

(b) EFFECTIVE DATE.—The amendment made by subsection (a) shall take effect on October 1, 2019.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 13—CALLING UPON THE PRESIDENT TO ISSUE A PROCLAMATION RECOGNIZING THE ABIDING IMPORTANCE OF THE HELSINKI FINAL ACT AND ITS RELEVANCE TO THE NATIONAL SECURITY OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. WICKER (for himself, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. RUBIO, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. BOOZMAN, Mr. GARDNER, and Mr. UDALL) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. CON. RES. 13

Whereas the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe (CSCE) concluded on August 1, 1975 (in this joint resolution referred to as the “Helsinki Final Act”), established a comprehensive concept of security that encompasses political-military, environmental and economic, and human rights and humanitarian dimensions;

Whereas the Helsinki Final Act set out a declaration of ten fundamental Principles Guiding Relations Between States, which all participating States committed to respect and put into practice in their relations with each other, that have been the basis of the international order in the OSCE Region since its inception in 1975;

Whereas these Principles, adopted on the basis of consensus by all participating States and reaffirmed through the years, enshrine—

- (1) sovereign equality, respect for the rights inherent in sovereignty;
- (2) refraining from the threat or use of force;
- (3) inviolability of frontiers;
- (4) territorial integrity of States;
- (5) peaceful settlement of disputes;
- (6) non-intervention in internal affairs;
- (7) respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion or belief;
- (8) equal rights and self-determination of peoples;
- (9) cooperation among States; and
- (10) fulfillment in good faith of obligations under international law;

Whereas the Helsinki Final Act, for the first time in the history of international agreements, recognized that respect for, and implementation of, commitments to human rights and fundamental freedoms are integral to stability and security within and among nations;

Whereas, in the 1990 Charter of Paris for a New Europe, the participating States declared, “Human rights and fundamental freedoms are the birthright of all human beings, are inalienable and are guaranteed by law. Their protection and promotion is the first responsibility of government,” and committed themselves “to build, consolidate and strengthen democracy as the only system of government of our nations”;

Whereas, in 1991, participating States met in Moscow and unanimously agreed that “issues relating to human rights, fundamental freedoms, democracy and the rule of law are of international concern, as respect for these rights and freedoms constitutes one of the foundations of international order;”

and declared “categorically and irrevocably. . . that the commitments undertaken in the field of the human dimension of the CSCE are matters of direct and legitimate concern to all participating States and do not belong exclusively to the internal affairs of the State concerned”;

Whereas the CSCE was renamed the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) in January 1995, reaffirming the continued relevance and applicability of previously made principles and provisions in a Europe no longer divided between East and West and as the number of participating States increased from the original 35 to 57 today;

Whereas the Helsinki Final Act, by making respect for human rights and implementation of commitments by participating States a permanent priority in the relations between States, provided an international foundation for the democratic aspirations of peoples throughout Europe and contributed to the peaceful end to the Cold War;

Whereas the seventh Principle confirmed the right of the individual to know and act upon his or her rights, which inspired citizens from the participating States to associate and assemble for the purposes of monitoring and encouraging compliance with the principles and provisions of the Helsinki Final Act and subsequent documents of the CSCE and OSCE;

Whereas, during the Communist era, members of nongovernmental organizations, such as the Helsinki Monitoring Groups in Russia, Ukraine, Georgia, and Armenia as well as in Lithuania, and similar groups in Czechoslovakia and Poland, sacrificed their personal freedom and even their lives in their courageous and vocal support for the principles enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act;

Whereas members of nongovernmental organizations, civil society, and independent media across the region covered by the OSCE continue to risk their safety to advance the principles enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act, often in the face of harassment and threats from their own governments who are OSCE participating States;

Whereas the United States Congress contributed to advancing the aims of the Helsinki Final Act by creating the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe to monitor and encourage compliance with its principles and provisions;

Whereas many countries continue to fall significantly short of implementing their OSCE commitments, particularly in the Human Dimension;

Whereas the Russian Federation is responsible for the clear, gross, and uncorrected violation of all ten Principles of the Helsinki Final Act;

Whereas, for many years, the Russian Federation has ignored its OSCE commitments related to the Human Dimension of comprehensive security by cracking down on civil society and independent media through harassment, intimidation, burdensome legal constraints, and violence, undermining the ability of its citizens to freely choose their leaders;

Whereas Russia’s internal repression is directly related to its external aggression, including in Ukraine, Georgia, and Syria;

Whereas the Government of the Russian Federation has interfered through information warfare and cyber-intrusions and otherwise engaged in deliberate and malicious efforts to undermine confidence in the democratic institutions and processes of other OSCE participating States;

Whereas the first Principle recognizes the right of each participating State “to be or not to be a party to bilateral or multilateral treaties including the right to be or not to be

a party to treaties of alliance; they also have the right to neutrality”;

