

Mr. LOBIONDO. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Montana for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to bring H.R. 4285, to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located at 123 Bridgeton Pike in Mullica Hill, New Jersey, as the James C. "Billy" Johnson Post Office Building, to the floor for consideration.

Second Lieutenant Johnson was born and raised in my district in Richwood, New Jersey, in 1920. Due to his strong desire to serve his country, Billy enlisted as a private in the United States Army in 1941. He was later commissioned as an officer.

He was assigned to the 370th Infantry Regiment, 92nd Division during the height of the Italian Campaign in World War II. Second Lieutenant Johnson made the ultimate sacrifice for his country when he was tragically killed in action in October of 1944.

It is because of his steadfast commitment to his country, along with his valor and dedication to his country, that I support the naming of this post office after Second Lieutenant Johnson.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of this legislation.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to join my colleagues in consideration of H.R. 4285, a bill to designate the facility of the United States Postal Service located in Mullica Hill, New Jersey, as the James C. "Billy" Johnson Post Office Building.

You have heard he was a native of Richwood, New Jersey. He attended elementary school at Mullica Hill and graduated from Glassboro High School before attending Benedict College. In 1941, he began his military service in the United States Army.

You have heard he was assigned to the Canon Company, the 370th Infantry Regiment, 92nd Division. Regretfully, he made the ultimate sacrifice in 1944, when he was tragically killed. But his legacy lives on. He serves as an inspiration to those who have benefited from his sacrifice.

Mr. Speaker, we should pass this bill to commemorate the sacrifice that Second Lieutenant Johnson made to his country. I urge the passage of H.R. 4285.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. GIANFORTE. Mr. Speaker, I urge adoption of the bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Montana (Mr. GIANFORTE) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 4285.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONDEMNING THE PERSECUTION OF CHRISTIANS AROUND THE WORLD

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 407) condemning the persecution of Christians around the world, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 407

Whereas the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6401 et seq.) found that religious persecution is not confined to a particular region or regime and reaffirmed the commitment of the United States that religious freedom, which is the freedom of thought and conscience and the right to practice theistic and non-theistic beliefs, is the right of every individual and should never be arbitrarily abridged by any government;

Whereas the persecution of Christians is a global problem, occurring in countries across Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and the Americas;

Whereas Christians face persecution not only from Islamic extremist groups, like the Islamic State and Boko Haram, but also from other religious extremist groups and from officials at all levels of government;

Whereas the Middle East has been a home to Christians since the first century A.D., but the Christian population in the Middle East has significantly decreased over the past few decades as a result of persecution, displacement, and genocide;

Whereas such persecution ranges from social harassment and discrimination to physical violence, imprisonment, torture, enslavement, rape, and death;

Whereas Christians in Syria and Iraq have faced assault, torture, imprisonment, enslavement, and execution in a genocidal campaign by the Islamic State;

Whereas according to 2017 reports from international non-governmental organizations, the Christian population in Iraq decreased from 1,400,000 people in 2003 to just 275,000 people in 2016, as a result of displacement and genocide caused by religious extremism;

Whereas Christian holy sites in Syria have been destroyed by the Islamic State;

Whereas in 2016, approximately 200 Christians in Iran were arrested, while others have been beaten, tortured, subjected to feigned public executions, and even sentenced to death for their faith, and at least 90 remain in illegal detention;

Whereas in Saudi Arabia, Christians as well as other religious minorities face imprisonment, torture, and deportation and must practice their faith in secrecy because their houses of worship are not allowed;

Whereas on April 9, 2017, Palm Sunday, 44 people were killed in bomb attacks by the Islamic State on Coptic churches in Egypt;

Whereas the Islamic State has also claimed responsibility for the attack on a bus on May 26, 2017, in which 29 Coptic Christians were killed while traveling to a monastery in Minya, Egypt;

Whereas since the fall of the Gaddafi regime, Libya has served as a haven for militant Islamist extremist groups, like the Islamic State, which has resulted in more violent forms of Christian persecution;

Whereas the Islamic State claimed responsibility for the killing of 51 Coptic Christians in Libya in February and March of 2015;

