

point where today Croatia stands as a steady and reliable friend in Southeast Europe and the Balkans. Exemplified by President Bush's successful trip there in April of this year, Croatia has become a true partner on a global scale. The U.S. and Croatia share joint efforts in the war against global terrorism, proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, and international organized crime, which represent the most dangerous threats to national and international security.

As an active contributor to NATO-led operations in Afghanistan, Croatia has already demonstrated itself willing and capable to assume responsibilities of NATO membership, and will prove to be an effective contributor to the collective defense and overall alliance mission. In total, Croatia currently participates in 17 international peace-keeping missions and is a current non-permanent member of the United Nations Security Council.

As cochair of the Croatian Caucus, it has long been a goal of ours to see Croatia receive an invitation to join NATO, and I was pleased when the invitation to begin accession discussions came earlier this year. The government and the people of Croatia have worked very hard, and NATO has taken notice of their political, social, and military reforms. All Croatians and Croatian Americans deserve to feel true national pride in this accomplishment. I know that I speak for myself, my cochair Mr. VISCLOSKEY, and other members of the Croatian Caucus when I say that we look forward to continuing to work with Croatia and their very capable embassy here in the United States on a variety of issues of mutual concern.

This is truly a great accomplishment for the nation of Croatia, and it is very appropriate that as a Congress we stand together to honor the accomplishments of our friend and ally. I thank all the Members who cosponsored this resolution and helped to bring it to the floor, and encourage my colleagues to join me today in honoring Croatia and Albania.

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from North Dakota (Mr. POMEROY).

Mr. POMEROY. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of this resolution.

I am very pleased that Albania and Croatia were invited to join the alliance at the Bucharest summit in April of this year. Enlarging NATO has been hugely successful in advancing stability and cooperation among NATO's member states, and this invitation to Albania and Croatia to join the alliance is very welcome news.

Unfortunately, another friend and important ally, the Republic of Macedonia, was blocked from joining NATO at the Bucharest summit due to the objection of a single nation, Greece, over the official name of Macedonia. This is very disappointing.

Macedonia has made significant economic and political reforms. They have made a strong contribution to U.S.-led

military missions. They have been deemed to be fully qualified to become a member of the alliance.

Greece is our long-time friend, our valued ally, but their refusal to allow Macedonia into NATO over a bilateral name dispute represents, to my belief, the first time NATO membership has been denied any country due to a bilateral dispute unrelated to strategic defense considerations of the alliance. This is a very troubling precedent. It sets the stage for what could be a pattern, where member states leverage their advantage to nonmember states seeking to get into NATO and try and extract any measure of bilateral concession, all occurring at the expense of the alliance.

I strongly support a quick and expedient resolution to the name dispute between Greece and Macedonia so that Macedonia can join Albania and Croatia in signing accession protocols with NATO. I commend the United States diplomat that has led the efforts to resolve this issue. Both Greece and Macedonia have expressed their resolution to continue to work on getting a breakthrough. I encourage their efforts and I urge them, these great countries, these important friends of ours, to rise above the temptation to exploit nationalist themes for domestic political advantage in each of their respective countries. Put that aside, rise above that for the good of the alliance. Resolve this issue and let Macedonia in.

The resolution before us commends Albania and commends Croatia for the beginning of the accession process. They deserve this commendation. Please support this resolution.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Persons in the gallery are reminded to refrain from any exhibition, including applause.

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

Mr. BERMAN. 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. BERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1266, 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 THE SPECIAL OLYMPICS' 40TH ANNIVERSARY

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1279) recognizing the Special Olympics' 40th anniversary.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1279

Whereas Eunice Kennedy Shriver organized the first international Special Olympics Summer Games, which were held on July 20, 1968, in Chicago's Soldier Field;

Whereas the Special Olympics World Games are held every 4 years;

Whereas the Special Olympics oath is "Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt.", which was originally spoken by gladiators entering the arena in ancient Rome;

Whereas the Special Olympics is dedicated to empowering individuals with intellectual disabilities to become physically fit, productive, and respected members of society through sports training and competition;

Whereas the Special Olympics currently serves 2,500,000 people with intellectual disabilities in more than 200 programs in over 180 countries;

Whereas the Special Olympics currently has 700,000 volunteers and 500,000 coaches worldwide;

Whereas the Special Olympics programs offer year-round training and competition in 30 Olympic-type sports for both winter and summer;

Whereas at every Special Olympics awards ceremony, in addition to the traditional medals for first, second, and third places, athletes from fourth to last are presented a suitable place ribbon with appropriate ceremony;

Whereas the Special Olympics events are open to all intellectually disabled peoples that are above the age of 8 regardless of the degree of their disability;

