

and Article 8 of the 1997 Law on Freedom of Conscience and Religious Associations provides for registration for religious communities as “religious organizations,” if they have at least 10 members and have operated within the Russian Federation with legal status for at least 15 years;

Whereas religious freedom has advanced significantly for the vast majority of people in Russia since the collapse of the Soviet Union;

Whereas many rights and privileges afforded to religious communities in the Russian Federation remain contingent on the ability of the communities to obtain government registration;

Whereas some religious groups have not attempted to register with government authorities due to theological considerations, and other communities have been unjustly denied registration or had their registration improperly terminated by local authorities;

Whereas many of the unregistered communities in the Russian Federation today were never registered under the Soviet system because they refused to collaborate with that government’s anti-religious policies and they are now experiencing renewed discrimination and repression by authorities of the Russian Federation;

Whereas over the past 2 years there have been an estimated 10 arson attacks on unregistered Protestant churches, with little or no effective response by law enforcement officials to bring the perpetrators to justice;

Whereas the Government of the Russian Federation reacted swiftly in response to the January 2006 attack on a Moscow synagogue, but there have been numerous other anti-Semitic attacks against Jews and Jewish institutions in the Russian Federation, and there is increasing tolerance of anti-Semitism in certain segments of society in that country;

Whereas there has been evidence of an increase in the frequency and severity of oppressive actions by security forces and federal and local officials against some Muslim communities and their members;

Whereas there are many cases involving restitution for religious property seized by the Soviet regime that remain unresolved;

Whereas in some areas of the Russian Federation law enforcement personnel have carried out acts of harassment and oppression against members of religious communities peacefully practicing their faith and local officials have put overly burdensome restrictions on the ability of some religious communities to engage in religious activity; and

Whereas the United States has sought to protect the fundamental and inalienable right of individuals to profess and practice their faith, alone or in community with others, according to the dictates of their conscience, and in accordance with international agreements committing nations to respect individual freedom of thought, conscience, and belief: Now, therefore, be it

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Resolved, That it is the sense of Congress that the United States Government should—

(1) urge the Government of the Russian Federation to ensure full protection of freedoms for all religious communities without distinction, whether registered or unregistered, and end the harassment of unregistered religious groups by the security apparatus and other government agencies, thereby building upon the progress made over the past 15 years in promoting religious freedom in the Russian Federation;

(2) urge the Government of the Russian Federation to ensure that law enforcement officials vigorously investigate and prosecute acts of violence, arson, and desecration perpetrated against registered and unregistered religious communities, as well as make

certain that government authorities are not complicit in such incidents;

(3) continue to raise concerns with the Government of the Russian Federation over violations of religious freedom, including those against unregistered religious communities, especially indigenous denominations not well known in the United States;

(4) ensure that United States Embassy officials engage local officials throughout the Russian Federation, especially when violations of freedom of religion occur, and undertake outreach activities to educate local officials about the rights of unregistered religious communities;

(5) urge the Government of the Russian Federation to invite the three Personal Representatives of the OSCE Chair-in-Office and the United Nations Special Rapporteur on Freedom of Religion or Belief to visit the Russian Federation and discuss with federal and local officials concerns about the religious freedom of both registered and unregistered religious communities; and

(6) urge the Council of Europe, its member countries, and the other members of the G-8 to raise issues relating to religious freedom with Russian officials in the context of the Russian Federation’s responsibilities both as President of the Council in 2006 and as a member of the G-8.

SENATE RESOLUTION 501—COM-
MENDING THE UNIVERSITY OF
VIRGINIA CAVALIERS MEN’S LA-
CROSSE TEAM FOR WINNING THE
2006 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATH-
LETIC ASSOCIATION DIVISION I
NATIONAL LACROSSE CHAMPION-
SHIP.