Whereas Christian migrants from northern Africa traveling through Libya on their way to Europe have been abducted, trafficked, and forced to convert to Islam at the hands of the Islamic State;

Whereas in Afghanistan there are reports that converts to Christianity have been murdered or sent to mental hospitals;

Whereas Christians in Pakistan face accusations of blasphemy, punishable by death, and convictions and sentences for blasphemy are given despite little or no evidence;

Whereas according to Open Doors USA, approximately 600 Christian churches were attacked in Pakistan in 2016;

Whereas both Christians and Muslims in Nigeria have been massacred by Islamic extremist groups like Boko Haram;

Whereas Christian converts in Somalia often face public execution;

Whereas in 2017, a mob of 100 men attacked a Christian church in Uganda, beating and raping members of the congregation;

Whereas in May 2017, a Christian governor in Indonesia was found guilty of blasphemy and sentenced to two years in prison, in what was widely seen as a challenge to religious pluralism in Indonesia;

Whereas communist regimes have a strong history of oppressing and persecuting Christians as well as other religious minorities;

Whereas since 2013, in the Zhejiang Province of China, crosses have been removed from over 1,500 churches as part of that province's anti-cross campaign;

Whereas in China, members of Christian churches, as well as other religious minorities, that are not registered with the government face increased persecution from the Chinese state, including the risk of imprisonment and torture;

Whereas in North Korea, the practice of Christianity is prohibited and if caught, Christians are sent to forced labor camps;

Whereas in November 2016, Vietnam adopted a new "Law on Belief and Religion" that falls dramatically short of internationally accepted standards for human rights and curtails the right to religious freedom for over 8,000,000 Christians in that country;

Whereas in Mexico and Colombia, Christian church leaders have been assaulted, threatened, and in some cases killed by transnational criminal organizations and paramilitary armed groups attempting to intimidate and silence them;

Whereas religious discrimination, including the persecution of Christians, is a global human rights problem; and

Whereas the right to religious freedom is a universal right recognized by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) condemns all violations of religious freedom and affirms that religious freedom is a fundamental right of every individual that should never be arbitrarily abridged by any government;

(2) condemns the persecution of Christians around the world;

(3) calls on discriminatory countries to cease their persecution of Christians and religious minorities and combat religious persecution carried out by extremist non-state actors; and

(4) urges the President and the heads of the governments of all countries around the world to uphold the right to religious freedom and condemn the global persecution of Christians and other religious minorities.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from

California (Mr. ROYCE) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE of California. 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 in the RECORD on this measure.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, let me begin here by thanking the gentleman from Wisconsin, Representative GLENN GROTHMAN, for his work on this resolution.

As many in our country are preparing to celebrate this season of peace and joy, thousands of Christian believers around the world are marking the holiday in a much more somber way. They are marking this holiday under a threat of persecution and under a threat of violence.

Pope Francis has said: "When we read the history of the first centuries, we read of so much cruelty toward Christians. I tell you: There is the same cruelty today, and to a greater extent."

Those were his words.

According to research, Christians today are more targeted for attack than any other body of believers.

While about 30 percent of the world's population identifies as Christian, 80 percent of all reported acts of religious persecution right now are directed at Christians. Open Doors charity reports that, each month, around the world, 300 Christians are murdered—this would be for their faith—and more than 200 churches and properties are destroyed. This is each month.

Over 770 acts of violence are committed against Christians, including beatings, abductions, rapes, arrests, and forced marriages.

For example, across the Middle East there are historic Christian communities that are only one or two generations away from extinction. These were the indigenous people to this region. In Iraq, there are now fewer than 250,000 Christians remaining of a community that once had more than 1.4 million believers.

Last Congress, the House took the lead in declaring the violence against Christians committed by ISIS in Iraq and Syria as genocide. Since then, Congress has pushed hard to make sure that these vulnerable communities are protected and receive the assistance that they need.

I have visited these communities up in northern Iraq, and I can attest to the amount of persecution that they have been through.

