

around the world, that we remain the beacon of hope and light and that we uphold this pillar of religious freedom, not only in our own Nation but in countries around the world where people of faith are under siege.

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

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

In closing, let me thank the authors of this bill, Mr. WOLF and Ms. ESHOO, for your dedication, your focus, and your hard work.

It would seem that in the year of our Lord 2013 we would learn religious tolerance by now all over the world, we would have learned that it is the right thing to do to be patient with individuals who might believe different than we do, to allow them their way of life so that they can prosper and grow and pray in their own beliefs. Unfortunately, that's not true. For all of us, we should be concerned wherever religious tolerance is not adhered to.

I recall the words—and why it concerns us—Dr. King said once that “injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.” If we allow minorities who believe differently than we do anywhere to think that it is okay, and we are not going to use whatever diplomatic or other forms of relationships that we have to try to have religious freedoms, they're mistaken. We must not allow our voices to be silent, we must speak aloud in clear language, and I urge my colleagues to support this bill.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, in the spirit that Mr. MEEKS articulated there, we Americans who cherish religious liberty and all people of goodwill who value the rights of conscience cannot remain silent in the face of this rising regional intolerance. I think, as he put it, and as Mr. WOLF and Ms. ANNA ESHOO put so eloquently, I think it is time to bring about this Special Envoy to deploy in the Middle East. I thank Mr. WOLF for his leadership and certainly urge passage of H.R. 301.

I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. SCHAKOWSKY. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 301, legislation to provide for the establishment of the Special Envoy to Promote Religious Freedom of Religious Minorities in the Near East and South Central Asia. I want to thank my colleagues Congressman WOLF and Congresswoman ESHOO for introducing this important legislation, which I am proud to cosponsor.

Ethno-religious minorities face serious threats in many countries in the Middle East, and it is critical that U.S. policy is sensitive to the needs and concerns of those endangered communities. Years of warfare, as well as specific persecution and targeting minority groups, has taken a serious toll on once-vibrant communities. While there were once over 1.5 million Christians in Iraq, today there are less than 400,000.

In October 2010, an attack on the Our Lady of Salvation Assyrian Catholic Church in Baghdad left more than 50 clergy, worshipers and police dead. This brutal massacre, just

one of many in recent years, drew international outrage and condemnation. We need a clear strategy for the protection of targeted minority communities.

My district in the Chicagoland area has a large and vibrant Assyrian population. In recent years, they have been extremely active in calling for greater attention to the ongoing persecution and targeting of their brothers and sisters in the Middle East, including a large march in Chicago in the wake of the 2010 Baghdad massacre. I am proud to work with them on this issue and to push to see H.R. 301 enacted into law.

Today's legislation will ensure that this serious issue is given the high-level attention it deserves within the State Department. A Special Envoy to Promote Religious Freedom of Religious Minorities in the Near East and South Central Asia will be a voice for persecuted communities, ensuring that U.S. policy is responsive to their needs. It is a critical step toward protecting these ancient and vibrant communities, and toward ensuring a peaceful and secure future for all residents of the region.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this important bill.

Mr. VAN HOLLEN. Mr. Speaker, I rise as a cosponsor of H.R. 301, a bill to establish a Special Envoy to promote religious freedom for minorities in the Near East and South Central Asia and to applaud Representative FRANK WOLF for his leadership on this timely and important issue.

No one should be made to feel that the practice of their religion is a crime or a source of shame. When people are persecuted in the name of one religion against another, such persecution violates their inalienable right to worship as they choose and promotes political instability. Around the world, many conflicts are rooted in sectarian differences and rivalries. Today in Syria, Christians and other religious minorities are in direct peril and are the target of abuse and persecution as a result of the civil war. On April 22, 2013, Greek Orthodox Archbishop of Aleppo Boulose Yazigi and the Syriac Archbishop of Aleppo, Yohanna Ibrahim were kidnapped by a faction of rebel extremists while carrying out humanitarian work in the area around the city. To this day they remain missing.

To the extent the United States can promote religious tolerance, we advance the cause of human rights, justice and peace around the globe. This bill creates a special envoy in order to monitor and combat acts of religious intolerance and incitement targeted against religious minorities and to work with foreign governments to address laws that are inherently discriminatory toward religious minority communities.

I encourage my colleagues to support of H.R. 301. By helping protect minorities in the Near East and South Central Asia, we contribute to the safety of minorities all over the world who live in fear for their lives merely because they practice a different religion than those around them.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 301, as amended.

