

there have been 246 maulings, 253 escapes, 143 big cat deaths, and 128 confiscations.

This is also an animal welfare issue. Research shows that the captive big cat community is characterized by a systemic culture of inhumane mistreatment of the animals. One major reason for this is that once individual big cats have outgrown the infancy stage when they are most profitable, they are often warehoused in terrible conditions. Because private ownership is allowed to continue, many sanctuaries for mistreated or unwanted big cats are at or nearing capacity and lack financial reserves to provide greater assistance. The recent closure of a major sanctuary in Texas that had over 50 big cats has made matters worse.

Third, this is a matter of conservation. Tigers, for example, are extremely endangered by poaching and trade, and illegal tiger products continue to be smuggled into the U.S. from foreign countries. One of the biggest threats to wild tigers is the demand for tiger parts and products, and leakage of captive tiger parts and products into the illegal market continues to encourage demand, perpetuating poaching and threatening remaining wild populations.

Finally, this bill will address the current patchwork state regulation. There are still two states that have no regulations or permits at all regarding private ownership of exotic animals including big cats. Seven other States have little to no regulations of private ownership of exotic animals including big cats. Another 14 states allow big cat possession only with a state permit, and 27 states and the District of Columbia have enacted full bans on private ownership of big cats, though all of those exempt federally-licensed exhibitors. Given the risks I have already outlined, this kind of regulatory patchwork is simply unacceptable and could be dangerous.

I believe that the Big Cats and Public Safety Protection Act will help ensure that lions, tigers, and other potentially dangerous big cats do not threaten public safety, harm global conservation efforts, or end up living in squalid conditions where they are subject to mistreatment and cruelty.

A number of organizations are supportive of this bill, including the International Fund for Animal Welfare, the Humane Society of the United States, Born Free USA, Big Cat Rescue, the Animal Welfare Institute, and the World Wildlife Foundation.

I would like to recognize Senators LIEBERMAN, SANDERS, and BLUMENTHAL as original cosponsors of this bill. I look forward to continued progress in enhancing the protection and conservation of wild big cats and in increasing public safety from the dangers of these untamed animals.

By Mr. AKAKA:

S. 3548. A bill to clarify certain provisions of the Native American Veterans

Memorial Establishment Act of 1994; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

Mr. AKAKA. Mr. President, as Chairman of the Committee on Indian Affairs, I am introducing legislation to make technical corrections to the National Native American Veterans' Memorial Act of 1994.

The 1994 Act honors the profound contributions of Native Veterans by authorizing the construction of a National Native American Veterans' Memorial. Unfortunately, technical issues with the law have made it difficult to move forward with the Memorial. The bill I am introducing today seeks to alleviate those obstacles.

My legislation would make technical corrections in order to allow the National Museum of American Indian to join the National Congress of American Indians in the fundraising efforts for the Memorial. In addition, my bill would allow the Memorial to be constructed on the property provided for by the National Museum of American Indian Act.

Per capita, American Indians, Alaska Natives, and Native Hawaiians serve at a higher rate in the Armed Forces than any other group of Americans. Native peoples have served in all of the Nation's wars since the Revolutionary War. A memorial in their honor is well-deserved and long overdue.

My non-controversial, no cost, technical amendments bill will make it easier to construct the authorized memorial to honor our Native Veterans.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 554—CALLING ON THE GOVERNMENT OF THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA TO FACILITATE THE IMMEDIATE AND UNCONDITIONAL RELEASE OF GAO ZHISHENG, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

Mrs. BOXER (for herself and Mr. CORNYN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 554

Whereas Gao Zhisheng is a prominent Chinese human rights lawyer known for representing religious minority groups, factory workers, coal miners, and victims of government land seizures;

Whereas, in 2001, the Ministry of Justice of the People's Republic of China listed Gao Zhisheng as one of the top ten lawyers in China;

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China arrested Gao Zhisheng on August 15, 2006, and prevented him from meeting with chosen legal counsel;

Whereas, on December 22, 2006, Gao Zhisheng was convicted of inciting subversion and received a suspended sentence of three years subject to five years of probation;

Whereas, in September 2007, authorities in China apprehended and detained Gao Zhisheng for 50 days;

Whereas Gao Zhisheng claimed that during his detention, government officials threatened his life and tortured him, including

beating him with electrified batons, urinating on him, leaving him tied up for hours, and holding lighted cigarettes close to his eyes and nose;

Whereas the Government of the People's Republic of China arrested and detained Gao Zhisheng again on February 4, 2009;

Whereas Gao Zhisheng's whereabouts were unknown until March 2010, when he resurfaced, only to be arrested once more on April 20, 2010;

