

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

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

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, reserving the right to object, later this month on August 20, the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT) has authorized a delegation of Members of this House to travel to Ukraine to help the Ukrainian people and to celebrate with them in their celebration of the tenth anniversary of Ukrainian independence. It is a celebration of victory that belongs to the people of Ukraine, and I thank the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) for her help in bringing this resolution forward and delivering it to the people of Ukraine later this month.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. SCHAFFER. Further reserving the right to object, I yield to the gentlewoman from Ohio.

Ms. KAPTUR. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. SCHAFFER) who co-chairs the Ukrainian Caucus with myself; we have several dozen Members who are participants in that. For dropping this resolution, H. Res. 222, congratulating Ukraine on the tenth anniversary of the reestablishment of its independence, we ask for the unanimous approval of the membership.

Mr. Speaker, it is important to remind ourselves and think about the fragile beginnings of our own Republic, after 10 years, where were we. We did not even have a Constitution in place, and it took us almost a century more to grant civil rights to all of our people. And voting rights did not come until almost another 70 years later to women, then in the mid-20th century to minorities.

So we see the struggle of this democratic Nation, this democratic Republic, to provide greater and fuller, more robust liberties to all of her people. We look at Ukraine after 10 years, she has been building broad and durable relations with the 1994 charter for Ukrainian-American partnership, friendship and cooperation, and also her distinctive partnership since 1997 with NATO.

Ukraine has done many things that the West has asked, including dismantling her nuclear arsenal. On June 28, 1996, Ukraine's parliament voted to adopt a democratic constitution of the Ukraine, providing for presidential and parliamentary elections, and we are about to embark on the third set of parliamentary elections.

Mr. Speaker, I would say to the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. SCHAFFER) and, indeed, our entire membership that Ukraine has been trying to pursue friendly relations with her neighboring countries and has been consistently pursuing a course of European integration with a commitment to ensuring democracy and prosperity for its citizens. The road has not always been easy.

Mr. Speaker, it still has many rough bumps in that road, certainly the full

development of free press and independent media; the development of a rule of law and a judicial system; a legislative branch of the government that participates fully and equally with the executive. And as we move this resolution forward, we want to walk alongside Ukraine on this journey, and we urge her to join with the community of freedom-loving nations and European nations, and hopefully in our lifetime see her fully integrated into the European and trans-Atlantic set of institutions that we have all come to respect and love.

Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and urge this resolution's swift passage. I thank the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HASTERT), the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. HYDE), the gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), the gentleman from California (Mr. GALLEGLY), the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), all Members who have supported this resolution at the authorizing level, the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. TANCREDO), and the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. BEREUTER) who shares our interest in moving Ukraine forward.

Mr. SCHAFFER. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman for her help and leadership on this important issue.

Mr. Speaker, Ukraine faces certain challenges. There is no question about that, and the United States is prepared to pay whatever supportive role it can to help promote private property ownership, freedom of speech, human rights and political stability. Despite all of those challenges, and some of them are not coming soon enough, the economic growth in Ukraine is opening up Ukrainian people to a tremendous amount of prosperity that they have not experienced before.

As I said before, there are lot of political figures that we have had a chance to meet over time, but the tenth anniversary of Ukrainian independence is a victory and celebration for the people of Ukraine. Their hope for freedom, democracy and an enduring, independent nation is our hope as well, and we are anxious to get to Ukraine and celebrate this monumental event with them.

Mr. Speaker, I withdraw my reservation of objection.

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

There was no objection.

