

Stearns Tiahrt Weldon (PA)
Strickland Tiberi Weller
Sullivan Towns Westmoreland
Tancredo Turner Whitfield
Taylor (NC) Walden (OR) Wicker
Terry Walsh Wilson (SC)
Thomas Wamp Wolf
Thompson (MS) Weiner Young (AK)
Thornberry Weldon (FL) Young (FL)

NOT VOTING—6

Davis, Jo Ann Evans McKinney
Deal (GA) Istook Wexler

□ 2108

Mr. DENT changed his vote from "aye" to "no."

Mr. JOHNSON of Illinois changed his vote from "no" to "aye."

So the motion to recommit was rejected.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the passage of the bill.

The question was taken; and the Speaker pro tempore announced that the ayes appeared to have it.

RECORDED VOTE

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, I demand a recorded vote.

A recorded vote was ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. This will be a 5-minute vote.

The vote was taken by electronic device, and there were—ayes 359, noes 68, not voting 6, as follows:

[Roll No. 411]

AYES—359

Ackerman Camp (MI) Engel
Aderholt Campbell (CA) English (PA)
Akin Cannon Eshoo
Alexander Cantor Etheridge
Allen Capito Everett
Andrews Capuano Fattah
Baca Cardin Feeney
Bachus Cardoza Ferguson
Baird Carnahan Finer
Baker Carson Fitzpatrick (PA)
Barrett (SC) Carter Flake
Barrow Case Foley
Bartlett (MD) Castle Forbes
Barton (TX) Chabot Ford
Bass Chandler Fortenberry
Bean Chocola Fossella
Beauprez Clay Foxx
Berkley Cleaver Frank (MA)
Berman Clyburn Franks (AZ)
Berry Coble Frelinghuysen
Biggert Cole (OK) Gallegly
Bilbray Conaway Garrett (NJ)
Billirakis Cooper Gerlach
Bishop (GA) Gibbons
Bishop (NY) Cramer Gilchrist
Bishop (UT) Crenshaw Gillmor
Blackburn Crowley Gingrey
Blunt Cubin Gohmert
Boehlert Cuellar Gonzalez
Boehner Culberson Goodlatte
Bonilla Davis (AL) Gordon
Bonner Davis (CA) Granger
Bono Davis (FL) Graves
Boozman Davis (IL) Green (WI)
Boren Davis (KY) Green, Al
Boswell Davis (TN) Green, Gene
Boucher Davis, Tom Gutierrez
Boustany DeGette Gutknecht
Boyd Delahunt Hall
Bradley (NH) Dent Harris
Brady (PA) Diaz-Balart, L. Hart
Brady (TX) Diaz-Balart, M. Hastert
Brown (OH) Dicks Hastings (FL)
Brown (SC) Doolittle Hastings (WA)
Brown, Corrine Doyle Hayes
Brown-Waite, Drake Hayworth
Ginny Dreier Hensarling
Burgess Duncan Hergert
Burton (IN) Edwards Herseth
Butterfield Ehlers Higgins
Buyer Emanuel Hinojosa
Calvert Emerson Hobson

Hoekstra Meek (FL) Ryun (KS)
Holden Meeks (NY) Sabo
Honda Melancon Salazar
Hostettler Mica Sánchez, Linda
Hoyer Michaud T.
Hulshof Millender Sanchez, Loretta
Hunter McDonald Saxton
Hyde Miller (FL) Schakowsky
Inglis (SC) Miller (MI) Schiff
Inslee Miller (NC) Schmidt
Israel Miller, Gary Schwarz (MI)
Issa Mollohan Scott (GA)
Jackson (IL) Moore (KS) Scott (VA)
Jackson-Lee Moran (VA) Sensenbrenner
(TX) Murphy Sessions
Jefferson Murtha Shadegg
Jenkins Musgrave Shaw
Jindal Myrick Shays
Johnson (CT) Napolitano Sherman
Johnson (IL) Neal (MA) Sherwood
Johnson, E. B. Neugebauer Shimkus
Johnson, Sam Ney Shuster
Jones (OH) Northup Simmons
Kanjorski Norwood Simpson
Keller Nunes Skelton
Kelly Nussle Smith (TX)
Kennedy (MN) Oliver Smith (WA)
Kind Ortiz Snyder
King (IA) Osborne Sodrel
King (NY) Otter Souder
Kingston Oxley Spratt
Kirk Pallone Stearns
Kline Pearce Strickland
Knollenberg Pelosi Stupak
Kolbe Pence Sullivan
Kuhl (NY) Peterson (PA) Sweeney
LaHood Petri Tancredo
Lantos Pickering Tanner
Larsen (WA) Pitts Terry
Larson (CT) Platts Thomas
Latham Poe Thompson (MS)
LaTourette Pombo Thornberry
Levin Pomeroy Tiahrt
Lewis (CA) Porter Tiberi
Lewis (KY) Price (GA) Tierney
Linder Price (NC) Towns
Lipinski Pryce (OH) Turner
LoBiondo Putnam Udall (CO)
Lofgren, Zoe Radanovich Upton
Lowey Rahall Van Hollen
Lucas Ramstad Visclosky
Lungren, Daniel Rangel Walden (OR)
E. Regula Walsh
Mack Rehberg Wamp
Maloney Reichert Wasserman
Manzullo Renzi Schultz
Marchant Reyes Watt
Matheson Reynolds Weiner
McCarthy Rogers (AL) Weldon (FL)
McCaul (TX) Rogers (KY) Weller
McCullum (MN) Rogers (MI) Westmoreland
McCotter Rohrabacher Whitfield
McCreery Ros-Lehtinen Wicker
McGovern Ross Wilson (NM)
McHenry Royce Wilson (SC)
McHugh Ruppertsberger Wolf
McIntyre Rush Wynn
McKeon Ryan (OH) Young (AK)
McMorris Ryan (WI) Young (FL)
Meehan