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. WOLF. 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, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES REVITALIZATION AND REFORM ACT OF 2013

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (S. 793) to support revitalization and reform of the Organization of American States, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

S. 793

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the “Organization of American States Revitalization and Reform Act of 2013”.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress makes the following findings:

(1) The Charter of the Organization of American States recognizes that—

(A) representative democracy is indispensable for the stability, peace, and development of the Western Hemisphere; and

(B) a purpose of the Organization of American States is to promote and consolidate representative democracy, with due respect for the principle of nonintervention.

(2) The United States supports the purposes and principles enshrined in—

(A) the Charter of the Organization of American States;

(B) the Inter-American Democratic Charter; and

(C) the American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man.

(3) The United States supports the Organization of American States in its efforts with all member states to meet our commitments under the instruments set forth in paragraph (2).

(4) Congress supports the Organization of American States as it operates in a manner consistent with the Inter-American Democratic Charter.

SEC. 3. STATEMENT OF POLICY.

It is the policy of the United States—

(1) to promote democracy and the rule of law throughout the Western Hemisphere;

(2) to promote and protect human rights and fundamental freedoms in the Western Hemisphere; and

(3) to support the practices, purposes, and principles expressed in the Charter of the Organization of American States, the American Declaration on the Rights and Duties of Man, the Inter-American Democratic Charter, and other fundamental instruments of democracy.

SEC. 4. SENSE OF CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the Organization of American States (OAS) should be the primary multi-lateral diplomatic entity for regional dispute resolution and promotion of democratic governance and institutions;

(2) the OAS is a valuable platform from which to launch initiatives aimed to benefit the countries of the Western Hemisphere;

(3) the Summit of the Americas institution and process embodies a valuable complement to regional dialogue and cooperation;

(4) the Summit of the Americas process should be formally and more effectively integrated into the work of the OAS, the Inter-American Development Bank, and other Members of the Joint Summit Working Group, and the OAS should play a central role in overseeing and managing the Summit process;

(5) the OAS General Assembly and the Summit of the Americas events should be combined geographically and chronologically in the years in which they coincide;

(6) the OAS has historically accepted too many mandates from its member states, resulting in both lack of clarity on priorities and loss of institutional focus, which in turn has reduced the effectiveness of the organization;

(7) to ensure an appropriate balance of priorities, the OAS should review its core functions no less than annually and seek opportunities to reduce the number of mandates not directly related to its core functions;

(8) key OAS strengths lie in strengthening peace and security, promoting and consolidating representative democracy, regional dispute resolution, election assistance and monitoring, fostering economic growth and development cooperation, facilitating trade, combating illicit drug trafficking and transnational crime, and support for the Inter-American Human Rights System;

(9) the core competencies referred to in paragraph (8) should remain central to the strategic planning process of the OAS and the consideration of future mandates;

(10) any new OAS mandates should be accepted by the member states only after an analysis is conducted and formally presented consisting of a calculation of the financial costs associated with the mandate, an assessment of the comparative advantage of the OAS in the implementation of the mandate, and a description of the ways in which the mandate advances the organization's core mission;

(11) any new mandates should include, in addition to the analysis described in paragraph (10), an identification of the source of funding to be used to implement the mandate;

(12) the OAS would benefit from enhanced coordination between the OAS and the Inter-American Development Bank on issues that relate to economic development;

(13) the OAS would benefit from standard reporting requirements for each project and grant agreement;

(14) the OAS would benefit from effective implementation of—

(A) transparent and merit-based human resource standards and processes; and

(B) transparent hiring, firing, and promotion standards and processes, including with respect to factors such as gender and national origin; and

(15) it is in the interest of the United States, OAS member states, and a modernized OAS to move toward an assessed fee structure that assures the financial sustainability of the organization and establishes, not later than five years after the date of the enactment of this Act, that no member state pays more than 50 percent of the organization's assessed fees.

SEC. 5. ORGANIZATION OF AMERICAN STATES REVITALIZATION AND REFORM STRATEGY.

(a) STRATEGY.—

(1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Secretary of State shall submit to the Committee on Foreign Relations of the Senate and the Committee on Foreign Affairs of

the House of Representatives a multiyear strategy that—

(A) identifies a path toward the adoption of necessary reforms that prioritize and reinforce the OAS's core competencies described in section 4(8);

(B) outlines an approach to secure from the OAS effective adoption of—

(i) a results-based budgeting process in order to strategically prioritize, and where appropriate, reduce current and future mandates; and

(ii) transparent hiring, firing, and promotion practices;

(C) reflects the inputs and coordination from other Executive Branch agencies, as appropriate; and

(D) identifies a path toward the adoption of necessary reforms that would—

(i) lead to an assessed fee structure in which no member state would pay more than 50 percent of the OAS's assessed yearly fees; and

(ii) seek to minimize the negative financial impact on the OAS and its operations.