Of course, our brave men and women in uniform deserve our praise for lead-

ing the fight to destroy ISIS, the so-called caliphate, allowing for the safe return of Christians and other religious minorities in the region.

We are blessed to live in this country free to enjoy our religious festivals in peace and security. We must not turn a blind eye to the atrocities happening elsewhere in the world.

With passage of this measure, we acknowledge the disturbing rise in persecution of Christians around this globe and recommit our Nation to support the religious freedom of all people.

We also call on other world leaders to end persecution of Christians and other religious minorities that are also persecuted at the national, local government, and community level. This includes persecution, of course, by violent non-state actors like terrorist groups Boko Haram and ISIS.

With this call to action, we work to advance our Nation's historic goal to promote "peace on Earth and goodwill toward men."

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this measure. I want to thank Mr. GROTHMAN from Wisconsin for authoring this resolution. I also thank my good friend and the chairman of the Foreign Affairs Committee, ED ROYCE, for his leadership as always.

Mr. Speaker, freedom of worship is a basic human right, yet we see religious minorities all over the world subjected to persecution and violence.

In Iraq and Syria, ISIS has forced Christians in Mosul to convert to Islam, to pay a protection tax, and to flee or face execution. ISIS has carried out genocide against the Yazidis, the Christians, and the Shias. In Europe, we see synagogues fire-bombed and a surge of anti-Semitism across the continent. In Burma, we see government security forces engaged in ethnic cleansing against the Rohingya.

□ 1530

Freedom of religion has been a bedrock principle of open and democratic societies for centuries. It is enshrined in our founding documents, in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, and in charters of democracies all over the world.

The freedom to worship as a person chooses or not to worship at all is a broad right that should not be restrained by a government or a fanatical group. Religious persecution holds societies back, undercuts progress, and is usually associated with a much broader assault on basic human rights.

Here in the United States, we must make it clear that it is not enough to just guarantee religious liberty to our own people. We must speak out and act when we see this freedom, this liberty, and any other freedom under attack anywhere and hold accountable those responsible for human rights abuses.

In places like China, we see freedom of speech under attack. In Chechnya,

we see LGBT individuals targeted, tortured, and executed by Putin's cronies just for whom they love. We see women's reproductive rights under attack.

We must also speak out against attacks on our press, on our right to organize, on equality for LGBT persons, and on women's right to control their own bodies. This legislation helps us send a clear message that protecting all human rights is a priority for the United States.

Finally, Mr. Speaker, we all know that America's first immigrants came here because they were fleeing religious persecution in their home countries. It would be hypocritical of us to condemn current-day religious persecution around the world and then to slam our doors shut in the face of those trying to flee such persecution. America must remain a place where those facing persecution or death can find refuge.

Mr. Speaker, I support this measure and urge my colleagues to do the same, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 5 minutes to the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. GROTHMAN), the author of this resolution.

Mr. GROTHMAN. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of my resolution, H. Res. 407, condemning the persecution of Christians around the world.

The persecution of Christians is a global human rights problem that Congress needs to address. According to Open Doors' 2017 World Watch List, approximately 1 in 12 Christians around the world is experiencing persecution for their faith.

North Korea, which is one of the world's most repressive regimes, is a serious violator of international religious Christian rights, which is not surprising, given it is a communist country. Communist countries throughout history have done what they can to suppress and destroy Christians.

Human rights groups have reported that members of underground churches in North Korea have been arrested, beaten, tortured, or killed.

In another communist country, China, religious groups, including Christians, are required to register with the government. Those that do not face imprisonment and torture.

In 2016, 232 Protestants were imprisoned for their religious activities. As part of the country's anti-cross campaign, some 2,000 crosses and buildings have been demolished since 2014, according to State Department estimates.

In the Middle East, the Islamic State and other jihadist militant groups have forced Christians in Iraq, Syria, Libya, and other countries in the region to flee or risk enslavement, execution, or death. Since the U.S. invasion of Iraq in 2003, the number of Christians in Iraq has plunged from 1.5 million to just a couple hundred thousand.

In Libya, ISIS and other extremist groups have gained a stronghold in the country since the fall of Qadhafi.