Mr. ALLEN (for himself and Mr. WARNER) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 501

Whereas the students, alumni, faculty, and supporters of the University of Virginia are to be congratulated for their commitment to, and pride in, the University of Virginia Cavaliers national champion men’s lacrosse team;

Whereas the University of Virginia Cavaliers men’s lacrosse team won the National Collegiate Athletic Association (NCAA) championship game 15-7 against the University of Massachusetts Amherst Minutemen, and became the first team in NCAA history to finish with a 17-0 record and the 12th team in NCAA history to win the national championship with an undefeated record;

Whereas the University of Virginia Cavaliers men’s lacrosse team won the 2006 NCAA Division I National Championship, which was dominated by the Cavaliers possession, due to the impressive play of Drew Thompson who won 8 out of 12 face offs, goals scored by Matt Poskay, Ben Rubeor, Kyle Dixon, and Danny Glading, sparkling goaltending by Kip Turner, and the outstanding performance of NCAA Men’s Division I Lacrosse Tournament’s Most Outstanding Player Matt Ward;

Whereas the University of Virginia Cavaliers men’s lacrosse team added the Division I title to 5 previous national championships;

Whereas every player on the University of Virginia lacrosse team, Will Barrow, Garrett Billings, Mike Britt, Douglas Brody, Patrick Buchanan, Kevin Coale, Chris Conlon, Michael Culver, Joe Dewey, Kyle Dixon, Adam Fasnacht, Drew Garrison, Steve Giannone, Foster Gilbert, Gavin Gill, Danny Glading, Charlie Glazer, Pike Howard, Drew Jordan, Matt Kelly, Ryan Kelly, James King, Jared

Little, J.J. Morrissey, Chris Ourisman, Matt Paquet, Michael “Bud” Petit, Derek Pilipiak, Max Pomper, Matt Poskay, Jack Riley, Ben Rubeor, Tim Shaw, Ricky Smith, Drew Thompson, Mike Timms, Kip Turner, Mark Wade, and Matt Ward, contributed to the team’s success in this undefeated championship season;

Whereas the University of Virginia Cavaliers outstanding, creative, and motivational lacrosse Head Coach Dom Starsia has had a successful 14-year tenure as the University of Virginia’s head lacrosse coach that includes 3 NCAA Division I Men’s Lacrosse National Championships; and

Whereas Assistant Coaches Marc Van Arsdale and Hannon Wright deserve high commendation for their strong leadership and superb coaching support, as well as the dedication of team staff members Lorenzo Rivers, Katie Serenelli, Matt Diehl, Jade White, and Dr. Danny Mistry to the University of Virginia Cavaliers men’s lacrosse team: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) congratulates the University of Virginia Cavaliers men’s lacrosse team for winning the 2006 National Collegiate Athletic Association Division I, National Championship; and

(2) respectfully requests the Secretary of the Senate to transmit an enrolled copy of this resolution to Dom Starsia of the National Champion University of Virginia Cavaliers and a copy to John T. Casteen III, the president of the University of Virginia.

SENATE RESOLUTION 502—CON-
GRATULATING ALL THE CON-
TESTANTS OF THE 2006 SCRIPPS
NATIONAL SPELLING BEE

Mr. LAUTENBERG (for himself and Mr. MENDEDEZ) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 502

Whereas the Scripps National Spelling Bee is the largest and longest-running educational promotion in the United States, and is administered by the E.W. Scripps Company and 268 local sponsors, most of whom publish daily and weekly newspapers;

Whereas the 2006 Scripps National Spelling Bee began with 275 competitors from across the United States, American Samoa, the Bahamas, Canada, Europe, Guam, Jamaica, New Zealand, Puerto Rico, and the Virgin Islands, each of whom had qualified for the contest by winning locally-sponsored spelling bees;

Whereas Miss Katharine “Kerry” Close is an 8th-grade student at the H.W. Mountz School in Spring Lake, New Jersey;

Whereas the 13-year-old Miss Close first competed in the Scripps National Spelling Bee as a 9-year-old, tied for 7th place in 2005, and competed for the 5th time this year, sponsored by the Asbury Park Press and the Home News Tribune;

Whereas Miss Close has spent between 1 hour and 2 hours a day looking up words and their origins during the previous 5 years, yet has still found time for sailing, playing soccer, and going to the mall and the movies with her friends;

Whereas Miss Close survived 19 rounds of fierce competition this year and won the 2006 Scripps National Spelling Bee in the 20th round by correctly spelling “ursprache”, which is defined as “a parent language, especially one reconstructed from the evidence of later languages”; and

Whereas the achievement of Miss Close brings an immense sense of pride to H.W. Mountz School, her hometown of Spring