(2) POLICY PRIORITIES AND COORDINATION.—The Secretary of State shall—

(A) carry out diplomatic engagement to build support for reforms and budgetary burden sharing among OAS member states and observers; and

(B) promote donor coordination among OAS member states.

(b) BRIEFINGS.—The Secretary of State shall offer to the committees referred to in subsection (a)(1) a quarterly briefing that—

(1) reviews assessed and voluntary contributions;

(2) analyzes the progress made by the OAS to adopt and effectively implement a results-based budgeting process in order to strategically prioritize, and where appropriate, reduce current and future mandates;

(3) analyzes the progress made by the OAS to adopt and effectively implement transparent and merit-based human resource standards and practices and transparent hiring, firing, and promotion standards and processes, including with respect to factors such as gender and national origin;

(4) analyzes the progress made by the OAS to adopt and effectively implement a practice of soliciting member quotas to be paid on a schedule that will improve the consistency of its operating budget; and

(5) analyzes the progress made by the OAS to review, streamline, and prioritize mandates to focus on core missions and make efficient and effective use of available funding.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. MEEKS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include extraneous material on this measure in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. MEEKS. Mr. Speaker, at this time, I yield myself such time as I may consume to explain that this legislation would require the Secretary of State to develop a multiyear strategy to bolster the Organization of American States, OAS as we know it, and

improve the performance and the process for managing the budget and the personnel at the OAS.

When it was founded in 1948, it was the sole multilateral body in the Western Hemisphere. As the premier hemispheric organization, the OAS' key institutional documents—its charter, the American Declaration of Rights, the Inter-American Democratic Charter—enshrine values that are the foundation for political systems in the Americas.

Since its founding, the OAS has accepted too many mandates from its member states, resulting in a loss of international focus, and in turn has reduced, frankly, the organization's effectiveness. This bill seeks to push the OAS to refocus on those two core principles of promoting democratic governance and institutions and resolving regional disputes.

This push comes as other regional bodies are competing with the OAS for regional influence. There is the Central American System of Integration, the Union of South American Nations, and the Community of Latin American and Caribbean States, which includes Cuba but excludes both the United States and Canada.

Many of these political bodies do not represent our values. Most exclude the U.S. Many are used by governments in the region to undermine the U.S., thus undermining U.S. diplomacy in the hemisphere.

In order to maintain the OAS as an influential, positive force and to defend U.S. engagement, it is important that the U.S. spearhead an effort to reform the OAS and address its many administrative challenges.

This bill calls on the administration to develop a strategy that helps the OAS focus on its core mission, shed nonessential programs, install a results-based budgeting process, and adopt transparent, competitive personnel practices.

Additionally, this bill was strengthened in committee to recognize that it is not politically or financially viable for any OAS member state, including the United States, to pay more than 50 percent of the institution's assessed fees.

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

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

I rise in strong support of S. 793, as amended.

Mr. Speaker, the OAS remains the premier regional forum for the countries of the Americas to conduct multilateral business, an important aspect of U.S. relations with its neighbors.

The bill before us today seeks to support the organization, particularly with respect to democracy promotion and the protection of human rights.

The version we are poised to pass today in the House adds an important provision to the bipartisan Senate bill introduced by the Senator from New Jersey, BOB MENENDEZ, the chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee.

This new provision requires the State Department to examine ways to ensure that in the future no OAS member state pays more than 50 percent of the regular budget.

Currently, based on a legacy fee structure from a different era, the U.S. does pay more than 50 percent, with a series of distorting results.

A modernized OAS would benefit from a more egalitarian fee structure. The new provision asks State to lay out a roadmap to achieve such a fee structure, and hopefully opens up the conversation with our fellow member states in the OAS in the spirit of consensus and partnership.

I would like to thank Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL for working, truly, again, as we have done and seen time and time again on the Foreign Affairs Committee, really working in a bipartisan manner on this bill. We know sometimes it is not easy, but they have managed to do it. I thank them for that.

I urge my colleagues to support it, and reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE. I would like to thank Mr. MEEKS.

Mr. Speaker, at this time, I ask unanimous consent to yield the balance of my time to the gentlelady from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and that she be able to control that time.

