

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN).

Mr. MCGOVERN. I just wanted to come to the floor as a native of Massachusetts to say how proud I am that we will honor Edward Brooke with a Congressional Gold Medal. And I am proud of all the accomplishments of Senator Brooke. He was a Republican, and I'm a Democrat and I come from a family of Democrats. But my very first vote when I was eligible to vote was for Senator Brooke. And I voted for him in spite of the fact that he was a Republican.

I voted for him because I believed in him and I believed in what he stood for. I admired his being a champion of civil rights, of human rights. I admired his work on the Voting Rights Act and so many other areas. He was a historic figure, it has been pointed out the first popularly elected African American to serve in the United States Senate. But he was a man who had the common touch and who represented the people of Massachusetts with great dignity, and I am proud that my first vote was for Ed Brooke. I look forward to being there when he is honored.

But I wanted to just say, as somebody from Massachusetts, that this is a really special tribute for an extraordinary man. And I am very proud that this House is doing that.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I just want to say that I enjoyed the remarks of the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN). I would just make one correction. He said that Senator Brooke was a Republican. As far as I understand he still is a Republican. And one of the things I was looking forward to when I was first elected in 1978 was joining people in my party such as Senator Brooke and having an opportunity to work with him.

I was saddened in 1978 when he lost for reelection at that point in time, but then was privileged to work with him on that national commission. And I found him to be a gentleman above all, a real gentleman with a soft-spoken manner who listened to what others had to say, did not put himself out front, but tried to get to the business at hand in a very intelligent, very dedicated, very persistent way.

So this is truly an honor, not only for him, but for this Congress that we are recognizing the service of this great American at this time and that we're doing it with the congressional honor, and that we will have this here in the rotunda of the United States.

Mr. MARKEY of Massachusetts. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of S. Con. Res. 43, a resolution authorizing the use of the rotunda of the Capitol for the presentation of the Congressional Gold Medal to former Massachusetts Senator Edward W. Brooke III.

There are few individuals more deserving of a Congressional Gold Medal, the highest

award of national appreciation from the U.S. Congress, than my friend, the former Senator of my state, Ed Brooke.

Throughout Senator Brooke's life, he has worked to bridge the great divides in our country.

In 1966, in the crucible of racism, prejudice, and segregation, Senator Edward W. Brooke stood as an embodiment of the change our country needed to move beyond the dark legacy of racial discrimination and prejudice in America. The first popularly elected African-America Senator, Senator Brooke's election stood as an example of what our nation could be when he noted that the voters of Massachusetts saw beyond skin color to "judge you on your merit and your worth alone".

When asked to comment on what many considered to be an improbable electoral victory, Senator Brooke responded by saying he was committed to "unite men who have not been united before." Throughout his tenure in the U.S. Senate, Senator Brooke did just that. Senator Brooke sought to reduce the economic and racial division in our country, particularly in the area of U.S. housing policy. Senator Brooke co-authored the Fair Housing Act of 1968, which prohibited discrimination in the sale, rental, and financing of housing based on race, religion, or national origin. Still, to this very day, the Fair Housing Act remains a cornerstone of our housing policy.

On all issues of justice and equality, regardless of sex, race, or religion, there has been no stronger advocate. When Title IX of the 1972 Education Act was in jeopardy in the Senate, Senator Brooke took the lead to ensure that women and girls would be guaranteed equal educational opportunities. When the extension and expansion of the Voting Rights Act came before the Senate in 1975, it was the respected voice of Senator Brooke that helped to garner an extension of the Voting Rights Act. Whenever there was an opportunity to protect and defend the fundamental civil rights of Americans who had suffered from discrimination, Senator Brooke was there, serving as a powerful voice for justice.

Thirty years later, Senator Brooke's legacy is reflected by an America that is very different from the nation that existed when he first arrived in the Senate, an America which has made enormous progress in breaking down the barriers of racial discrimination and inequality that once divided our nation.

Today, Mr. Speaker, I stand to support and recognize a great leader, who never lost his passion for bridging our nation's divides by uniting men and women under the belief that we all are created equal.

Mr. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BRADY of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I urge the passage of S. Con. Res. 43 and yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SALAZAR). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. BRADY) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the concurrent resolution, S. Con. Res. 43.

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. DANIEL E. LUNGREN of California. 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.

