

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

In closing, I would like to thank Ranking Member ENGEL and Representative KINZINGER for their exceptional work on this important bill. This bill will keep taxpayer dollars out of the hands of a murderous regime and its proxies.

Time and again, Mr. ELIOT ENGEL has been this body's conscience on the issue of Syria. We have acted many times, passing the Caesar Syria Civilian Protection Act twice; adopting H. Con. Res. 121, which expressed the sense of the Congress supporting the establishment of a tribunal in Syria to try Assad's war crimes, another measure we had passed.

While we have made important progress in the military campaign against ISIS, there is no end in sight to the misery inflicted on the people of Syria by Assad and his proxies. Now is not the time to turn away. As we engage, we cannot allow U.S. taxpayer money to reward war crimes.

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

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H.R. 4681, the No Assistance for Assad Act, introduced by my good friend Rep. ENGEL, the Ranking Member of our committee. I commend Rep. ENGEL and Rep. KINZINGER for advancing this important measure in a bipartisan manner to demonstrate the broad agreement in this House that Syrian President Bashar al-Assad has no future as the legitimate leader of the Syrian people.

Mr. Speaker, this bill would effectively block most categories of U.S. assistance to areas of Syria controlled by the Assad regime unless it is delivered through trusted local partners or serves basic humanitarian needs. In creating strict conditions for the provisions of U.S. assistance to regime-controlled areas, this bill ensures that the United States will not help those responsible for destroying Syria to profit from rebuilding it.

Mr. Speaker, the Syrian regime, Russia, and Iran have played both arsonist and firefighter in Syria's devastating civil war—and now they want to play the role of predatory developer, sopping up reconstruction contracts to pad their pockets and further determine Syria's future in line with their narrow political agendas.

Mr. Speaker, Assad long ago surrendered his last shred of legitimacy as president of Syria. His regime's horrific chemical attack this month in Douma placed this fact once again in high relief. The Trump Administration was right to respond decisively to this barbaric attack with targeted strikes to punish and deter such atrocities perpetrated with chemical weapons.

Mr. Speaker, I have long advocated concrete steps that would ensure the Assad regime, jihadi groups, and others responsible for mass atrocities in Syria face justice for their crimes. This bill rightly insists on the removal of war criminals from the Syrian government as one condition among many for releasing U.S. aid to the regime.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this timely and important measure.

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. 4681, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

#### SUPPORTING EFFORTS TO BRING THE 2026 FIFA WORLD CUP COMPETITION TO CANADA, MEXICO, AND THE UNITED STATES

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 111) recognizing and supporting the efforts of the United Bid Committee to bring the 2026 Federation Internationale de Football Association (FIFA) World Cup competition to Canada, Mexico, and the United States, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

#### H. CON. RES. 111

Whereas soccer is one of the fastest growing and most popular sports in the world and the FIFA World Cup competition is the single most important event in that sport;

Whereas the United States successfully hosted in 9 cities throughout the Nation the 1994 FIFA World Cup competition, which was broadcast to billions of fans around the world and set an attendance record of nearly 3,600,000, which remains unbroken today;

Whereas the 1994 FIFA World Cup competition served as a catalyst for the increased popularity and development of the game throughout the United States, as well as the introduction of Major League Soccer, the United States national first division professional soccer league;

Whereas United States Soccer Federation and its counterparts in Canada and Mexico have established a United Bid Committee to prepare and submit an unprecedented joint bid to host the 2026 FIFA World Cup competition in North America;

Whereas Canada, the United States, and Mexico share core beliefs in justice, freedom, equality, and opportunity, and have a long history of partnership, innovation, and growth together on our shared continent;

Whereas for the first time in history the 2026 FIFA World Cup will include teams from 48 nations and presents an opportunity for Canada, Mexico, and the United States as host countries to demonstrate the highest achievable standards and serve as a benchmark for future organizers;

Whereas North America is home to one of the most competitive and advanced professional sports landscapes in the world that is continually updating to take advantage of the latest innovations and modernizations;

Whereas numerous American cities have been named by the United Bid Committee as candidates to serve as hosts to FIFA World Cup matches in 2026, with each of these cities embodying the diversity and enthusiasm shared by the entire Nation and guaranteeing each participating team and its followers a "home team" atmosphere;

Whereas the United States and its neighbors offer FIFA a valuable and receptive

market within which to further develop the sport of soccer, which in turn will have significant impact on and off the field in both the United States and throughout the world;

Whereas the United States possesses all necessary state-of-the-art infrastructure in its stadiums and potential host cities to ensure that the competition sets a new standard of quality, comfort, security, and safety for players, officials, spectators, media, and sponsors alike;

