

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 439) expressing the strong support of the Senate for the North Atlantic Treaty Organization to enter into a Membership Action Plan with Georgia and Ukraine.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 439) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 439

Whereas the sustained commitment of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to mutual defense has made possible the democratic transformation of Central and Eastern Europe and Eurasia;

Whereas NATO members can and should play a critical role in addressing the security challenges of the post-Cold War era in creating the stable environment needed for emerging democracies in Europe and Eurasia;

Whereas lasting stability and security in Europe and Eurasia require the military, economic, and political integration of emerging democracies into existing European structures;

Whereas, in an era of threats from terrorism and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction, NATO is increasingly contributing to security in the face of global security challenges for the protection and interests of its member states;

Whereas the Government of Georgia and the Government of Ukraine have each expressed a desire to join the Euro-Atlantic community, and Georgia and Ukraine are working closely with NATO and its members to meet criteria for eventual NATO membership;

Whereas, at the NATO-Ukraine Commission Foreign Ministerial meeting in Vilnius in April 2005, NATO and Ukraine launched an Intensified Dialogue on membership between the Alliance and Ukraine;

Whereas, following a meeting of NATO Foreign Ministers in New York on September 21, 2006, NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer announced the launching of an Intensified Dialogue on membership between NATO and Georgia;

Whereas the Riga Summit Declaration, issued by the heads of state and government participating in the meeting of the North Atlantic Council in November 2006, reaffirms that NATO's door remains open to new members and that NATO will continue to review the process for new membership, stating "We reaffirm that the Alliance will continue with Georgia and Ukraine its Intensified Dialogues which cover the full range of political, military, financial, and security issues relating to those countries' aspirations to membership, without prejudice to any eventual Alliance decision. We reaffirm the importance of the NATO-Ukraine Distinctive Partnership, which has its 10th anniversary next year and welcome the progress that has been made in the framework of our Intensified Dialogue. We appreciate Ukraine's substantial contributions to our common security, including through participation in NATO-led operations and efforts to promote regional cooperation. We encourage Ukraine to continue to contribute to regional secu-

rity. We are determined to continue to assist, through practical cooperation, in the implementation of far-reaching reform efforts, notably in the fields of national security, defense, reform of the defense-industrial sector and fighting corruption. We welcome the commencement of an Intensified Dialogue with Georgia as well as Georgia's contribution to international peacekeeping and security operations. We will continue to engage actively with Georgia in support of its reform process. We encourage Georgia to continue progress on political, economic and military reforms, including strengthening judicial reform, as well as the peaceful resolution of outstanding conflicts on its territory. We reaffirm that it is of great importance that all parties in the region should engage constructively to promote regional peace and stability."

Whereas, in January 2008, Ukraine forwarded to NATO Secretary General Jaap de Hoop Scheffer a letter, signed by President Victor Yushchenko, Prime Minister Yulia Tymoshenko, and Verkhovna Rada Speaker Arseniy Yatsenyuk, requesting that NATO integrate Ukraine into the Membership Action Plan;

Whereas, in January 2008, Georgia held a referendum on NATO and 76.22 percent of the votes supported membership;

Whereas participation in a Membership Action Plan does not guarantee future membership in the NATO Alliance; and

Whereas NATO membership requires significant national and international commitments and sacrifices and is not possible without the support of the populations of the NATO member States: Now, therefore, be it Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that—

(1) the Senate—

(A) reaffirms its previous expressions of support for continued enlargement of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to include qualified candidates; and

(B) supports the commitment to further enlargement of NATO to include democratic governments that are able and willing to meet the responsibilities of membership;

(2) the expansion of NATO contributes to NATO's continued effectiveness and relevance;

(3) Georgia and Ukraine are strong allies that have made important progress in the areas of defense, democratic, and human rights reform;

(4) a stronger, deeper relationship among the Government of Georgia, the Government of Ukraine, and NATO will be mutually beneficial to those countries and to NATO member States; and

(5) the United States should take the lead in supporting the awarding of a Membership Action Plan to Georgia and Ukraine as soon as possible.

