

and Georgia will become members of the alliance.

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

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I further ask the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, with no intervening action or debate, and any statements be printed in the RECORD.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 523) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 523

Whereas, prior to the Bucharest Summit in April 2008, the Government of Georgia and the Government of Ukraine each expressed the desire to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO), have committed their countries to programs of reforms consistent with membership in the Euro-Atlantic community, and have worked consistently for membership in NATO; and

Whereas, in April 2008 at the Bucharest Summit, the assembled leaders of NATO issued the following statement: "NATO welcomes Ukraine's and Georgia's Euro-Atlantic aspirations for membership in NATO. We agreed today that these countries will become members of NATO. Both nations have made valuable contributions to Alliance operations. We welcome the democratic reforms in Ukraine and Georgia and look forward to free and fair parliamentary elections in Georgia in May. MAP is the next step for Ukraine and Georgia on their direct way to membership. Today we make clear that we support these countries' applications for MAP. Therefore we will now begin a period of intensive engagement with both at a high political level to address the questions still outstanding pertaining to their MAP applications. We have asked Foreign Ministers to make a first assessment of progress at their December 2008 meeting. Foreign Ministers have the authority to decide on the MAP applications of Ukraine and Georgia." Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the declaration of the Bucharest Summit, which stated that Ukraine and Georgia will become members of NATO;

(2) reiterates its support for the commitment to further enlargement of NATO to include democratic governments that are able and willing to meet the responsibilities of membership; and

(3) urges the foreign ministers of NATO member states at their meeting in December 2008 to consider favorably the applications of the governments of Ukraine and Georgia for Membership Action Plans.

HONORING SMALL BUSINESS OWNERS DURING NATIONAL SMALL BUSINESS WEEK

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent the Small Business Committee be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 524, and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered. The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 524) honoring the entrepreneurial spirit of the owners of small business concerns in the United States during National Small Business Week, beginning April 21, 2008.

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

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. I ask unanimous consent the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, the motions to reconsider be laid upon the table, and any statements be printed in the RECORD.

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

The resolution (S. Res. 524) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 524

Whereas the 26,800,000 small business concerns in the United States are the driving force behind the Nation's economy, creating more than 75 percent of all net new jobs and generating more than 50 percent of the Nation's nonfarm gross domestic product;

Whereas small business concerns represent 99.7 percent of all businesses and employ 50 percent of the Nation's workforce;

Whereas small business concerns represent 97 percent of all exporters and produce 28.6 percent of exported goods;

Whereas small business concerns are the Nation's innovators, advancing technology and productivity;

Whereas the resilience, vitality, and growth of small business concerns are critical to the Nation's competitiveness during a time of economic downturn;

Whereas Congress established the Small Business Administration in 1953, to aid, counsel, assist, and protect the interests of small business concerns in order to preserve free competitive enterprise, to ensure that a fair proportion of the total purchases and contracts or subcontracts for property and services for the Federal Government be placed with small business concerns, to ensure that a fair proportion of the total sales of Government property be made to such small business concerns, and to maintain and strengthen the overall economy of the Nation;

Whereas for over 50 years, the Small Business Administration has provided aid and assistance to millions of entrepreneurs who have succeeded in achieving the American dream of owning a small business concern, and thus has played a key role in fostering economic growth; and

Whereas the President has designated the week beginning April 21, 2008, as National Small Business Week; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) honors the entrepreneurial spirit of the owners of small business concerns in the United States during National Small Business Week, beginning April 21, 2008;

(2) honors the efforts and achievements of the owners and employees of small business concerns, whose hard work, commitment to excellence, and willingness to take a risk, have made them a crucial part of the Nation's economy;

(3) recognizes that small business concerns are essential to restoring the Nation's economic health;

(4) recognizes the vital role of the programs of the Small Business Administration and the work of its employees and its resource partners in providing assistance to entrepreneurs and the owners of small business concerns;

(5) strongly urges the President to take steps to ensure that—

(A) reasonable rules relating to the procurement program for women-owned small business concerns under section 8(m) of the Small Business Act (15 U.S.C. 637(m)) are expeditiously implemented to give women business owners a fair opportunity to compete for Federal contracts;