The Clerk read the resolution, as follows:

H. RES. 222

Whereas the proclamation on August 24, 1991 of the independence of Ukraine led to the disintegration of the Soviet Union;

Whereas Ukraine and the United States, proceeding from their shared commitment to democratic values, have expressed their determination to build broad and durable relations in the 1994 Charter for Ukrainian-American Partnership, Friendship and Cooperation and Ukraine is a country that maintains a distinctive partnership with NATO since 1997;

Whereas on June 28, 1996, Ukraine's Parliament voted to adopt the democratic Con-

stitution and Ukraine has conducted its presidential and parliamentary elections according to it, moving further away from the former communist model of one-party totalitarian rule; and

Whereas Ukraine since its independence has successfully transferred from a colony of the Soviet empire into a viable, peaceful state, which established exemplary relations with all, neighboring countries and consistently pursues a course of European integration with a commitment to ensuring democracy and prosperity for its citizens: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That it is the sense of the House of Representatives that—

(1) as a leader of the democratic nations of the world, the United States commends and congratulates the people of Ukraine on the tenth anniversary of Ukrainian independence;

(2) the President and Parliament of Ukraine should continue their efforts to maintain the balance of powers between the executive and legislative branches of government and ensure that their cooperation is aimed at furthering democratic reforms and strengthening civil society based on the rule of law; and

(3) the United States should continue to assist in building a truly independent Ukraine through encouraging and supporting democratic and market-economy transformations in Ukraine, keeping the doors of European and Trans-Atlantic institutions open to this nation.

The resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 2320

APPOINTMENT OF HON. FRANK R. WOLF TO ACT AS SPEAKER PRO TEMPORE TO SIGN ENROLLED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS THROUGH SEPTEMBER 5, 2001

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. BEREUTER) laid before the House the following communication from the Speaker:

WASHINGTON, DC,
August 2, 2001.

I hereby appoint the Honorable FRANK R. WOLF or, if not available to perform this duty, the Honorable WAYNE T. GILCREST to act as Speaker pro tempore to sign enrolled bills and joint resolutions through September 5, 2001.

J. DENNIS HASTERT,
Speaker of the House of Representatives.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Without objection, the appointment is approved.

There was no objection.

SPECIAL ORDERS

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under the Speaker's announced policy of January 3, 2001, and under a previous order of the House, the following Members will be recognized for 5 minutes each.

INTRODUCTION OF DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from California (Mr. HORN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. HORN. Mr. Speaker, recently I introduced legislation, H.R. 2694, to elevate the Environmental Protection Agency, EPA, to a permanent Cabinet-level position. It has been 31 years since the EPA was first established, and I would suggest to my colleagues that this legislation is long overdue.

This is not the first time the House of Representatives has been asked to consider this legislation, and indeed it is not even the first bill on the subject this year. But in many respects, it is a better bill than its predecessors, and I hope it will move swiftly through the legislative process.

On December 2, 1970, our Nation marked its first major environmental milestone by establishing the Environmental Protection Agency. In so doing, then President Richard Nixon stated, "I am making an exception to one of my own principles: that, as a matter of effective and orderly administration, additional new independent agencies normally should not be created. Because environmental protection cuts across so many jurisdictions and because environmental deterioration is of great importance to the quality of life in our country and the world, I believe that in this case a strong, independent agency is needed."

President Nixon's overriding concern to be addressed by the establishment of the EPA was that although numerous parts of the Government may have been sympathetic to protecting environmental quality, no one distinct department existed to focus solely on our environment. Moreover, the mission statements and purposes across departments necessarily affect how each department views environmental protection, leading to inconsistent and varying ideas of real protection.

Thus, the EPA was organized. Since 1970, we have made a number of important strides to improve our environment, including such historic legislative achievements as the Clean Air and Clean Water Acts. Today, the administrator of the EPA is a member of President Bush's Cabinet. But, the Administrator serves in that capacity at the pleasure of the country's chief executive officer. If we are truly serious about maintaining our commitment to environmental protection, Cabinet-level status must be made permanent by elevating the EPA to a full department.

In each of the past several Congresses, my colleagues and I have attempted to elevate the EPA to a Cabinet-level department. The closest that we came to achieving this principle occurred in 1993. The base legislation at that time was developed by the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS), then chairman of the House Committee on Government Operations. This bill, in turn, was similar to legislation crafted by Senator Glenn and considered by the Senate. That bill passed the Senate by a wide margin, 79-15.

The reason to introduce the bill remains as pressing today as it was in

1993 and certainly as it was in 1970. Protecting our environment is a priority for all Americans. To give this function the attention it deserves really necessitates elevating the EPA to the Department of Environmental Protection. H.R. 2694 does precisely this. In no small part, this commitment and elevation of the EPA signals to our world partners and to our own citizens that environmental protection and restoration is at the top of our policy priorities.