RECOGNIZING CULTURAL AND HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE OF CHINESE NEW YEAR OR SPRING FESTIVAL

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to consideration of S. Res. 457.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 457) recognizing the cultural and historical significance of the Chinese New Year or Spring Festival.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I come to the floor today with the distinct honor

of supporting a resolution recognizing the cultural and historical significance of the Chinese New Year, held annually on the first day of the first lunar month of the Chinese calendar.

For the approximately 3.5 million Chinese-Americans currently living in the United States, the Chinese New Year represents one of the most important times for families and friends to get together and celebrate their rich cultural history. In my home county, Clark County, NV, thousands of Chinese-Americans, and Asian-Americans of various nationalities and ethnicities, recently celebrated the inception of the Year of the Rat.

In fact, February 7, 2008, of our calendar, the date on which the Year of the Rat began, marked the beginning of year 4705 of the Chinese calendar. I am so proud to recognize and offer my best wishes to all those Nevadans and Americans who have followed in the footsteps of so many past generations to observe this 2-week long festival, which culminates in the Lantern Festival to be held on the fifteenth day of the first lunar month.

Throughout this 15-day celebration, many members of Nevada's Chinese-American community will take this opportunity to spend time with their families and engage in traditional activities, such as the dragon and lion dances. To all of my friends back in Clark County, and throughout Nevada as a whole who observe this holiday, I wish you a joyous and prosperous New Year.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements related to the resolution be printed in the RECORD.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 457) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 457

Whereas the Chinese New Year is celebrated on the second new moon following the winter solstice;

Whereas February 7, 2008, marks the first day of the Chinese New Year for 2008, also known as the Year of the Rat or the Year of Wu Zi;

Whereas the Chinese New Year festivities begin on the first day of the first lunar month and end 15 days later with the celebration of the Lantern Festival;

Whereas there are approximately 3,500,000 Chinese-Americans in the United States, many of whom will be commemorating this important occasion;

Whereas this day will be marked by celebrations throughout our country as Chinese-Americans gather to watch the dragon and lion dances; and

Whereas the United States Postal Service will debut a new stamp series for the 12 animals in the Chinese calendar on February 9, 2008, with the series continuing through 2019: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the cultural and historical significance of the Chinese New Year or Spring Festival;

(2) in observance of the Chinese New Year, expresses its deepest respect for Chinese-Americans and all those throughout the world who will be celebrating this significant occasion; and

(3) wishes Chinese-Americans and all those who observe this holiday a happy and prosperous new year.

PROVIDING FOR CONDITIONAL ADJOURNMENT OR RECESS OF THE HOUSE AND SENATE

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that we now proceed to the immediate consideration of H. Con. Res. 293.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will report the concurrent resolution by title.

The legislative clerk read as follows.

A concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 293) providing for a conditional adjournment of the House of Representatives and a conditional recess or adjournment of the Senate.

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that the concurrent resolution be agreed to and the motion to reconsider be laid on the table, with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 293) was agreed to, as follows:

H. CON. RES. 293

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That when the House adjourns on the legislative day of Thursday, February 14, 2008, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand adjourned until 2 p.m. on Friday, February 15, 2008, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first; that when the House adjourns on the legislative day of Friday, February 15, 2008, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m. on Tuesday, February 19, 2008, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first; that when the House adjourns on the legislative day of Tuesday, February 19, 2008, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand adjourned until noon on Thursday, February 21, 2008, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first; that when the House adjourns on the legislative day of Thursday, February 21, 2008, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand adjourned until 2 p.m. on Monday, February 25, 2008, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first; and that when the Senate recesses or adjourns on any day from Friday, February 15, 2008, through Friday, February 22, 2008, on a motion offered pursuant to this concurrent resolution by its Majority Leader or his designee, it stand recessed or adjourned until noon on Monday, February 25, 2008, or such other time on that day as may be specified in the motion to recess or adjourn, or until the time of any reassembly pursuant to section 2 of this concurrent resolution, whichever occurs first.

SEC. 2. The Speaker of the House and the Majority Leader of the Senate, or their respective designees, acting jointly after consultation with the Minority Leader of the House and the Minority Leader of the Senate, shall notify the Members of the House and the Senate, respectively, to reassemble at such place and time as they may designate if, in their opinion, the public interest shall warrant it.