Whereas, on November 19, 2010, the United Nations Working Group on Arbitrary Detention determined Gao Zhisheng's ongoing detention to be arbitrary and in violation of international law;

Whereas Gao Zhisheng was held for 20 months before officials in China informed his family in December 2011 that he was being held at the Shaya County Prison in remote Xinjiang, China;

Whereas authorities allowed Gao Zhiyi to visit his brother, Gao Zhisheng, in the Shaya County Prison for 30 minutes on March 24, 2012, but then warned him not to speak to the media or he would not be allowed to visit his brother again;

Whereas the arbitrary arrest and detention of attorneys who represent minority groups and human rights activists could have a chilling effect on other attorneys working with similar clients;

Whereas Article 9 of the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, adopted at New York December 16, 1966, to which the Government of the People's Republic of China is a signatory, states, "No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest or detention.;"

Whereas the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights also guarantees the right to freedom of expression;

Whereas the wife of Gao Zhisheng, Geng He, and their two children have been afforded protection as political asylees in the United States;

Whereas the United States Government has authorized Gao Zhisheng to enter the United States, based on his family's successful claim of political asylum; and

Whereas the continued detention of Gao Zhisheng, with limited or no access to family or legal counsel, by the Government of the People's Republic of China is a source of grave concern to the United States Senate: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate calls on the Government of the People's Republic of China—

(1) to immediately facilitate continued access to Gao Zhisheng by his family and lawyers;

(2) to facilitate the immediate and unconditional release of Gao Zhisheng, including allowing Mr. Gao to leave China to come to the United States to be reunited with his family, should he wish to do so; and

(3) to release all persons in China who have been arbitrarily detained.

SENATE RESOLUTION 555—SUPPORTING THE GOALS AND IDEALS OF "NATIONAL SAVE FOR RETIREMENT WEEK", INCLUDING RAISING PUBLIC AWARENESS OF THE VARIOUS TAX-PREFERRED RETIREMENT VEHICLES AND INCREASING PERSONAL FINANCIAL LITERACY

Mr. CONRAD (for himself, Mr. ENZI, and Mr. CARDIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 555

Whereas people in the United States are living longer, and the cost of retirement is increasing significantly;

Whereas Social Security remains the bedrock of retirement income for the great majority of the people of the United States but was never intended by Congress to be the sole source of retirement income for families;

Whereas recent data from the Employee Benefit Research Institute indicates that, in the United States, less than % of workers or their spouses are currently saving for retirement, and the actual amount of retirement savings of workers is much less than the amount needed to adequately fund their retirement years;

Whereas the financial literacy of workers in the United States is important to their understanding of the need to save for retirement;

Whereas saving for retirement is a key component to overall financial health and security during retirement years, and the importance of financial literacy in planning for retirement must be advocated;

Whereas many workers may not be aware of their options in saving for retirement or may not have focused on the importance of, and need for, saving for retirement;

Whereas many employees have available to them, through their employers, access to defined benefit and defined contribution plans to assist them in preparing for retirement, yet many of those employees may not be taking advantage of those plans at all or to the full extent allowed by Federal law;

Whereas the need to save for retirement is important even during economic downturns or market declines, which make continued contributions all the more important;

Whereas all workers, including public and private sector employees, employees of tax-exempt organizations, and self-employed individuals, can benefit from developing personal budgets and financial plans that include retirement savings strategies and taking advantage of tax-preferred retirement savings vehicles; and

Whereas October 21 through October 27, 2012, has been designated as “National Save for Retirement Week”: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of “National Save for Retirement Week”, including raising public awareness of the importance of saving adequately for retirement;

(2) supports the need to raise public awareness of the availability of a variety of ways to save for retirement which are favored under the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 and are utilized by many people in the United States, but which should be utilized by more; and

(3) calls on the States, localities, schools, universities, nonprofit organizations, businesses, other entities, and the people of the United States to observe National Save for Retirement Week with appropriate programs and activities, with the goal of increasing the retirement savings and personal financial literacy of all people in the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 556—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT FOREIGN ASSISTANCE FUNDING TO THE GOVERNMENTS OF LIBYA AND EGYPT SHOULD BE SUSPENDED UNTIL THE PRESIDENT CERTIFIES TO CONGRESS THAT BOTH GOVERNMENTS ARE PROVIDING PROPER SECURITY AT UNITED STATES EMBASSIES AND CONSULATES PURSUANT TO THE VIENNA CONVENTION ON CONSULAR RELATIONS

Mr. INHOFE submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 556

Resolved, That it is the sense of the Senate that foreign assistance funding to the Governments of Libya and Egypt should be suspended until the President certifies to Congress that both governments are providing, and will provide in the future, security necessary to protect United States personnel in and around the United States embassies and consulates in these two countries, pursuant to the Vienna Convention on Consular Relations, done at Vienna April 24, 1963.