Besides elevating the EPA to a full department, we should look upon this as an opportunity to fix long overdue procedural challenges. In particular, we have an opportunity to ensure that in addressing environmental regulations, the Department utilizes the best science that is currently available and that sound public health priorities will actually be addressed by the proposal. It is worth noting that in passing their version of the legislation, the Senate included this very proposal and passed it by a vote of 95-3. It is refreshing to see that sometimes policy considerations can prevail over partisanship.

We face serious challenges to prevent global warming, to reduce toxic emissions, to assure quality air and to prevent other harmful discharges to ensure that we have clean sources of drinking water. These are large challenges with which we cannot afford to play politics. Evaluating the Environmental Protection Agency allows us the opportunity to take politics out of the equation, but we need to do it correctly. I look forward to working with my colleagues and the administration to move forward on this important bill.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. BROWN) is recognized for 5 minutes.

(Mr. BROWN of Ohio addressed the House. His remarks will appear hereafter in the Extensions of Remarks.)

MINNESOTANS MOURN THE DEATH OF KOREY STRINGER

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under a previous order of the House, the gentleman from Minnesota (Mr. RAMSTAD) is recognized for 5 minutes.

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, the people of Minnesota and Minnesota Vikings football fans around the world are mourning today because we have had a tragic death in the family.

Minnesotans are devastated over the loss of Corey Stringer, the gifted all-pro Minnesota Vikings football player, loving husband and father, popular hero to Minnesota kids and respected role model in our great State.

As Vikings head coach Dennis Green put it, "We have lost a brother, a teammate and a friend. Everybody loved, respected and admired Corey Stringer. He was our gift from heaven."

Mr. Speaker, Minnesota lost more than just the anchor of the Vikings of-

fensive line when Corey Stringer died at 1:50 this morning because of heatstroke. We lost much more than a Pro Bowl football player. We lost one of the finest people in the National Football League and our Twin Cities community.

As my friend Minnesota Vikings all-pro wide receiver Cris Carter said yesterday, "There was not a more well-liked player on our football team, but it's far greater than about football."

Korey was in his seventh season as a Viking after he was drafted in the first round in 1995 as a 20-year-old from Ohio State. Even though Korey was a native of Warren, Ohio, he chose to make the Twin Cities area his permanent home. He was a huge man physically, 6 feet 4, 335 pounds, and his heart was even bigger.

Known as a gentle giant, Corey Stringer gave so much to our Twin Cities community. He established Korey's Crew community service programs at local schools and at the St. Paul public library, and he was always available to help kids when help was needed. He loved to visit kids in local hospitals and schools, and he was one of the most involved Vikings in our community.

□ 2330

Brad Madson, Director of Community Relations for the Vikings said yesterday, "Korey was one of a handful of players who wanted to get involved in the community. When he wasn't performing community service as part of his own Korey's Crew program, he was there supporting his teammates' community efforts."

A fifth-grade teacher at Bancroft Elementary in South Minneapolis, where Corey Stringer visited the kids weekly to talk about the importance of reading and staying in school, paid tribute to Corey yesterday by saying, "Korey stringer was not commanding or brash. He was genuine and honest, and kids were drawn to him like a magnet.

"When Stringer visited schools, he signed autographs, shook hands and posed for photographs. But then he sat down and listened to the students' stories. He made them smile and laugh. And he came with his oft-repeated message: Read, stay in school, be responsible, be respectful."

Another teacher said yesterday, "A lot of times celebrities come and they spend 5 to 10 minutes, give a speech and then leave. Not Corey Stringer. He arrived early, greeted each youth, took photos with them, asked them about their favorite books and talked to them about them. He stayed until the last kid left. Not only did the Vikings lose a good football player, but the community lost a good man."

USA Today had a wonderful story in today's edition about Corey's love and concern for others. Just last week, Corey visited with Steven Arnold, who had been an assistant coach when Stringer played at Harding High School in Warren, Ohio. Coach Arnold