(B) small business concerns have access to quality affordable health insurance;

(C) the needs of veterans and reservists who own their own businesses, who work for small business concerns, or want to start their own businesses, are met during deployment and upon their return from duty;

(D) proper measures are enacted to provide a stimulus for business lending during this economic downturn;

(E) the tax burdens of small business concerns are reduced, and that there is a reduction in regulatory and bureaucratic barriers;

(F) small minority owned businesses are supported in their efforts to access the Federal marketplace and gain access to capital;

(G) small business concerns have the tools to become more energy efficient to survive rising costs of energy, increase profits, and reduce the Nation's reliance on foreign oil;

(H) all Federal agencies adhere to the contracting goals for small business concerns, including the goals for small business concerns owned and controlled by service-disabled veterans, small business concerns owned and controlled by women, small business concerns owned and controlled by socially and economically disadvantaged individuals, and HUBZone small business concerns;

(I) venture capital and small business loans, including microloans and guaranteed loans that are delivered through private lenders, for start-up firms and growing small business concerns are available to all qualified small business concerns; and

(J) the management assistance programs delivered by resource partners on behalf of the Small Business Administration, such as small business development centers, women's business centers, and the Service Corps of Retired Executives, are provided with the Federal resources necessary to do their jobs; and

(6) urges that the Administrator of the Small Business Administration have an active role as a member of the President's Cabinet.

RECOGNIZING THE 15TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FOUNDING OF SEEDS OF PEACE

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 536 which was submitted earlier today.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 536) recognizing the 15th anniversary of the founding of Seeds of Peace, an organization promoting understanding, reconciliation, acceptance, coexistence, and peace in the Middle East, South Asia, and other regions of conflict.

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

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. 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. 536) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 536

Whereas Seeds of Peace, founded by John Wallach, organizes and operates a program that brings together young people and educators from regions of conflict to study and learn about coexistence and conflict resolution;

Whereas Seeds of Peace operates a summer camp in Otisfield, Maine, as well as regional programs around the world, such as the Facilitation Training Course in the Middle East, the Homestay Programs in South Asia, or the International Regional Conferences;

Whereas the first International Conflict Resolution Camp welcomed Israeli, Palestinian, Jordanian, and Egyptian youth the summer of 1993, and the camp has since expanded to involve youths from other regions of conflict, including Greece, Turkey, Cyprus, the Balkans, India, Pakistan, and Afghanistan;

Whereas Seeds of Peace utilizes the summer camp to initiate dialogue between the youth of the United States and youth from various conflict regions to dispel hatred and create religious and cultural understanding;

Whereas hundreds of educators receive training through the regional operations of Seeds of Peace to support and teach peaceful conflict resolution techniques in their classrooms, ensuring that thousands of students around the world are exposed to those techniques;

Whereas Seeds of Peace works to dispel fear, mistrust, and prejudice, which are root causes of violence and conflict, and to build a new generation of leaders who are committed to achieving peace;

Whereas Seeds of Peace reveals the human face of youth who are too often exposed to hatred, by engaging campers in both guided coexistence sessions and ordinary summer camp activities, such as sharing meals, canoeing, swimming, playing sports, and exploring creativity through the arts and computers;

Whereas the Arab-Israeli conflict, as well as India-Pakistan and Afghanistan-Pakistan tensions, are currently at critical junctures, and progress toward peace will be enhanced by the emergence of a new generation of leaders who will choose dialogue, friendship, and openness over violence and hatred;

Whereas Seeds of Peace provides year-round opportunities, through regional programming and the innovative use of technology, to enable former participants to build on the relationships forged at camp, so that the learning processes begun at camp may continue in the participants' home countries, where they are most needed;

Whereas youth graduates of the camp, known as "Seeds", currently number more than 4,000, with an additional 567 adult delegation leaders also having completed the camp programming;

Whereas this graduate network receives continued support in promoting professional cooperation;

Whereas Seeds of Peace is strongly supported by participating governments and many world leaders;

Whereas Federal funding for Seeds of Peace demonstrates the recognized importance of Seeds of Peace in promoting the foreign policy goals of the United States; and

Whereas it is especially important to reaffirm that youth must be involved in long-term, visionary solutions to conflicts perpetuated by cycles of violence: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the 15th anniversary of the founding of Seeds of Peace;

(2) honors the accomplishments of Seeds of Peace in promoting understanding, reconciliation, acceptance, coexistence, and peace among youth from the Middle East and other regions of conflict around the world; and

(3) recognizes Seeds of Peace as a model of hope for living together in peace and security.