Whereas hosting the 2026 FIFA World Cup in Canada, Mexico, and the United States promises record-setting attendance and financial performance, allowing revenues and tourism generated by the competition to be used for the further development of soccer, FIFA's objectives of positive social and environmental change, and further economic growth throughout our Nation;

Whereas hosting the 2026 FIFA World Cup competition in Canada, Mexico, and the United States would serve as a tremendous impetus to national and international goodwill, as the competition would bring people from many nations, along with a diverse public, together under one banner of peace, friendship, and spirited and fair competition;

Whereas the historical tradition of inclusivity in the United States is shared by Canada and Mexico and the three countries are eager to welcome the players, spectators, and visitors who may travel to North America for the 2026 FIFA World Cup games; and

Whereas pursuant to FIFA bidding procedures, the President of the United States and certain Federal agencies have been asked to issue guarantees that upon authorization or appropriation, would establish the conditions required to help make the 2026 FIFA World Cup competition the most successful in history: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That the Congress—*

(1) recognizes and supports the efforts of the United Bid Committee to bring the 2026 FIFA World Cup competition to Canada, Mexico, and the United States;

(2) encourages the President of the United States and appropriate Federal agencies to support the United Bid Committee in its efforts to meet all requirements for the United States to jointly host with Canada and Mexico the 2026 FIFA World Cup competition; and

(3) stands prepared to give full consideration to legislative proposals or other requests by the President to provide support related to the 2026 FIFA World Cup competition, if Canada, Mexico, and the United States are selected to host this event.

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 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, I want to thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD).

I thank him for introducing a resolution which expresses the broad bipartisan agreement that the United States supports the United Bid Committee's effort to jointly host the 2026 FIFA World Cup competition.

Soccer is one of the most popular sports in the world, and the World Cup is its most important competition. Hosting the tournament would be a win for the United States and for our neighbors in Canada and Mexico as well.

The United States has not hosted a FIFA World Cup since 1994, but 24 years later, we still hold the all-time attendance record. Over 3½ million people attended those matches. I remember. I was there in the stands for the games in L.A. The economic revenue generated by the 1994 tournament generated more than double what was expected.

The 2026 tournament is expected to break revenue and attendance records. FIFA has already announced that it will be the first time in tournament history that 48 teams, instead of 32, are going to compete in the World Cup. The addition of more teams will mean more economic opportunities for American cities such as Los Angeles and San Francisco to host and entertain visitors from around the country and around the world.

The FIFA World Cup, much like the Olympics, has a long tradition of bringing countries together in a competitive but peaceful environment.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this measure.

First, let me thank Congressman LAHOOD for authoring this bipartisan resolution and Chairman ROYCE for bringing it to the floor.

With this resolution, we send a strong message of support for the efforts of the United Bid Committee to bring the FIFA World Cup competition to the United States, Mexico, and Canada.

We share critical relationships with our neighbors to the north and south, and it is important that we keep those good relationships. So I am pleased that Congress continues to push back on anything that would hurt the relationship.

Last year, the House passed my resolution with Congressman MCCAUL reaffirming the importance of the U.S.-Mexico partnership, as well as a resolution from Congressman JEFF DUNCAN on the U.S.-Canada alliance. The 2026 FIFA World Cup provides another key opportunity for us to reinforce our strong alliances with both Mexico and Canada.

The United States has hosted the World Cup three times: the men's tournament in 1994, and the women's World Cup in both 1999 and 2003. We have the infrastructure. We know how to prepare. We have 25 American cities eligi-

ble to host. Bringing the world's most popular tournament back to North America would generate increased tourist revenue for host sites as fans arrive from all over the world.

Congress should not only pass this resolution, but Congress should also continue to provide support for the United Bid Committee and its efforts in our own conversations with foreign leaders and other stakeholders.

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

Mr. ROYCE of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD), the author of this resolution.

Mr. LAHOOD. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank Chairman ROYCE for yielding.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 111, recognizing and supporting the efforts of the United Bid Committee to bring the 2026 FIFA World Cup soccer competition to the United States, Canada, and Mexico.

This bipartisan resolution, introduced by the co-chairs of the Congressional Soccer Caucus—myself, Congresswoman CASTOR, Congressman BACON, Congressman KIHUEN—conveys our strong support for this united North American bid to host the 2026 World Cup as well as voicing our overall support for soccer at the global level.

When the U.S. last hosted the 1994 FIFA World Cup competition, it served as a catalyst for the increased popularity and development of soccer across America and the introduction of Major League Soccer, which is thriving today.