APPOINTMENTS

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The Chair, on behalf of the Vice President, pursuant to section 5 of title 1 of Division H of Public Law 110-161, appoints the following Senator as vice chairman of the U.S.-Japan Interparliamentary Group conference for the 110th Congress: the Senator from Alaska, Mr. STEVENS.

The Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, pursuant to the provisions of 2 U.S.C. Sec. 1151, as amended, appoints the following individual to the Board of Trustees of the Open World Leadership Center: the Senator from Mississippi, Mr. WICKER.

The Chair, on behalf of the Democratic Leader, pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 110-161, appoints the following individuals to serve as members of the National Commission on Children and Disasters: Mark Shriver of Maryland and Sheila Leslie of Nevada.

The Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, pursuant to the provisions of 2 U.S.C. Sec. 1151, as amended, appoints the following individual to the Board of Trustees of the Open World Leadership Center: the Senator from Mississippi, Mr. WICKER.

The Chair, on behalf of the President pro tempore, pursuant to the provisions of Public Law 100-702, reappoints the following individual to the Federal Judicial Center Foundation Board: John B. White, Jr., of South Carolina.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO REPORT

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that Senate committees may report legislative and Executive Calendar business, notwithstanding a recess or adjournment of the Senate, on Friday, February 22, 2008, from 10 a.m. to 12 noon.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

APPOINTMENT AUTHORIZATION

Mr. REID. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that notwithstanding the recess or adjournment of the Senate, the President of the Senate, the President of the Senate pro tempore, and the majority and minority leaders be authorized to make appointments to commissions, committees, boards, conferences, or interparliamentary conferences authorized by law, by concurrent action of the two Houses, or by order of the Senate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER FOR RECORD TO REMAIN OPEN

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent, notwithstanding the Senate being in pro forma session on Friday, February 15, that the RECORD remain open until 12 noon for bill introductions and statements.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ORDER OF PROCEDURE

Mr. REID. I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand in recess until 10 a.m. tomorrow, Friday, February 15; that on Friday, the Senate meet in pro forma session only with no business conducted; that the Senate recess until 11 a.m. on Tuesday, February 19, for a pro forma session only, with no business conducted; the Senate then recess until 10 a.m. on Friday, February 22, for a pro forma session only; that at the close of Friday's session, the Senate adjourn until 3 p.m. on Monday, February 25; further that the Journal of proceedings be agreed to, the morning hour be deemed expired, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and following the reading of the Washington's Farewell Address, the Senate resume consideration of S. 1200, the Indian Health Care Improvement Act, as under the previous order.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

RECESS UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. REID. If there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand in recess under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 8:13 p.m., recessed until Friday, February 15, 2008, at 10 a.m.

NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

FEDERAL INSURANCE TRUST FUND

JEFFREY ROBERT BROWN, OF ILLINOIS, TO BE A MEMBER OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES OF THE FEDERAL SUPPLEMENTARY MEDICAL INSURANCE TRUST FUND FOR A TERM OF FOUR YEARS, VICE THOMAS R. SAVING.

THE JUDICIARY

DAVID GUSTAFSON, OF VIRGINIA, TO BE A JUDGE OF THE UNITED STATES TAX COURT FOR A TERM OF FIFTEEN YEARS, VICE CAROLYN P. CHIECHI, TERM EXPIRED.
ELIZABETH CREWSON PARIS, OF THE DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA, TO BE A JUDGE OF THE UNITED STATES TAX COURT FOR A TERM OF FIFTEEN YEARS, VICE JOEL GERBER, RETIRED.

DEPARTMENT OF STATE

JOSEPH EVAN LEBARON, OF OREGON, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE STATE OF QATAR.
STEPHEN JAMES NOLAN, OF VIRGINIA, A CAREER MEMBER OF THE SENIOR FOREIGN SERVICE, CLASS OF MINISTER-COUNSELOR, TO BE AMBASSADOR EXTRAORDINARY AND PLENIPOTENTIARY OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA TO THE REPUBLIC OF BOTSWANA.