CELEBRATING YOUNG AMERICANS

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. I ask unanimous consent that the Senate now proceed to the consideration of S. Res. 538 which was submitted earlier today.

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

The assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 538) designating April 30, 2008 as "Día de los Niños: Celebrating Young Americans," and for other purposes.

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

Mr. HATCH. Mr. President, it is with great pleasure that I support this resolution designating the 30th day of April 2008 as "Día de los Niños: Celebrating Young Americans." Over the years, the Senate has passed seven similar resolutions in recognition of the young people throughout our country.

Nations throughout the world, and especially within Latin America, celebrate Día de los Niños every April 30th, in recognition and celebration of their country's future, their children. Many American Hispanic families continue the tradition of honoring their children on this day by celebrating Día de los Niños in their homes.

The designation of April 30 as a day to honor the children of our Nation will continue to affirm for the people of the United States the significance of family, education, and community. This special recognition of children will provide them with an opportunity to reflect on their future aspirations and find comfort and security in the support of their family members and communities. This resolution calls on the American people to join with all children, families, organizations, communities, churches, cities, and States across the Nation to observe the day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.

I am joined in introducing this resolution by a bipartisan group of Senators that includes Senators MENENDEZ, CRAIG, LUGAR, COCHRAN, BROWN, DURBIN, and CRAPO. I urge the remainder of my colleagues to lend their support.

Ms. KLOBUCHAR. 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. 538) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

The resolution, with its preamble, reads as follows:

S. RES. 538

Whereas many nations throughout the world, and especially within the Western hemisphere, celebrate "Día de los Niños", or "Day of the Children", on the 30th of April, in recognition and celebration of their country's future—their children;

Whereas children represent the hopes and dreams of the people of the United States and are the center of American families;

Whereas children should be nurtured and invested in to preserve and enhance economic prosperity, democracy, and the American spirit;

Whereas, according to the latest Census report, there are more than 44,000,000 individuals of Hispanic descent living in the United States, nearly 15,000,000 of which are children;

Whereas Hispanics in the United States, the youngest and fastest growing ethnic community in the Nation, continue the tradition of honoring their children on this day, and wish to share this custom with the rest of the Nation;

Whereas the primary teachers of family values, morality, and culture are parents and family members, and we rely on children to pass on these family values, morals, and culture to future generations;

Whereas the importance of literacy and education are most often communicated to children through family members;

Whereas families should be encouraged to engage in family and community activities that include extended and elderly family members and that encourage children to explore and develop confidence;

Whereas the designation of a day to honor the children of the United States will help affirm for the people of the United States the significance of family, education, and community;

Whereas the designation of a day of special recognition for the children of the United States will provide an opportunity for children to reflect on their future, to articulate their aspirations, and to find comfort and security in the support of their family members and communities;

Whereas the National Latino Children's Institute, serving as a voice for children, has worked with cities throughout the country to declare April 30 as "Día de los Niños: Celebrating Young Americans", a day to bring together Hispanics and other communities nationwide to celebrate and uplift children; and

Whereas the children of a nation are the responsibility of all its people, and people should be encouraged to celebrate the gifts of children to society: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates April 30, 2008, as "Día de los Niños: Celebrating Young Americans"; and

(2) calls on the people of the United States to join with all children, families, organizations, communities, churches, cities, and States across the Nation to observe the day with appropriate ceremonies, including activities that—

(A) center around children, and are free or minimal in cost so as to encourage and facilitate the participation of all our people;

(B) are positive and uplifting and that help children express their hopes and dreams;

(C) provide opportunities for children of all backgrounds to learn about one another's cultures and to share ideas;

(D) include all members of the family, especially extended and elderly family members, so as to promote greater communication among the generations within a family, enabling children to appreciate and benefit from the experiences and wisdom of their elderly family members;

(E) provide opportunities for families within a community to get acquainted; and