COMMEMORATING SALVADORAN JESUITS ON THE 20TH ANNIVERSARY OF THEIR DEATHS

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 761) remembering and commemorating the lives and work of Jesuit Fathers Ignacio Ellacuria, Ignacio Martin-Baro, Segundo Montes, Amando Lopez, Juan Ramon Moreno, Joaquin Lopez y Lopez, and housekeeper Julia Elba Ramos and her daughter Celina Mariset Ramos on the occasion of the 20th anniversary of their deaths at the University of Central America Jose Simeon Canas located in San Salvador, El Salvador on November 16, 1989, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 761

Whereas in the early morning hours of November 16, 1989, six Jesuit priests and faculty members of the Universidad Centroamericana José Simeon Cañas (UCA) located in San Salvador, El Salvador—Father Ignacio Ellacuria, Ignacio Martin-Baró, Segundo Montes, Amando López, Juan Ramon Moreno, and Joaquin López y López—and housekeeper Julia Elba Ramos and her daughter, Celina Mariset Ramos, were executed by members of the Salvadoran Army;

Whereas Father Ignacio Ellacuria, 59, was since 1979 rector of the UCA, and an internationally-respected intellectual and advocate for human rights and a negotiated solution to the Salvadoran civil conflict;

Whereas Father Ignacio Martin-Baró, 44, was the vice rector of the UCA, a leading analyst of national and regional affairs, the founder and director of the respected polling organization, the Public Opinion Institute, former Dean of Students, Dean of the Psychology Department, an internationally renowned pioneer in the field of social psychology and pastor of the rural community of Jayaque;

Whereas Father Segundo Montes, 56, was Dean of the Department of Social Sciences and a sociology professor at the UCA, and the founder and director of the Human Rights Institute at the UCA (IDHUCA), who did extensive work on Salvadoran refugees in the United States during the period of the Salvadoran conflict, including providing documentation and advice to United States Members of Congress on refugee issues;

Whereas Father Amando López, 53, was a philosophy and theology professor at the UCA, former director of the Jesuit seminary in San Salvador, and served as pastor of the Tierra Virgen community in Soyapango, a poor neighborhood in the periphery of San Salvador;

Whereas Father Juan Ramon Moreno, 56, was a professor of theology at the UCA, former novice-master for the Jesuits, and a tireless pastoral worker and spiritual guide;

Whereas Father Joaquin López y López, 71, was one of the creators of the UCA and the

founder, organizer, and director of Fe y Alegria (Faith and Joy) to address the lack of education in El Salvador, which opened 30 educational centers in marginalized communities throughout the country where 48,000 people received vocational training and education;

Whereas Julia Elba Ramos, 42, was the cook and housekeeper for the Jesuit seminarians at the UCA and wife of Obdulio Lozano, the UCA gardener and groundskeeper;

Whereas Celina Mariset, 16, had finished her first year of high school at the José Damian Villacorta Institute in Santa Tecla, El Salvador, and was staying with her mother the night of November 15, 1989;

Whereas the six Jesuit priests dedicated their lives to advancing education in El Salvador, protecting and promoting human rights and the end of conflict, and identifying and addressing the economic and social problems that affected the majority of the Salvadoran population;

Whereas the six Jesuit priests, as faculty and administrators at the UCA, educated many students throughout the 1970s and 1980s, students who subsequently became Salvadoran government, political, and civil society leaders, and thus helped facilitate communication, dialogue, and negotiations even during the turbulent years of the armed conflict;

Whereas these six priests and two women joined the more than 75,000 noncombatants who perished during the Salvadoran civil war;

Whereas on December 6, 1989, United States Speaker of the House of Representatives Thomas Foley appointed a Special Task Force on El Salvador consisting of 19 Members of the House of Representatives, chaired by Representative John Joseph Moakley of Boston, Massachusetts, to monitor the Salvadoran government's investigation into the murders of the Jesuit priests and two women and to look into related issues involving respect for human rights and judicial reform in El Salvador;

Whereas the Speaker's Task Force on El Salvador found that members of the High Command of the Salvadoran military were responsible for ordering the murder of the Jesuits and two women and for obstructing the subsequent investigation into the crimes;