Whereas the OSCE’s participating States bear primary responsibility for raising violations of the Helsinki Final Act and other OSCE documents;

Whereas successive United States Administrations since the Helsinki Final Act was signed in 1975 have made the Act’s Principles Guiding Relations Between States a basis for United States policy toward Europe and the OSCE region as a whole; and

Whereas Congress has strongly supported and encouraged the United States to encourage improved compliance with these Principles, including by raising its concerns about non-compliance in a direct and frank manner and continues to do so today: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That Congress calls upon the President to—

(1) issue a proclamation—

(A) reaffirming the United States’ commitment to the Guiding Principles of the Final Act of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe;

(B) reasserting the commitment of the United States to full implementation of the Helsinki Final Act, including respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, defense of the principles of liberty, and tolerance within societies, all of which are vital to the promotion of democracy;

(C) urging all participating States to fully implement their commitments under the Helsinki Final Act;

(D) calling upon all participating States to respect each other’s sovereign right to join alliances;

(E) condemning the clear, gross, and uncorrected violation of all ten core OSCE principles enshrined in the Helsinki Final Act by the Russian Federation with respect to other OSCE participating States, including Georgia, Moldova, and Ukraine; and

(F) condemning all other violations of the Helsinki Final Act and its fundamental Guiding Principles; and

(2) conveying to all signatory states of the Helsinki Final Act that respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, democratic principles, economic liberty, and the implementation of related commitments continue to be vital elements in promoting a new and lasting era of democracy, peace, and unity in the region covered by the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. MCCONNELL. Mr. President, I have 8 requests for committees to meet during today’s session of the Senate. They have the approval of the Majority and Minority leaders.

Pursuant to Rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committees are authorized to meet during today’s session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON ENVIRONMENT AND PUBLIC WORKS

The Committee on Environment and Public Works is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 26, 2017, at 10 a.m., in room 406 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building, to conduct a hearing entitled, “A Review of the Technical, Scientific, and Legal Basis of the WOTUS Rule.”

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN RELATIONS

The Committee on Foreign Relations is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 26, 2017, at 1:30 p.m., to hold a hearing entitled "Nominations."

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION, LABOR, AND PENSIONS

The Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions is authorized to meet in executive session during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 26, in between votes in SD-430.

COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY

The Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 26, 2017, at 10 a.m., in order to conduct a hearing entitled "Duplication, Waste, and Fraud in Federal Programs."

COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

The Committee on the Judiciary is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate, on April 26, 2017, at 10 a.m., in room SD-226 of the Dirksen Senate Office Building.

COMMITTEE ON SMALL BUSINESS

The Committee on Small Business and Entrepreneurship is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 26, 2017, at 10 a.m., in 428A Russell Senate Office Building to conduct a hearing entitled, "The Challenges and Opportunities of Running a Small Business in Rural America."

COMMITTEE ON INTELLIGENCE

The Senate Select Committee on Intelligence is authorized to meet during the session of the 115th Congress of the U.S. Senate on Wednesday, April 26, 2017 from 10 a.m. in room SD-106 of the

Dirksen Senate Office Building to hold a hearing entitled, "Nomination of Courtney Simmons Elwood to be General Counsel of the Central Intelligence Agency."

SUBCOMMITTEE ON SPACE, SCIENCE, & COMPETITIVENESS

The Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation is authorized to hold a meeting during the session of the Senate on Wednesday, April 26, 2017, at 10 a.m., in room 253 of the Russell Senate Office Building.

The Committee will hold Subcommittee Hearing on "Reopening the American Frontier: Reducing Regulatory Barriers and Expanding American Free Enterprise in Space."

KIDS TO PARKS DAY

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on the Judiciary be discharged from further consideration of S. Res. 123 and the Senate proceed to its immediate consideration.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The clerk will report the resolution by title.

The senior assistant legislative clerk read as follows:

A resolution (S. Res. 123) designating May 20, 2017, as "Kids to Parks Day."

There being no objection, the Senate proceeded to consider the resolution.

Mr. McCONNELL. I further ask unanimous consent that the resolution be agreed to, the preamble be agreed to, and the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table with no intervening action or debate.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

The resolution (S. Res. 123) was agreed to.

The preamble was agreed to.

(The resolution, with its preamble, is printed in the RECORD of April 7, 2017, under "Submitted Resolutions.")

ORDERS FOR THURSDAY,
APRIL 27, 2017

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it adjourn until 10 a.m., Thursday, April 27; further, that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; further, that following leader remarks, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Acosta nomination; finally, that all time during recess, adjournment, morning business, and leader remarks count postcloture on the Acosta nomination.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Is there objection?

Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M.
TOMORROW

Mr. McCONNELL. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask unanimous consent that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 2:05 p.m., adjourned until Thursday, April 27, 2017, at 10 a.m.