I reluctantly have to point out that the Christian persecution going on in Libya and Iraq has happened after the United States decided to get involved in these countries, so we have a special responsibility to look out for the Christians there.

In Egypt, ISIS claimed responsibility for killing over 70 Coptic Christians earlier this year.

The persecution of Christians in the Middle East doesn't end with terrorists. It is institutional, as well.

Pakistan has some of the most extreme blasphemy laws in the world. In June of 2016, two Christians received death sentences for blasphemy convictions.

In Iran, approximately 200 Christians were arrested last year. At least 90 remain in illegal detention.

Acts of persecution against Christians across the globe is a violation of international law, which is why Congress must act.

Sadly, in our own country, the United States, sometimes Christians can be forced to participate in ceremonies with which they don't agree. It is kind of hard to believe that this is going on in the United States of America.

H. Res. 407 will condemn the persecution of Christians around the world. It calls for all discriminatory countries and groups to cease their persecution of religious minorities and urge world leaders to uphold the universal human right to religious freedom.

I encourage all of my colleagues to support this bipartisan resolution.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY).

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend and colleague for yielding and for his incredible leadership as the ranking member on this important committee. I also thank Chairman ROYCE for his work on this issue, bringing the bill to the floor, and truly being a visionary legislator in shining a spotlight on the systematic persecution of Christians around the world. It is frightening, it is wrong, and we need to do everything we can to stop it.

Freedom of religion is a core American principle and a key component for peace and stability around the world. There are too many examples of Christian persecution. Congress must clearly condemn those atrocities.

As cofounder and co-chair of the Hellenic Caucus, I have long advocated for reforms in Turkey to respect the rights of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and reopen the Halki seminary.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The time of the gentlewoman has expired.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield the gentlewoman an additional 1 minute.

Mrs. CAROLYN B. MALONEY of New York. Boko Haram has wreaked havoc in Nigeria, killing innocent Christians and Muslims alike.

Coptic Christians in Egypt and elsewhere face the constant threat of vio-

lence, and we have seen some tragedies for this community just in the past year. The number of Coptic Christians that have been killed is truly astounding. They have laws now that, if a wall falls or any church needs repair, you cannot even repair the church.

These are just a few examples of spots around the world where Christian persecution is rampant.

Persecution against Christians and other religious minorities around the world is a security crisis, and the United States Government must remain vigilant in monitoring and response. It should be a unanimous vote in support of this important resolution.

I thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle for bringing this to the attention of Congress and, hopefully, the world.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, protecting human rights has been and must remain a cornerstone of our foreign policy. Around the world, we see religious liberties under siege in places like Iraq, Syria, Burma, and certainly in Iran. But we also see threats to free press, rights to organize, persecution for sexual orientation, and even reproductive rights in places like China, Chechnya, and other places as well. So we must send a clear message to the world that the United States does not and will not stand idly by, and helping pass this measure helps us to say just that.

I want to thank Chairman ROYCE, as always, for his cooperation. This is strong, important, bipartisan legislation, and we should pass it unanimously.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me supporting H. Res. 407, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

Mr. Speaker, I also want to thank Mr. ENGEL for his leadership in bringing these issues to the floor and, certainly, our colleague, the cosponsor of this resolution, CAROLYN MALONEY. I thank, again, Congressman GLENN GROTHMAN for authoring this important resolution here.

Christians around the world are being assaulted, raped, tortured, and murdered. Believers in North Korea, for example, have "disappeared" by the hundreds. They are hidden away in labor camps for decades. Many of them are worked to death, as you know by the conditions in those camps. The reason they are there is they attempted to practice their faith: Christianity.

We know that, at the hands of ISIS, brutal atrocities have risen to the level of genocide. Wherever ISIS goes, you see the consequence in the terror that is visited upon Christians, Yazidis, Jews, and other races.

In terms of the positioning that ISIS had in the Middle East, they had ready access to the Christian communities.

Having visited those Christian communities in the aftermath of those attacks as they escaped into the Kurdish regions, it was absolutely heart-wrenching to hear the accounts of the survivors about what had happened among the Christians and Yazidis.