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

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I thank our esteemed chairman for this privilege to speak about an important bill before us.

I would like to commend Senator BOB MENENDEZ, my dear friend from New Jersey, for introducing this pivotal bill, an important bipartisan bill, to bring desperately needed reforms to this failed Organization of American States.

I remain deeply disappointed, Mr. Speaker, that the OAS continues to fail to live up to the principles of the Inter-American Democratic Charter. The OAS should be, but is not, an important regional body that stands up for democratic principles, that promotes the rule of law and condemns human rights violations.

However, the OAS has strayed. This bill is a positive step forward to bring it back onto the right path.

Throughout the region, Mr. Speaker, we have seen ALBA nations continue to ignore their own constitution and deprive their people of the most basic human rights.

Has the OAS spoken out against the illegitimate elections in Venezuela? How about the illegitimate elections in Nicaragua? Or what about the continued human rights abuses against the people of Cuba?

Just this past Sunday, Mr. Speaker, more than 30 pro-democracy advocates who were peacefully gathering in Cuba

were detained and beaten by agents of the regime—for doing nothing. But the OAS remains silent on all of these important topics, and in doing so it fails to hold accountable the authoritarian regimes that oppress millions in our own hemisphere.

□ 1730

That is why real and concrete reforms are needed at the OAS. I fully support this legislation because it strengthens our mission at the OAS, and it ensures that U.S. taxpayer dollars are used well and no longer go to waste as they are at the OAS right now.

With that, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MEEKS. I have no further requests for time and am ready to close, and so I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, let me just state again about the hard work of Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL and their working in a bipartisan manner to get this bill done. It's difficult at times when you have different views on different issues; but I think that, when you have individuals working together across the aisle who are trying to come up with the appropriate compromise for an organization that is needed to have the strength to protect human rights and to make sure there is democracy, working together to get them on the right track, as Mr. ROYCE has indicated, is important. To also have the other body, the Senate, working with us so it's bicameral is a tremendous effort, I think, on both sides in trying to make sure that we have an organization in our hemisphere that is doing the right thing, and we've got to do it on a continuous basis, being sturdy, being forceful but also being bipartisan.

Let me just finally say that the manner in which this bill has come together is the manner in which I wish many bills could come together on this floor and in working with the other body.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, in closing, I want to thank our esteemed chairman, Mr. ED ROYCE of California, and our committee's ranking member, Mr. ELIOT ENGEL of New York, for their work on this bipartisan-bicameral effort to take one step—just the first step—at deep OAS reform.

I want to thank Senator BOB MENENDEZ, the author of the bill, who has been a longtime supporter and a leader in favor of human rights, the rule of law and democracy, especially in our hemisphere. All of us and our committee look forward to working with Senator MENENDEZ and with all of our Members and the other body, as well, as we move forward to enact this bill and make sure that we have true,

meaningful reforms and that we endeavor to get the OAS, once again, focused back on their core mission, which should be and remains promoting democracy and human rights in the Americas, a mission from which it has strayed far too often, including up to today.

With that, Mr. 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. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, S. 793, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. 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, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

E. CLAY SHAW JR. MISSING CHILDREN'S ASSISTANCE REAUTHORIZATION ACT OF 2013

Mr. GUTHRIE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 3092) to amend the Missing Children's Assistance Act, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3092

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "E. Clay Shaw, Jr. Missing Children's Assistance Reauthorization Act of 2013".

SEC. 2. AMENDMENTS.

(a) FINDINGS.—Section 402 of the Missing Children's Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5771) is amended—

(1) by redesignating paragraphs (3) through (9) as paragraphs (4) through (10), respectively, and

(2) by inserting after paragraph (2) the following:

“(3) many missing children are run-aways;”.

(b) DUTIES AND FUNCTIONS OF ADMINISTRATOR.—Section 404 of the Missing Children's Assistance Act (42 U.S.C. 5773) is amended—

(1) in subsection (a)—

(A) in paragraph (5)—

(i) by striking “Representatives, and” and inserting “Representatives, the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives,”; and

(ii) by inserting “, and the Committee on the Judiciary of the Senate” after “Senate”;

(B) by redesignating paragraphs (4) and (5) as (5) and (6), respectively, and

(C) by inserting after paragraph (3) the following:

“(4) coordinate with the United States Interagency Council on Homelessness to ensure that homeless services professionals are aware of educational resources and assistance provided by the Center regarding child sexual exploitation;”.

(2) in subsection (b)—

(A) in paragraph (1)—