Since the games in 1994, soccer has become one of the fastest growing sports in the United States, promoting a competitive and a healthy and active lifestyle, teamwork, and sportsmanship to over 24 million Americans of all ages in every State. This includes the 20 percent of American children under the age of 12 who currently play soccer.

As the father to three young soccer players and the Representative of a district which includes eight college soccer programs, I recognize the value that soccer has for families and communities. Additionally, in my home State of Illinois, we are proud to be the home of the U.S. Soccer Federation and the Chicago Fire, one of Major League Soccer's original soccer clubs.

By uniting players and fans from different nations under one banner of friendship and fair competition, it is our hope that hosting the 2026 competition would promote and further the positive impact of soccer here and abroad.

As the consideration of the 2026 location by FIFA continues, support from Congress will help demonstrate that our government is equally enthusiastic for North America's three largest nations to host one of the world's pre-eminent sporting events, which is soccer.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleagues who have supported this effort,

including Chairman ROYCE, who has been a strong advocate for this resolution, and also my colleagues on the U.S. Congressional Soccer Caucus.

Mr. Speaker, I urge passage of H. Con. Res. 111.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. CASTOR), an original cosponsor of this resolution, but even more importantly, co-chair of the Congressional Soccer Caucus.

Ms. CASTOR of Florida. Mr. Speaker, the United States of America and our North American neighbors of Canada and Mexico have a wonderful opportunity to host the 2026 FIFA World Cup soccer tournament. This is a combined North American bid.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague, Representative LAHOOD, and Chairman ROYCE and Ranking Member ENGEL for their support of this resolution, and I also commend my colleagues, Congressman BACON and Congressman KIHUEN, who also co-chair the Congressional Soccer Caucus.

The United States last hosted the World Cup in 1994. We had nine cities. The attendance was over 3½ million. We think now for 2026 it is going to be bigger and better than ever because we are going to combine efforts with our North American neighbors of Canada and Mexico, where they will also host many of the tournament matches.

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Mr. Speaker, I noticed that Mr. WEBSTER was on the floor, along with Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN and Mr. DEUTCH, and they should be proud to know that Orlando and Miami, from our home State of Florida, will be participating, and we love soccer in the Sunshine State.

But I also offer my strong support for this resolution because of the inspiration that the World Cup soccer tournament provides to young people all across this country. It is like the Olympics. It encourages them to be healthy and well, to participate in team supports and athletics. It exposes and encourages children and young people to be good sports and understand what a world competition means in a friendly way.

Studies show that team sports lead to healthier lifestyles, increased knowledge about exercise and nutrition, positive gains in reading and math; and that is why the Congressional Soccer Caucus works with the U.S. Soccer Foundation because they really provide the national model for programs about "the beautiful game," and they make so many helpful investments in communities across the country to encourage kids to get out, be active, and learn about great sportsmanship.

So here is this resolution. We are coming together in a bipartisan way, to recognize the effort, to support it, to make sure that Americans everywhere know that we expect the men's team to live up to their expectations. The women's team, national team, of course,

has been champion after champion after champion. It is time, also, for the men's team and this generation to try to meet their goals.

We would like to encourage everyone to pay attention, support the effort.

Again, I thank my colleague, Mr. LAHOOD, Chairman ROYCE, Ranking Member ENGEL; and I urge the House to kick this resolution towards passage so that we can meet our goals.

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

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

The ties between the United States, Mexico, and Canada are longstanding and deep; and I am pleased that the United States can continue to come together in partnership with our friends from both of those countries on the United Bid Committee to try to bring the 2026 World Cup to North America.

I stand ready to support the North American bid in any way that I can. It would really be terrific to get it, and I know we all feel the same way.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to support this resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

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

In closing, I would like to, once again, thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. LAHOOD), and I also thank the 40 cosponsors who have been pushing this important, bipartisan resolution. By passing this resolution, we show our support for the efforts of the United Bid Committee to bring the excitement of the World Cup tournament to the United States once again, for the first time since 1994.

Mr. Speaker, I urge unanimous support for this measure, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. POE of Texas). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 111, 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. ROYCE 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, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

#### AMERICAN SPACE COMMERCE FREE ENTERPRISE ACT

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 2809) to amend title 51, United States Code, to provide for the authorization and supervision of nongovernmental space activities, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 2809

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

#### SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE; TABLE OF CONTENTS.

(a) SHORT TITLE.—This Act may be cited as the “American Space Commerce Free Enterprise Act”.

(b) TABLE OF CONTENTS.—The table of contents is as follows:

Sec. 1. Short title; table of contents.

Sec. 2. Findings; policy; purposes.

Sec. 3. Certification to operate space objects.