These are just a few of the examples of the persecution against Christians that is happening around the world.

I urge my colleagues to join me in this call to world leaders to work to stop the global persecution of Christians.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 407 condemning the persecution of Christians around the world, as amended.

I am proud to stand shoulder to shoulder with all those who have been persecuted for their religious views and remain committed to fighting with you as we embark on the journey of promoting freedom of conscience, speech, association, religion, and all other freedoms that are inalienable to all humankind.

As a Member of the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission, I continue to work with my colleagues in a bipartisan manner in order to amplify the important work of upholding religious freedom, facilitating human dignity, and protecting human rights.

As a Member of Congress, one of our charges is to understand how to improve religious freedom and diplomacy across the globe and here at home.

A good measure for this congressional call of fostering religious freedom and diplomacy is H. Res. 407 that calls on:

(1) discriminatory regimes to cease their persecution of not only Christians but all religious minorities, and

(2) the President and heads of the governments of all democratic countries to uphold the right to religious freedom and condemn the persecution of Christians and minorities.

This resolution highlights the United States foreign policy commitment to the protection and promotion of religious freedom across the globe from Indonesia, to Pakistan to Nigeria to China to name a few.

The persecution of religious minorities is a global problem, occurring in countries across the Middle East, Africa, Asia, and the Americas.

Christians, for example, face persecution not only from Islamic extremist groups, like the Islamic State and Boko Haram, but also from other religious extremist groups and from officials at all levels of certain foreign government.

Such persecution of religious minorities ranges from social harassment and discrimination to physical violence, imprisonment, torture, enslavement, rape, and death.

Over 200 million Christians experience persecution across the globe, the majority of those are found in the Middle East. But it is important to note that Christianity is not a Western imposition on historically Islamic countries in the Middle East.

The Middle East has been a home to Christians since the first century A.D., but unfortunately the Christian population in the Middle East has significantly decreased over the past few decades as a result of persecution, displacement, and genocide.

Not only Christian lives, but also Christian holy sites have been destroyed by the Islamic State.

And not only Christians, but anyone who opposed their ruthless war on peace.

In many places, Christians must practice their faith in secrecy because churches are not allowed, and makeshift churches in homes are raided.

A loud example of this persecution is aimed at the Coptic Christians in Egypt that have faced persecution for over 50 years, and on April 9, 2017, Palm Sunday, 44 people were killed in bomb attacks by the Islamic State on Coptic churches.

The Islamic State has claimed responsibility for the attack on a bus on May 26, 2017, in which 29 Coptic Christians were killed while traveling to a monastery in Minya, Egypt;

This important resolution describes numerous instances where Christians have been attacked by terrorist groups, groups that hide behind religion as a pretext to destroy minority groups and to recklessly and harmfully seek power.

Religious minority persecution has been on the rise in Asia, primarily due to religious nationalism.

Recently, in Bangladesh, hundreds of Christians are being forced off their property, and legal action rarely results in the favor of a Christian party.

In Burma/Myanmar, since late August 2017, more than 645 thousand ethnic Rohingya have fled a campaign of ethnic cleansing by Burma's security forces and sought asylum in Bangladesh.

The Rohingya massacre is another example of religious minority persecution, overlooked and disregarded by a government that, as some may surmise, values power over people.

Not surprisingly, Christians and other dissidents of the government in North Korea are forced into harsh labor camps, where approximately 70,000 Christians are imprisoned in 2017.

All that is to say that religious discrimination is a global human rights problem and the right to religious freedom is a universal right recognized by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

In the 114th Congress, I introduced and continue to support legislation by my colleagues that seek to protect religious freedom and democracy which are the very bedrock of the United States Constitution.

Fighting for human rights across the globe is one of my passions and I have sought to promote and protect religious freedom such as H. Res. 290, a resolution I introduced in the last Congress condemning blasphemy laws that serve as a pretext to persecute religious minorities; that resolution was co-sponsored by our former colleague, Joseph Pitts of Pennsylvania.

Within the context of H. Res. 407 and other legislation addressing human rights, some of the issues we continue to grapple with include:

Expanding the Country of Particular Concern (CPC) list to include more countries who have not improved in their treatment of religious minorities or upholding religious freedoms;

The need for an Annual Countries of Particular Concerns Designations;

Double hatting of sanctions and indefinite waivers;

The need to designate non-state actors as violators of religious freedom;

Prosecuting Islamic state militants; and

The need to have a high functioning Department of State with appropriate leadership for both senior and junior staff, and sufficient funding.

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 agree to the resolution, H. Res. 407, 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.

REAFFIRMING A STRONG COMMITMENT TO THE UNITED STATES-MEXICO PARTNERSHIP

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 336) reaffirming a strong commitment to the United States-Mexico partnership.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 336

Whereas shared cultural ties, values, and beliefs connect the citizens of the United States and Mexico and have long been the foundation from which the friendly, bilateral relationship has flourished;

Whereas the United States and Mexico have benefited from a bilateral, mutually beneficial partnership focused on advancing the economic and security interests of both countries;

Whereas it is in the national interests of the United States and Mexico to continue deepening economic cooperation and security cooperation;

Whereas consecutive United States and Mexican administrations have increased bilateral defense and law enforcement cooperation on counterterrorism and counter-narcotics issues, including the illicit trafficking of weapons, money, people, and drugs across the United States southern border;

Whereas cooperation with Mexico during the administration of President Peña Nieto has led to the extradition of more than 270 individuals facing criminal charges in the United States;

Whereas, the January 19, 2017, extradition of drug kingpin Joaquin "El Chapo" Guzman to New York was a major victory for both countries that would not have been possible without a robust United States-Mexico security partnership;

Whereas the Mérida Initiative was established in 2007 and enabled a new level of security cooperation between the United States and Mexico on a range of issues including efforts to combat transnational organized crime and promote justice reform;

Whereas the United States and Mexico have begun cooperation to address the trafficking and production of heroin and fentanyl threatening the lives of citizens in both countries;

Whereas the United States has provided almost \$2.8 billion in security assistance to Mexico through the Mérida Initiative between fiscal year 2008 and fiscal year 2017;

Whereas the United States and Mexico enjoy close diplomatic cooperation and Mexico has consistently voted with the United States at the United Nations on challenges related to Syria, North Korea, and Ukraine;

Whereas the United States and Mexico have closely collaborated at the Organization of American States (OAS) on issues related to Venezuela, where Mexico has played a leading role;

Whereas Mexico is an important security and defense partner to the United States, and regularly participates in training activities in coordination with United States Northern Command (NORTHCOM) and the North American Aerospace Defense Command (NORAD); and

Whereas the United States and Mexico launched the High Level Economic Dialogue on September 20, 2013, to help advance United States-Mexico economic and commercial priorities to promote mutual economic growth, job creation, educational exchanges and innovation, and global competitiveness: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) reaffirms its strong commitment to a United States-Mexico partnership based on mutual respect and the promotion of shared democratic values and principles;

(2) supports continued bilateral cooperation through the High Level Economic Dialogue on issues related to the economic well-being and security of both countries;

(3) encourages continued security cooperation between the United States and Mexican law enforcement agencies and militaries, including on violence reduction in Mexico, counterterrorism and the increased trafficking of heroin and fentanyl;

(4) supports continued engagement with Mexico to tackle regional issues and work together in international fora, including the United Nations and the Organization of American States; and

(5) supports efforts by the Government of Mexico to strengthen the rule of law, reduce corruption, and advance civil and human rights.

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

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from California.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and to include any extraneous material in the RECORD.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, Mr. ENGEL. This is his bill. Let me also say that the chairman of the Homeland Security Committee, MIKE MCCAUL, who was his primary cosponsor for this, has worked hard on this resolution. It represents a broad, bipartisan acknowledgment of the importance of the relationship between the United States of America and the country of Mexico.

The United States and Mexico share strong ties. Passage of this resolution will signal this body's commitment to strengthening our bilateral relationship with Mexico, a relationship that impacts Americans on a daily basis.