Whereas the United Nations Commission on the Truth for El Salvador (Truth Commission) was established under terms of the January 1992 Peace Accords that ended El Salvador's 12 years of war and was charged to investigate and report to the Salvadoran people on human rights crimes committed by all sides during the course of the war;

Whereas on March 15, 1993, the Truth Commission confirmed the findings of the Speaker's Special Task Force;

Whereas on September 28, 1991, a Salvadoran jury found guilty of these murders two Salvadoran military officers, including Salvadoran Army Colonel Guillermo Alfredo Benavides Moreno, the first time in Salvadoran history where high-ranking military officers were convicted in a Salvadoran court of law of human rights crimes;

Whereas the University of Central America José Simeon Cañas in San Salvador remains dedicated to advancing and expanding educational opportunity, providing the highest quality of academic excellence in its studies and courses, and the commitment to human rights and social justice;

Whereas the 28 Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States, which represent many of the highest quality academic communities in the nation, have maintained a sense of solidarity with the UCA and the people of El Salvador and have annually ob-

served the November 16th anniversary of those murders;

Whereas in the United States, El Salvador, and around the world university programs, academic and scholarly institutes, libraries, research centers, pastoral programs, spiritual centers, and programs dedicated to educational achievement, social justice, human rights, and alleviating poverty have been dedicated in the names of the murdered Jesuits;

Whereas the international and Salvadoran outcry in response to the deaths of the six Jesuits and two women and the subsequent investigations into this crime served as a catalyst for negotiations that led to the signing of the 1992 Peace Accords, which have allowed the Government and the people of El Salvador to achieve significant progress in creating and strengthening democratic political, economic, and social institutions; and

Whereas November 16, 2009, marks the 20th anniversary of the deaths of these eight spiritual, courageous, and generous priests, educators, and laywomen: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) remembers and commemorates the lives and work of Father Ignacio Ellacuría, Ignacio Martín-Baró, Segundo Montes, Amando López, Juan Ramon Moreno, Joaquín López y López, Julia Elba Ramos, and Celina Mariset Ramos;

(2) extends sympathy to the families, friends, colleagues, and religious communities of the six Jesuit priests and two laywomen;

(3) recognizes the continuing academic, spiritual, and social contributions of the University of Central America José Simeon Cañas (UCA) in San Salvador, El Salvador;

(4) further recognizes the 28 Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States for their solidarity with the UCA and annual remembrance of those killed twenty years ago;

(5) remembers the seminal reports by Chairman John Joseph Moakley and the Speaker's Special Task Force on El Salvador in investigating the murders of the six priests and two laywomen;

(6) acknowledges the role played by the Speaker's Special Task Force, Congressman John Joseph Moakley, the Jesuit leadership of the UCA, and the Salvadoran judicial investigation and convictions in advancing negotiations to end the war in El Salvador;

(7) highlights the solidarity demonstrated by the people of the United States, academic institutions, and religious congregations through their participation in local, national, and international events commemorating the 20th anniversary of the murders of the six Jesuit priests and two laywomen;

(8) recognizes that the murdered individuals dedicated their lives to addressing and alleviating El Salvador's social and economic inequities, and that while significant progress has been made during the post-war period, social and economic hardships persist among many sectors of Salvadoran society; and

(9) supports public, private, nongovernmental, and religious organizations in efforts to fulfill the legacy of the murdered Jesuits to reduce poverty and hunger and promote educational opportunity, human rights, the rule of law, and social equity for the people of El Salvador.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

On November 16, 1989, in the midst of El Salvador's 12-year-long civil war, six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper, and her teenage daughter were murdered in San Salvador by members of the Salvadoran Army. On the 20th anniversary of this heinous crime, the resolution we consider today calls upon us to remember and honor their lives and their work.

The six priests were well known internationally for their work in support of human rights, social justice, peace and caring for refugees and the internally displaced. They worked tirelessly to end the conflict that had torn apart their country for over a decade. As scholars, researchers and advocates, they identified and addressed the many economic and social problems that affected the majority poor of El Salvador.

Upon learning of their murders, Speaker of the House Tom Foley appointed a special task force on El Salvador consisting of 19 Members of the House and chaired by Congressman Joe Moakley of Boston, Massachusetts. The special task force was charged with monitoring the Salvadoran Government's investigation into the eight murders.

Six of our colleagues who served on the Speaker's special task force still serve today in the 111th Congress. They are Congressmen STENY HOYER, JIM McDERMOTT, GEORGE MILLER, JACK MURTHA, DAVID OBEY and JOHN SPRATT. We honor them for their service then and today and for their dedication to the cause of peace, justice and human rights.

The Moakley Commission, as the Speaker's special task force came to be known, issued a series of reports that identified members of the Salvadoran military's high command as those responsible for murdering and obstructing the subsequent investigation into the crime. The international outcry in response to the murders and the subsequent investigations served as a catalyst for negotiations that resulted in the signing of peace accords in January 1992, bringing El Salvador's long nightmare to an end.

So even in death, these brave men and women contributed to achieving the very peace to which they had dedicated their lives. Since that terrible November day in 1989, these eight individuals have been remembered in El Salvador and around the world. Annual

observances have been held by the 28 Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States which have taken up many projects in support of human rights and social justice in honor of the fallen Jesuits.

By passing this resolution today, the House adds its voice to that remembrance and extends our sympathy to the family members, friends, colleagues and religious communities who knew them, worked with them, loved them and miss them. We also remember our former colleague, Congressman Joe Moakley, and the seminal reports issued by the Speaker's special task force that played such an important role in bringing to trial those responsible for the murders and advancing negotiations to end the war.

I want to thank my good friend and gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MCGOVERN) for introducing this important resolution, and I urge all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this.

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

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

I also want to thank Mr. MCGOVERN for bringing this resolution forward. I rise today to join my colleagues in commemorating the anniversary of the murders of six Jesuit fathers, their housekeeper, and her daughter on November 16, 1989, in El Salvador. On the occasion of the 20th anniversary of their deaths, the resolution before us remembers and commemorates the lives and work of these individuals. It extends our sympathy to the families, friends, colleagues and religious communities of those whose lives were lost that day.

It recognizes the continuing academic and social contributions of the University of Central America, UCA, in San Salvador, El Salvador and the 28 Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States for their solidarity and annual remembrance of those killed 20 years ago.

The resolution also recognizes that progress is being made in El Salvador, but reminds us that social and economic hardships still persist among many sectors of Salvadoran society. Therefore, it supports the efforts of public, private, nongovernmental and religious organizations to fulfill the legacy of the murdered Jesuits to reduce poverty and hunger and promote educational opportunity, human rights, the rule of law and social equity for the people of El Salvador.

It has been a long road over the past 20 years. By working together with responsible partners and friends, the United States can help El Salvador to overcome the obstacles that remain. And as long as the democratic principles and respect for fundamental freedoms and the rule of law remain the compass for our support, I'm confident that we can be successful.

I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5½ minutes to Mr. JAMES MCGOVERN

from the Third District of Massachusetts.

Mr. MCGOVERN. I want to thank the gentlewoman from California, and I want to thank my colleague, Mr. BOOZMAN. I want to thank the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, HOWARD BERMAN, for all of his help and support in bringing this resolution to the floor in a timely manner. I especially want to thank the chairman's staff person, Peter Quilter, whose expertise on Latin America is so greatly appreciated by so many Members on and off the committee.

Mr. Speaker, as many of my colleagues know, I spent 13 years working for our former colleague from Boston, Massachusetts, Congressman Joe Moakley. I handled foreign policy issues for Joe, and in the early 1980s Joe asked me to go to El Salvador to see if the stories he had been hearing from Salvadoran refugees about the situation on the ground were true.

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As I prepared for the trip, whenever I asked who should I see and talk to in order to understand what is going on in El Salvador, the response was always the same: you have to go to the University of Central America, otherwise known as the UCA. And that's how I first met the director of the UCA, Father Ignacio Ellacuria, and the vice rector, Father Ignacio Martin Baro.

When I asked Father Martin Baro what was the single most important thing I needed to know about the human rights situation in El Salvador, he said to me, remember, we are human beings, too. That meeting and those words forever changed my life.

During later months and later visits, I got the chance to meet with Father Segundo Montes, an expert on the refugee crisis in El Salvador, as hundreds of thousands of Salvadorans fled the violence of the civil war and made their way to the United States. As Congressman Moakley developed legislation to provide temporary protection to Salvadoran refugees in the United States, Father Montes testified before Congress and provided invaluable materials and help in documenting and understanding the refugee crisis.

Mr. Speaker, 20 years ago in the dead of night, the Salvadoran Army entered the grounds of the University of Central America. They pulled six Jesuit priests from their beds, including Fathers Ellacuria, Martin Baro, and Segundo Montes, marched them out to a lawn behind their residence, they put high-powered rifles to their heads, and they shot them dead in cold blood.

A few minutes later, these same soldiers discovered the Jesuits' housekeeper and her daughter hiding in the house, and they murdered them as well.

In response, then-Speaker Tom Foley appointed a congressional commission, chaired by Joe Moakley, to investigate this terrible crime. Joe asked me to be his chief investigator. And during the

course of that work, we helped identify the killers and those responsible for ordering and covering up this terrible tragedy.

The commission's report became critical evidence in the prosecution and conviction of some of the priest killers and I believe in creating support for the U.N.-brokered negotiations that ended El Salvador's 12-year civil war.

So it's with deep humility and appreciation that I applaud the House for taking up this resolution today which honors the memories and lives and works of these six priests and two women and the work of Congressman Moakley and the Speaker's Special Task Force on El Salvador.

The Jesuit priests dedicated their lives to peace, to bringing the warring parties inside El Salvador together to end violence and the war.

A generation has now grown up in El Salvador without having known them or benefited from their wisdom or humor, but every year on November 16, their lives and work are remembered in El Salvador and around the world. And each year, another generation of young people re-dedicate themselves to working for peace and justice because of the example and inspiration of these six Jesuit priests.

Mr. Speaker, I have walked on the site behind the Jesuits' residence, the very ground where, 20 years ago, the bodies of my friends were discovered. This hallowed ground is now a beautiful rose garden, and each day people from all over El Salvador and around the world come to the garden to nourish hope and renew their commitment to peace. It is used by faculty and students for meditation and repose.

There is now a chapel where the six priests are buried. The UCA has also installed a small and emotionally compelling museum dedicated to the lives and deaths of these six priests, their housekeeper and her daughter.

Mr. Speaker, the lives and deaths of these priests had a profound effect on my own life. I knew them in life. I was proud to call them friends. I helped investigate and uncover who ordered and carried out their murders. And I have remained involved and committed to peace, democracy, and development in El Salvador.

I will never forget my friends or the role of Joe Moakley or the role the U.S. Congress played in helping El Salvador end its long civil war because of the impact inside and outside of El Salvador that the murders of these incredible men had on changing the course of El Salvador's history.

Nothing will bring my friends back to life, but this resolution honoring and remembering their lives and work on this, the occasion of the 20th anniversary of their deaths, is a worthy tribute, and I ask my colleagues to support the resolution.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Louisiana (Mr. CAO) a member of the

Homeland Security and Transportation committees and a former Jesuit seminarian.

Mr. CAO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 761 to commemorate the lives and work of those that were executed by members of the Salvadoran Army on the 20th anniversary of their deaths next month.

On November 16, 1989, members of the Salvadoran Army entered the Universidad Centroamericana Jose Simeon Canas in San Salvador and massacred six Jesuit priests, their housekeeper, and her daughter. This senseless mass murder was incited when the six priests took a stand for social justice and against the oppressive elements in the Salvadoran society, notably the tyrannical military.

Among the victims were Father Ignacio Ellacuria, a rector of the university and an outspoken critic of the Army; Father Ignacio Martin Baro, a prolific writer and an intellectual on the effects of war on the human psyche; Father Segundo Montes, founder of the Human Rights Institute at UCA and a congressional adviser on Salvadoran refugees; Father Amano Lopez, a respected member of the Society of Jesus, gifted counselor, and a pastoral worker; Father Joaquin Lopez y Lopez, director of the Fe y Alegria education program in poor communities; Father Juan Ramon Moreno, a theological scholar and publicist; and Elba Ramos, the Jesuits' housekeeper, who was killed alongside her teenage daughter, Celina, when she wrapped her body around Celina trying to protect her from the shooting.

Having spent 6 years in the Jesuit order studying to become a Jesuit priest, I have a deep appreciation for the sacrifice these people made in pursuit of religious freedom and human rights. These eight martyrs actually inspired me to join the Society of Jesus in 1990 and to carry on their struggle for religious freedom and human rights 19 years later.