Sec. 4. Permitting of space-based remote sensing systems.

Sec. 5. Administrative provisions related to certification and permitting.

Sec. 6. Technical and conforming amendments.

Sec. 7. Office of Space Commerce.

Sec. 8. Restriction on preventing launches and reentries of certified space objects.

Sec. 9. Report on registration of space objects.

Sec. 10. Comptroller General report.

Sec. 11. Radiofrequency mapping report.

#### SEC. 2. FINDINGS; POLICY; PURPOSES.

(a) FINDINGS.—Congress finds the following:

(1) The United States, through existing authorization and supervision mechanisms, satisfies and is in conformity with its obligation under the Outer Space Treaty to authorize and supervise nongovernmental space activities to assure such activities are carried out in conformity with the international obligations of the United States under the Outer Space Treaty.

(2) The United States has a robust and innovative private sector that is investing in, developing, and placing into outer space, spacecraft and payloads.

(3) Authorization and supervision mechanisms as of the date of enactment of this Act could be improved to relieve administrative burdens on new and innovative nongovernmental space actors.

(4) It serves the national interest to address misperceptions of legal uncertainty through the establishment of a general authorization and supervision certification authority for nongovernmental outer space activities.

(5) The private exploration and use of outer space by nongovernmental entities will further the national security, foreign policy, and economic interests of the United States.

(b) POLICY.—It is the policy of the United States that—

(1) United States citizens and entities are free to explore and use space, including the utilization of outer space and resources contained therein, without conditions or limitations;

(2) this freedom is only to be limited when necessary to assure United States national security interests are met and to authorize and supervise nongovernmental space activities to assure such activities are carried out in conformity with the international obligations of the United States under the Outer Space Treaty;

(3) to the maximum extent practicable, the Federal Government shall interpret and fulfill its international obligations to minimize regulations and limitations on the freedom of United States nongovernmental entities to explore and use space;

(4) to the maximum extent practicable, the Federal Government shall take steps to protect the physical safety of space objects operated by the United States that do not involve limitations on the freedoms of non-

governmental entities of the United States; and

(5) nongovernmental activities in outer space shall only be authorized and supervised in a transparent, timely, and predictable manner, with minimal costs and burdens placed on the entities authorized and supervised.

(c) PURPOSES.—The purposes of this Act and the amendments made by this Act are—

(1) to enhance the existing outer space authorization and supervision framework to provide greater transparency, greater efficiency, and less administrative burden for nongovernmental entities of the United States seeking to conduct space activities; and

(2) to ensure that the United States remains the world leader in commercial space activities.

(d) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act—

(1) the term “Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts and the Return of Space Objects” means the Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts, the Return of Astronauts and the Return of Objects Launched into Outer Space (signed at Washington, Moscow, and London on April 22, 1968, ratified by the United States on December 3, 1968; 19 UST 7570);

(2) the term “Convention on Registration of Space Objects” means the Convention on Registration of Objects Launched into Outer Space (signed at New York on January 14, 1975, ratified by the United States on September 15, 1976; 28 UST 695);

(3) the term “covered treaties on outer space” means—

(A) the Outer Space Treaty;

(B) the Agreement on the Rescue of Astronauts and the Return of Space Objects;

(C) the Convention on Registration of Space Objects; and

(D) the Liability Convention;

(4) the term “Liability Convention” means the Convention on the International Liability for Damage Caused by Space Objects (signed at Washington, Moscow, and London on March 29, 1972, ratified by the United States on October 9, 1973; 24 UST 2389); and

(5) the term “Outer Space Treaty” means the Treaty on Principles Governing the Activities of States in the Exploration and Use of Outer Space, including the Moon and Other Celestial Bodies (signed at Washington, Moscow, and London on January 27, 1967, ratified by the United States on October 10, 1967; 18 UST 2410).

#### SEC. 3. CERTIFICATION TO OPERATE SPACE OBJECTS.

Title 51, United States Code, is amended by adding at the end the following:

“**Subtitle VIII—Authorization and Supervision of Nongovernmental Space Activities**

##### “CHAPTER 801—CERTIFICATION TO OPERATE SPACE OBJECTS

“Sec.

“80101. Definitions.

“80102. Certification authority.

“80103. Certification application and requirements.

“80104. Mitigation of space debris.

“80105. Continuing certification requirements.

“80106. Certification transfer.

“80107. Certification expiration and termination.

“80108. Existing license or pending application for launch or reentry.

“80109. Private Space Activity Advisory Committee.

“80110. Exemptions.

“80111. Protecting the interests of United States entity space objects.

##### “§ 80101. Definitions

“In this subtitle: