacefully and prosperously despite the enormous challenges facing the Korean Peninsula and the Northeast Asia region.

Madam Speaker, the strong alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea has proven itself to be a relevant and resilient relationship since our involvement when we fought side by side in the Korean War nearly 58 years ago. Out of that often "forgotten" conflict was born one of the most significant dividing lines of the Cold War, the demilitarized zone on the 38th parallel but, at the same time, one of the most successful alliances in our Nation's history.

The Republic of Korea has remained a steadfast ally of the United States. South

Korea has contributed the third largest coalition troop contingent in Iraq, pledged \$460 million toward postwar reconstruction and had previously also committed troops for peacekeeping operations in Afghanistan, and Lebanon. As a key member of the Six-Party Talks to denuclearize North Korea, the Republic of Korea shares an important responsibility for broader security in Northeast Asia. Today, we are committed absolutely to compelling the North Korean regime to eliminate its nuclear program and to ensuring that promises made by Pyongyang are, in fact, followed through with verifiable action.

The combination of South Korea's efforts to stand alongside the United States in meeting the global threats of the 21st century as well as the North Korean challenge makes this resolution particularly important today. President-elect Lee Myung-Bak has stated that he "will do [his] best to resolve the North Korean nuclear problem through cooperation and a strengthened relationship with the United States." I am very encouraged by President-elect Lee's remarks and, as Chairman of the Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific and the Global Environment, I look forward to working with his administration to this end.

What is clear from our longstanding relationship over the past half-century is that it is reciprocal. As President-elect Lee's Special Envoy to the United States, Dr. Chung Mong-Joon, said recently after meeting Deputy Secretary of State John Negroponte last month, "We both need each other." Let me also take this opportunity to once again congratulate my good friend, Dr. Han Seung-soo, on his nomination to become Prime Minister. I am confident that Dr. Han's nomination will serve to further consolidate our alliance partnership under President-elect Lee's leadership.

Madam Speaker, many years ago, I served in the U.S. Army during the Vietnam War, and I remember vividly the presence of more than 300,000 soldiers from South Korea who bravely served and fought alongside our American forces. Through that particular experience, I learned quickly and firsthand, the special friendship and bond that existed between the United States and the Republic of Korea.

I personally will never forget the sacrifices that South Korean soldiers made in that terrible conflict in Vietnam. In fact, South Korea has the unique distinction of being one of only four allies that fought alongside the United States in all four major conflicts since World War II and I hope that my other colleagues will join me in thanking the leaders and people of the Republic of Korea for the untold sacrifices they made to be with us when we needed help.

This resolution, while focusing on the peaceful, democratic transition to the presidency of Lee Myung-Bak, honors our special alliance but also welcomes a strengthening and deepening of the relationship between our two countries and our two peoples.

I have had the privilege on several occasions to visit the Republic of Korea and I have observed that the South Korean people are among the most industrious men and women in the world. However this trait for hard work and entrepreneurship developed, it has carried over despite geographic distance to the more than two million Americans of Korean heritage and descent that live throughout our own country today. The vibrant Korean American communities across the United States include

some of the most prominent individuals that have contributed to every facet of American life in every state and territory.

Madam Speaker, this resolution is very important to show our sense of appreciation to all South Koreans, to express how much we care about them and how important they are to our strategic and economic interests in that important region of the world. Its effect is not just to deliver good wishes to President-elect Lee as he assumes office on February 25, but to send a message of solidarity to the government and people of the Republic of Korea and to the soldiers who have fought side by side with the men and women of our own armed forces over the past nearly 60 years.

For all these reasons, this resolution is most fitting, and proper. I wish to congratulate President-elect Lee Myung-Bak and commend again my good friend, the gentleman from California, for offering and proposing this resolution. I strongly encourage my colleagues to offer their own expressions of support and urge the House to adopt this resolution today.

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

Mr. ROYCE. Madam Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time as well.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mrs. JONES of Ohio). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. PAYNE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 947.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. PAYNE. Madam Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

EXTENDING PARITY IN APPLICATION OF CERTAIN LIMITS TO MENTAL HEALTH BENEFITS

Mr. PALLONE. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4848) to extend for one year parity in the application of certain limits to mental health benefits, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4848

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

SECTION 1. PARITY IN APPLICATION OF CERTAIN LIMITS TO MENTAL HEALTH BENEFITS.

(a) AMENDMENT TO THE INTERNAL REVENUE CODE OF 1986.—Section 9812(f)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 is amended by striking "2007" and inserting "2008".

(b) AMENDMENT TO THE EMPLOYEE RETIREMENT INCOME SECURITY ACT OF 1974.—Section 712(f) of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1185a(f)) is amended by striking "2007" and inserting "2008".

(c) AMENDMENT TO THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE ACT.—Section 2705(f) of the Public