SENATE RESOLUTION 557—HONORING THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF LODI GYALTSEN GYARI AS SPECIAL ENVOY OF HIS HOLINESS THE DALAI LAMA AND IN PROMOTING THE LEGITIMATE RIGHTS AND ASPIRATIONS OF THE TIBETAN PEOPLE

Mr. KERRY (for himself, Mr. LUGAR, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. UDALL of Colorado, Mr. LIEBERMAN, Mr. KIRK, Mr. MCCAIN, and Mrs. BOXER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 557

Whereas Lodi Gyaltsen Gyari, who was born in Nyarong, Kham in 1949, was recognized according to Tibetan Buddhist tradition as a reincarnate lama and began his monastic studies at 4 years of age in Lhumorhab Monastery, which was located in what is now Kardze Prefecture, Sichuan Province;

Whereas, in 1958, 9-year-old Lodi Gyari fled Nyarong with his family to avoid pursuit by the Chinese People’s Liberation Army and was said to have led his group to safety in India through prayer and divinations;

Whereas Lodi Gyari, as a young man in India, began a career-long commitment to the Tibetan struggle against Chinese oppression in Tibet, becoming editor for the Tibetan Freedom Press, founder of the Tibetan Review, the first English language journal published by Tibetans in exile, and a founding member of the Tibetan Youth Congress;

Whereas Lodi Gyari served as a civil servant in the Central Tibetan Administration of His Holiness the Dalai Lama, as Chairman of the Tibetan Parliament in exile, and as a Deputy Cabinet Minister for the Departments of Religious Affairs and Health and Cabinet Minister for the Department of Information and International Relations;

Whereas, in 1991, Lodi Gyari moved to the United States in the capacity of Special Envoy of His Holiness the Dalai Lama and was soon after selected to be President of the International Campaign for Tibet;

Whereas, for 3 decades Lodi Gyari has met with leaders and diplomats of governments

around the world and with Members of the United States Congress and parliaments of other nations—

(1) to explain the Tibetan position with regard to engagement with China;

(2) to urge supportive strategies and policies from governments;

(3) to explain the Dalai Lama’s “Middle Way” philosophy of seeking genuine autonomy for Tibet within the People’s Republic of China that contributes to harmony between the Tibetan and Chinese peoples; and

(4) to promote Tibetan statecraft as the Dalai Lama’s senior ambassador-at-large;

Whereas, during his time as Special Envoy based in Washington, D.C., Congress approved many policy and programmatic measures on Tibet, which served to institutionalize the Tibet issue within the Government of the United States, most notably the establishment of a Special Coordinator on Tibetan Issues within the Department of State and support for Tibetan refugees;

Whereas, in 1999, Lodi Gyari became a United States citizen;

Whereas in May 1998, His Holiness the Dalai Lama authorized Special Envoy Lodi Gyari to be the principal person to reestablish contact with the Chinese government on the Tibetan issue;

Whereas, between September 2002 and January 2010, Lodi Gyari led the Dalai Lama’s negotiating team in 9 formal rounds of meetings with Chinese officials with tireless drive and immense skill, winning the respect of the international community;

Whereas Lodi Gyari presented the Chinese government with the Memorandum on Genuine Autonomy for the Tibetan People and its accompanying Note, thus detailing the Tibetan side’s vision for a political solution for Tibet consistent within the framework of the Chinese constitutional and laws on autonomy;

Whereas Lodi Gyari, in service to the Dalai Lama, came to represent in national capitals around the world, the great hope and conviction that the rights of Tibetans could be protected and their repression could be ended.

Whereas, in the personally and professionally difficult task of representing Tibetan interests in dialogue with the People’s Republic of China, Lodi Gyari demonstrated spirit, intelligence, and extraordinary tact, and brought civility, reason and a measure of mutual understanding to the Tibetan-Chinese relationship;

Whereas Lodi Gyari has credited the farsighted wisdom of His Holiness the Dalai Lama in empowering the Tibetan people by his devolution of his political authority to an elected Tibetan leadership; and

Whereas, Lodi Gyari resigned his position, effective June 1, 2012, in the context of the deteriorating situation inside Tibet, including increasing incidents of Tibetan self-immolations, and expressing deep frustration over the lack of positive response from the Chinese side in their nearly 10-year dialogue, and in respect for the process of the devolution of political power to the elected Tibetan leaders.

Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) honors the service of Lodi Gyaltsen Gyari as Special Envoy of His Holiness the Dalai Lama;

(2) commends the achievements of Lodi Gyaltsen Gyari in building an international coalition of support for Tibet that recognizes—

(A) the imperative to preserve the distinct culture and religious traditions of Tibet; and