Today, the 28 Jesuit colleges and universities in the United States have annually observed the November 16 anniversary of the murdered Jesuits and the two murdered women. This resolution commends those institutions for their solidarity with the UCA and extends sympathies to the families, friends, colleagues, and religious communities of the deceased.

Finally, the measure calls upon the President, the Secretary of State, and other United States Federal agencies to support efforts by the Salvadoran Government and other public, private, and religious organizations to reduce poverty and hunger and to promote educational opportunity, human rights, and the rule of law and social equity for the people of El Salvador.

Mr. Speaker, I strongly urge my colleagues to honor the lives of these human rights martyrs and support H. Res. 761. And in the words of the Jesuit Fathers, "ad maiorem dei gloriam."

Ms. WATSON. I continue to reserve my time, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, having no further speakers on the subject, again I want to thank Mr. MCGOVERN for bringing this forward.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 761, 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.

CALLING ON VIETNAM TO RELEASE IMPRISONED BLOGGERS AND RESPECT INTERNET FREEDOM

Ms. WATSON. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 672) calling on the Government of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam to release imprisoned bloggers and respect Internet freedom.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 672

Whereas the Internet is a tool to exercise freedom of expression and association, both of which are basic human rights;

Whereas the Internet is a medium to share information freely, promote social and economic development, and connect Vietnamese citizens domestically and internationally;

Whereas the Government of Vietnam created the Administration Agency for Radio, Television and Electronics Information in October 2008 and issued Circular 07 in December 2008 to restrict Internet freedom, censor private blogs, and compel information technology companies to cooperate with government efforts to monitor personal information of Internet users;

Whereas the Government of Vietnam has imprisoned bloggers and numerous democracy activists who have distributed their peaceful views over the Internet;

Whereas the Government of Vietnam continues to firewall external websites promoting democracy and human rights; and

Whereas these actions violate individuals' right to freedom of speech and expression: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) supports the right of Vietnamese citizens to access websites of their choosing and to have the freedom to share and publish information over the Internet;

(2) calls on the Government of Vietnam to repeal Circular 07, Article 88, and similar statutes that restrict the Internet, so as to be in line with the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to which the Socialist Republic of Vietnam is a signatory;

(3) calls on the Government of Vietnam to become a responsible member state of the international community by respecting individuals' freedom of speech, freedom of press, and freedom of political association; and

(4) calls on the Government of Vietnam to release all political prisoners, including but

not limited to the following bloggers and cyber activists—

- (A) Le Cong Dinh;
- (B) Le Nguyen Sang;
- (C) Le Thi Cong Nhan;
- (D) Nguyen Van Hai (Dieu Cay);
- (E) Nguyen Xuan Nghia;
- (F) Ngo Quynh;
- (G) Nguyen Ngoc Quang;
- (H) Nguyen Thi Hong;
- (I) Nguyen Van Dai;
- (J) Pham Ba Hai;
- (K) Pham Thanh Nghien;
- (L) Pham Van Troi;
- (M) Tran Huynh Duy Thuc;
- (N) Truong Minh Duc;
- (O) Truong Quoc Huy;
- (P) Vu Hoang Hai;
- (Q) Nguyen Tien Trung; and
- (R) Vu Hung.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. WATSON) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

I would like to thank my good friend, Representative LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, for her leadership in introducing this important resolution.

This resolution calls on the government of Vietnam to release imprisoned bloggers and respect individuals' rights to freedom of speech and expression.

Over the past decade, Vietnam has seen an explosion in Internet use due to the country's increasing economic integration and a decline in the cost of access to the Internet. Today, an estimated 24 million of Vietnam's 88 million people are online. A major leap forward for freedom of expression in Vietnam has been the rise of the blogs. Blogs have taken an important space in Vietnam society, providing a rare platform for Vietnamese citizens to exchange ideas and debate issues outside of the State-controlled media.

Rather than embracing this new form of communication, authorities in Hanoi have chosen to join the likes of China, Iran, Saudi Arabia, and Egypt in employing a mix of detentions, regulations, and intimidation in order to monitor users and censor views.

On October, 2008, the government passed a new edict that gave the police broad authority to move against online critics, including those who oppose the "State of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam." Since 2002, about 30 "cyber-dissidents" have been jailed in Vietnam. Seven of those 30 remain behind bars, and these people were expressing