

Tsereteli of Georgia with Secretary General Roberto Montella of Italy.

In conclusion, God bless our troops, and we will never forget September the 11th and the global war on terrorism.

SKILLSUSA RALLY

(Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. THOMPSON of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in recognition of the organization SkillsUSA.

Last month, I had the pleasure of joining more than 550 students and advisers from 29 different States at SkillsUSA's annual Washington Leadership Training Institute program, which culminated in a rally at the Capitol.

SkillsUSA is a partnership of students, teachers, and industry leaders working together to ensure America has a skilled workforce that is capable of closing our Nation's skills gap through career and technical education, otherwise known as CTE.

There are more than 7 million job openings in the United States today. Many of these jobs don't require a 4-year college degree, but they do require skills-based training in any number of fields, including STEM, nursing, information technology, cybersecurity, and so much more.

CTE is an investment in learners at every stage of life that empowers students to take control of their futures with valuable training that can lead to well-paying and rewarding jobs. SkillsUSA is a leader in this movement.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess until approximately 3:30 p.m. today.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 7 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess.

□ 1531

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro tempore (Mr. CUELLAR) at 3 o'clock and 31 minutes p.m.

ANNOUNCEMENT BY THE SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, the Chair will postpone further proceedings today on motions to suspend the rules on which a recorded vote or the yeas and nays are ordered, or votes objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

The House will resume proceedings on postponed questions at a later time.

RECOGNIZING HONG KONG'S BILATERAL RELATIONSHIP WITH THE UNITED STATES

Mr. SHERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 543) recognizing Hong Kong's bilateral relationship with the United States, condemning the interference of the People's Republic of China in Hong Kong's affairs, and supporting the people of Hong Kong's right to protest, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 543

Whereas the United States–Hong Kong Policy Act of 1992 (Public Law 102–383) states—

(1) “[s]upport for democratization is a fundamental principle of United States foreign policy”;

(2) “the human rights of the people of Hong Kong are of great importance to the United States and are directly relevant to United States interests in Hong Kong [and] serve as a basis for Hong Kong's continued economic prosperity”;

(3) “Hong Kong must remain sufficiently autonomous from the People's Republic of China to justify a different treatment than accorded to the People's Republic of China under United States law”;

Whereas the United States maintains substantial economic and political interests in Hong Kong, with more than 1,200 United States firms operating in the Special Administrative Region, due largely to Hong Kong's strong business environment, predicated on respect for the rule of law and an independent judiciary;

Whereas the United States supports Hong Kong's “high degree of autonomy” promised by the Joint Declaration between the Government of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and the Government of the People's Republic of China on the Question of the Hong Kong (“Joint Declaration”) in accordance with the “One Country, Two Systems” framework through bilateral agreements, the promotion of trade and investment, and the bolstering of educational, academic, and cultural links;

Whereas the Department of State reported in its 2019 Hong Kong Policy Act Report, dated March 21, 2019, that the People's Republic of China has carried out a number of actions inconsistent with China's commitments in the Basic Law of the Hong Kong Special Administrative Region (“Basic Law”) and the Joint Declaration, which have diminished Hong Kong's high degree of autonomy;

Whereas China has increasingly constrained Hong Kong's freedoms in violation of the “One Country, Two Systems” framework by, among other actions, supporting the restriction of entry into Hong Kong for individuals critical of the Communist Party of China, instructing to the Hong Kong Government to refuse a United States extradition request in May 2018, and abusing the national security rationale to justify interference with matters related to Hong Kong politics and governance;

Whereas on April 3, 2019, the Government of Hong Kong introduced the Fugitive Offenders and Mutual Legal Assistance in Criminal Matters Legislation (Amendment) Bill 2019 (commonly known as the “extradition bill”) that would amend the Fugitive Offenders Ordinance by expanding the existing extradition arrangement to include mainland China, allowing for the handover of any persons in the territory of Hong Kong,

residents and non-residents, as well as any materials in their possession;

Whereas the Department of State issued a statement on June 9, 2019, warning that the lack of procedural protections in the bill could negatively impact Hong Kong's longstanding protections of human rights, fundamental freedoms, and democratic values;

Whereas on June 9, 2019, as many as 1,000,000 people protested against the bill, and on June 12, 2019, tens of thousands staged a protest near the Legislative Council building to express opposition to the bill;

Whereas on June 12, 2019, the Government of Hong Kong took advantage of the acts of a small group of protesters to classify the largely peaceful protest as an unlawful assembly and a “riot”, a charge that can result in a prison sentence of up to 10 years for those who were arrested;

Whereas the police's excessive use of force on June 12, 2019, as seen in video footage, to disperse the protestors, including the use of tear gas, bean bag rounds, rubber bullets, batons, and pepper spray, caused severe injuries to protestors;

Whereas the excessive use of force fueled tensions and contributed to the worsening of violence;

Whereas on June 16, 2019, as many as 2,000,000 people peacefully gathered in the Admiralty district, which is likely the largest protest in Hong Kong's history;

Whereas on July 21, 2019, a group alleged to be linked to organized crime violently attacked protestors, innocent bystanders, and journalists with sticks and metal bars in Yuen Long, which resulted in the hospitalization of forty-five people, with one person in critical condition;

Whereas the Hong Kong Police Force have been slow to take meaningful action against those who attacked the protestors on July 21, 2019, suggesting the police may be complicit in their actions;

Whereas the protestors' demands included—

(1) the complete withdrawal of the extradition bill;

(2) the implementation of universal suffrage in the election of the Chief Executive and all members the Legislative Council;

(3) the establishment of an independent commission to investigate police conduct during the protests;

(4) the declassification of the protests as a riots; and

(5) the dropping of all charges against persons who participated in any protests;

Whereas on July 27, 2019, nine people were injured when police fired rubber bullets at demonstrators in Yuen Long who were protesting the July 21 violent attacks against protestors and the lack of a police response to them;

Whereas on July 29, 2019, China's spokesman for the State Council's Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office issued a statement referring to the protestors as “radical elements committing evil and criminal acts”;

Whereas on July 30, 2019, China's Foreign Ministry falsely claimed that the pro-democracy protests are the “work of the United States”, alleging that American officials have interfered in Hong Kong's internal affairs;

Whereas the Chinese Communist Party has called the protests “absolutely intolerable”, “terrorism”, and “terror atrocities”, raising fears that China may use the People's Liberation Army or the People's Armed Police to violently suppress the protestors;

Whereas on August 5, 2019, teachers, aviation workers, finance employees, and civil servants went on strike across seven districts, the largest citywide strike in decades, which evolved into a wave of demonstrations