Whereas the Special Olympics was officially recognized by the International Olympics Committee in February 1988 and is the only organization authorized by the International Olympics Committee to use the word "Olympics" worldwide;

Whereas the Flame of Hope is a symbol of the Special Olympics World Games and is lit in a special ceremony in Athens, Greece;

Whereas the Law Enforcement Torch Run is a multinational fundraising campaign for the Special Olympics programs in which the Flame of Hope is run by law enforcement officers to raise funds and awareness for the Special Olympics;

Whereas the cities of Lincoln and Omaha, Nebraska will be hosts to the Special Olympics in July 2010; and

Whereas the Special Olympics provides its athletes continuing opportunities to develop physical fitness, demonstrate courage, experience joy, and participate in a sharing of gifts, skills, and friendship with their families, other Special Olympics athletes, and the community: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives congratulates the Special Olympics on its 40th anniversary for the contributions and opportunities it provides to all its participants.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN) and the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. CHABOT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Madam Speaker, I would like to congratulate the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. TERRY) for putting forward a very important resolution which celebrates the 40th anniversary of the Special Olympics and recognizes the lifelong achievements of one of America's great champions of compassion, Eunice Kennedy Shriver.

Mrs. Shriver's leadership in the worldwide effort to improve and enrich the lives of people with intellectual disabilities is unparalleled. Her work led to the creation of the Presidential Committee on Mental Retardation in the Kennedy administration. She also organized the first International Special Olympics Summer Games on July 20, 1968 in Chicago's Soldier Field. Since that day, Mrs. Shriver has built the Special Olympics into an organization with global reach which has enriched the lives of 2,500,000 athletes with intellectual disabilities in over 180 countries.

The Special World Games, like the Summer and Winter Olympics, are held every 4 years. And since 1988, they have been officially recognized by the International Olympic Committee. They are dedicated to empowering individuals with intellectual disabilities. These contests allow Special Olympians to enjoy the thrill of competition, to develop sportsmanship, self-esteem, and fellowship.

The oath of the Special Olympians is, "Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt." The Special Olympians are indeed brave. I urge my colleagues to support this important resolution.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I would first like to also commend the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. TERRY) for his leadership and his offering this particular resolution, and I also rise to support this resolution, H. Res. 1279, which recognizes the Special Olympics on its 40th anniversary.

On July 20, 1968, as was mentioned, Eunice Kennedy Shriver organized the first Special Olympic Summer Games, which took place at Soldier Field in Chicago. Since then, the Special Olympics has become one of the most prominent and celebrated sporting programs in the entire world. The Special Olympics today serves more than 2½ million people with intellectual disabilities.

These inspirational athletes work with more than 1 million volunteers and coaches worldwide, training year round for competition in both Summer and Winter Games. In more than 200 countries, the Special Olympics has shown that intellectual disabilities are no impediment to fun and healthy athletic competition. These athletes are supported by more than 18,000 dedicated volunteers.

In my own State, Special Olympics Ohio has approximately 200 local member organizations and over 18,000 athletes who are in training and competition. These organizations originate from county boards of MR/DD, public schools, developmental centers, parks and recreation departments, churches, and parent and community groups.

For the past 40 years, these games have empowered individuals with intellectual disabilities to become physically fit and have fun while engaging in sports training and competition.

As was indicated by the gentleman from California, and I think the quote again warrants stating, that like the gladiators of ancient Rome, Special Olympics athletes pledge, "Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt."

On this 40th anniversary, we congratulate these courageous athletes and wish the program many more years of continued success.

I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. CHABOT. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. TERRY), who is the author of this particular resolution. As I indicated before, he is also a member of the powerful Committee on Energy and Commerce.

Mr. TERRY. I want to first say thank you to the chairman and ranking member for allowing this to come to the House floor in such a rapid manner. It is my pleasure to have authored this resolution in working with Special Olympics on their 40th anniversary.

In those 40 years since Mrs. Eunice Shriver dreamed of helping those with intellectual disabilities by having them compete as a part of letting them know that they can achieve and as part of their therapies, in those 40 years since her vision came to be, we have seen many with intellectual disabilities win and let them be better in that competition. I am also pleased that my community is hosting the International Special Olympics competition in 2010 between Omaha and Lincoln.

As my colleagues have stated, Special Olympics is an international nonprofit organization dedicated to the great cause of empowering individuals with intellectual disabilities to become physically fit, productive, and respected members of society through sports training and competition. Participation in Special Olympics' year-round sports training and athletic competition is open to anyone with intellectual disabilities ages 8 and older.

Currently there are 700,000 volunteers and 500,000 coaches worldwide that serve over 2.5 million people with intellectual disabilities by helping them participate in over 200 programs in 180 countries. It is important to note that Special Olympics would not exist today and could not have been created without the time, energy, commitment, and enthusiasm of many of its volunteers.

As a grassroots organization, Special Olympics relies on volunteers at all levels of the movement to ensure that every athlete is offered a quality sports training and competition experience.

The athletes have choices of just about any sport you can think of, from winter sports, aquatics, badminton, basketball, track and field, snowboarding, sailing, table tennis, handball, racquetball, volleyball. It goes on and on and on.

The Special Olympics oath is inspirational to all and was originally spoken by gladiators entering the arena in ancient Rome: "Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt."

Madam Speaker, as a Member of Congress, I strive every day to live up to these words. Again, I am proud to be associated with this resolution and Special Olympics and urge its passage on the floor today. Again, I thank Mr. BERMAN and Mr. CHABOT for making sure that this arrived on the floor in such a rapid manner.

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Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I have no other speakers and so I reserve my time.

Mr. MORAN of Kansas. Madam Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 1279 to recognize and congratulate Special Olympics for 40 years of extraordinary service to individuals with intellectual disabilities.

Beyond giving 2.5 million athletes a chance to compete, it gives their families a way to involve their sons, daughters, brothers and sisters. A chance for them to cheer. A chance to coach. A chance to connect in a special way. A chance to see their family member be accepted and respected in their communities.

After 40 years, there are now millions of stories of courage in the Special Olympics, but one athlete who has taken the oath and that embodies this year's theme is LP Esquibel from Dodge City, Kansas. He is more than a fan of courage. He is courageous and because of his courage he was awarded the Most Inspirational Athlete award at the Summer Games this year. Cerebral Palsy kept him from walking until he was 5 years old, but it hasn't kept him from becoming a 13-year veteran of the Special Olympics. It also hasn't kept a smile from his face. From all accounts, LP is more than a great athlete in his events of basketball, shot put, and the 100-yard walk, he is an encouragement to his fellow teammates and helps them on the court.

It is stories like LP's that has sold me on the power and benefits of the Special Olympics. Since 2007, I have served as the Honorary Chairman for the Kansas Law Enforcement Torch Run. The Torch Run covers hundreds of miles throughout Kansas and raises thousands of dollars in support of Special Olympics programs. This year-round fundraiser and awareness initiative was implemented by former Wichita Police Chief Richard LaMunyon in 1981. It became an international event 3 years later in 1984 when Chief LaMunyon presented it to the International Association of Chiefs of Police. The Law Enforcement Torch Run is now the largest grass-roots fundraiser and public awareness vehicle for Special Olympics around the world.

It was an honor to help raise money this past summer to help send Kansas athletes to compete in China at the World Olympics. I enjoyed meeting them and hearing of their success.

Special Olympics does remarkable work, both in the State of Kansas and across the globe. I would like to commend the leaders and volunteers of Special Olympics for 40 years of outstanding service and wish them continued success in the future.

Mr. WILSON of South Carolina. Madam Speaker, this year marks the 40th anniversary of the Special Olympics—an organization dedicated to providing individuals with intellectual disabilities an opportunity to train and compete in athletic events. Over 2.5 million individuals from across 180 countries participate in events held year-round.

As the world gathers in Beijing, China for this year's Summer Olympic Games, we should remember the 2007 Special Olympics World Summer Games that were held in Shanghai, China, in October 2007. This was only the second time the games have been held outside the United States and attracted over 7,000 athletes. From my home State of South Carolina, Special Olympics South Carolina sent four athletes—Diana Poiletman of Columbia, Eric Brown of Columbia, Jason Morrow of Spartanburg County, and Darlene Wycuff of Spartanburg County—who brought home an impressive total of 9 medals. These strong individuals embody the best of the human spirit and truly represent the words of the Special Olympics' motto: "Let me win. But if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt."

I wish to congratulate the millions of individuals who compete and participate in the Special Olympics. In particular, I want to recognize Anne Burke and Eunice Kennedy Shriver who founded the organization in 1968. Their dedication and tireless efforts on behalf of intellectually disabled men, women, and children around the world are truly remarkable. In South Carolina, Barry S. Coats, President and CEO of Special Olympics South Carolina and all his staff and volunteers should be commended for their wonderful work.

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Madam Speaker, I wish to take a moment to recognize the 40th anniversary of the Special Olympics and, in particular, Chicago's role in the wonderful program. As some of you may know, the first Special Olympics were held in my congressional district, the 7th Congressional District in Illinois on Chicago's Soldier Field on July 20, 1968. The idea for this event originated in 1967 when Anne Burke, a recreation teacher from the Chicago Park District, proposed holding a citywide track meet for people with disabilities, modeled after the Olympics. She was encouraged to hand in the proposal to Eunice Kennedy Shriver at the Kennedy Foundation; she did. It was at Chicago's Soldier Field that Eunice Kennedy Shriver announced the formation of the Special Olympics. One thousand athletes attended the first games from 26 States and Canada. The inaugural ceremony started with the quote, "Let me win, but if I cannot win, let me be brave in the attempt." These words came from the lips of the gladiators in ancient Rome and were wisely chosen by Kennedy Shriver to represent the goal of the Special Olympics.

Before the Special Olympics were started Eunice Shriver had already tried once to orga-

nize a camp that would help disabled children. This organization which started out with 35 boys was called Camp Shriver. It is amazing that something that started out with only 35 children has developed into the Special Olympics which now holds programs in more than 180 countries with more than 2.5 million athletes and counting. The Special Olympics is a program that allows people from all over the world, or most of it, to interact with one another. It is astonishing what can be achieved when someone has an idea. One idea can inspire people to do great things.

Congratulations to Special Olympics with its 40th anniversary. You have proven that great ideas give great outcomes. Thank you for making a difference and continue to inspire everyone.

Mr. CHABOT. Madam Speaker, we have no further speakers and we yield back our time.

Mr. BERMAN. I yield back my time, Madam Speaker.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. BERMAN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 1279.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CALLING ON CHINA TO END HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES PRIOR TO THE OLYMPICS

Mr. BERMAN. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1370) calling on the Government of the People's Republic of China to immediately end abuses of the human rights of its citizens, to cease repression of Tibetan and Uighur citizens, and to end its support for the Governments of Sudan and Burma to ensure that the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games take place in an atmosphere that honors the Olympic traditions of freedom and openness, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 1370

Whereas the relationship between the United States and the People's Republic of China is one of the most important and complex in global affairs;

Whereas in the context of this complex relationship, the promotion of human rights and political freedoms in the People's Republic of China is a central goal of United States foreign policy towards China;

Whereas increased protection and stronger guarantees of human rights and political freedoms in the People's Republic of China would improve the relationship between the United States and the People's Republic of China;

Whereas the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games will be held from August 8, 2008, through August 24, 2008;

Whereas the United States should continue to advance its policy goal of improved human rights and political freedoms in the People's Republic of China in the context of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games;

Whereas all Olympic athletes deserve to participate in a competition that takes place in an atmosphere that honors the Olympic traditions of freedom and openness;

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China committed to protect human rights, religious freedom, freedom of movement, and freedom of the press as part of its conditions for being named to host the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games;

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China issued temporary regulations promising foreign media representatives covering the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games that they could travel freely, with the exception of in the Tibet Autonomous Region, and did not require advance permission before interviewing Chinese citizens during the period of January 1, 2007, to October 18, 2008;

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China has failed to abide by many provisions of those regulations and has restricted foreign media by—

(1) detaining 15 journalists in 2007 for activities permitted by the new regulations;

(2) refusing to allow foreign media representatives access to Tibetan areas of China, including those areas outside of the Tibet Autonomous Region covered by the pledge of free access, to report on the March 2008 protests and the Government of the People's Republic of China's violent crackdown against Tibetans in those areas; and

(3) interfering with foreign media representatives and their Chinese employees who were hired within China, such that 40 percent of foreign correspondents have reported government interference with their attempts to cover the news in China;

Whereas in advance of the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games, there are widespread reports that the Government of the People's Republic of China has refused to grant visas or entry to individuals because of their political views, beliefs, writings, association, religion, and ethnicity;

Whereas Chinese citizens and foreign visitors in China for the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games will not have free access to information if the Government of the People's Republic of China continues to engage in blocking of overseas websites and other forms of Internet filtering and censorship;

Whereas the Beijing 2008 Olympic Games will not take place in an atmosphere of freedom if the Government of the People's Republic of China continues to limit the freedoms of speech, press, religion, movement, association, and assembly of its citizens and visitors, including political dissidents, protesters, petitioners, the disabled, religious activists, minorities, the homeless, and other people it considers undesirable;

Whereas despite the Government of the People's Republic of China's repeated pledges to the international community that the prevention and treatment of HIV/AIDS are a national priority, HIV/AIDS activists and their organizations remain targets for repression and harassment by Chinese authorities;

Whereas in the period preceding the Olympics Games, Chinese security forces have detained, threatened, and harassed HIV/AIDS and hepatitis advocates; shut down conferences and meetings of Chinese and foreign HIV/AIDS experts; and closed AIDS organizations;

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China continues to ignore its international commitments to refugee protection, as evidenced by film footage recording the shooting death of a Tibetan nun by Chinese border guards in October of 2006 and human rights groups' reports citing increased bounties offered for turning in North