NOES—68

Abercrombie Kildee Payne
Baldwin Kilpatrick (MI) Peterson (MN)
Becerra Kucinich Rothman
Blumenauer Langevin Sanders
Capps Leach Schwartz (PA)
Conyers Lee Serrano
Costello Lewis (GA) Slaughter
Cummings Lynch Smith (NJ)
DeFazio Markey Solis
DeLauro Marshall Stark
Dingell Matsui Tauscher
Doggett McDermott Taylor (MS)
Farr McNulty Taylor (NC)
Goode Miller, George Thompson (CA)
Grijalva Moore (WI) Udall (NM)
Harman Moran (KS) Velázquez
Hefley Nadler Waters
Oberstar Obey Watson
Owens Waxman
Pascrell Weldon (PA)
Pastor Woolsey
Paul Paul Wu

NOT VOTING—6

Davis, Jo Ann Evans McKinney
Deal (GA) Istook Wexler

□ 2117

So the bill was passed.

The result of the vote was announced as above recorded.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PERMISSION FOR COMMITTEE ON FINANCIAL SERVICES TO HAVE UNTIL 5 P.M., AUGUST 11, 2006 TO FILE REPORT ON H.R. 5637, NON-ADMITTED AND REINSURANCE REFORM ACT OF 2006

Mr. PRICE of Georgia. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that the Committee on Financial Services have until 5 p.m. on Friday, August 11, 2006, to file a report on H.R. 5637, Non-admitted and Reinsurance Reform Act of 2006.

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

There was no objection.

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 on which the vote is objected to under clause 6 of rule XX.

Record votes on postponed questions will be taken tomorrow.

EXPRESSING SENSE OF CONGRESS THAT VENEZUELA SHOULD SUPPORT STRATEGIES FOR ENSURING SECURE AIRPORT FACILITIES

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 400) expressing the sense of Congress that the Government of Venezuela should actively support strategies for ensuring secure airport facilities that meet international certifications to prevent trafficking of controlled substances, narcotics, and laundered money, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 400

Whereas the United States is strongly committed to working with countries in Latin America and the Caribbean that have a shared interest in promoting regional stability;

Whereas the United States is strongly committed to working with countries in Latin America and the Caribbean that are combating the scourge of drugs and the violence and social degradation caused by narcotics trafficking;

Whereas the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela is a party to the United Nations Convention Against Illicit Traffic in Narcotic Drugs and Psychotropic Substances (1988 UN Drug Convention);

Whereas Venezuela is a key transit point for drugs leaving Colombia—the world's primary source of cocaine and South America's top producer of heroin;

Whereas drug trafficking through Venezuela significantly increased in 2005;

Whereas weak law enforcement, corruption, and a weak judicial system in Venezuela allow criminal organizations to act with impunity;

Whereas the Department of State's International Narcotics Control Strategy Report of 2006 reports that Colombian cartels, guerrilla groups, and paramilitary organizations and Venezuelan criminal organizations (among other smugglers) routinely exploit a variety of routes and methods to move hundreds of tons of illegal drugs into Venezuela every year, and organized crime in Venezuela has begun to set up operations in foreign countries to receive and distribute drugs in addition to providing transportation services;

Whereas in September 2005, the Government of the United States determined that Venezuela had failed demonstrably to meet its counternarcotics obligations and that Venezuela could no longer be certified as an ally in the war on drugs;

Whereas the promulgation by Venezuela of two new laws in October 2005, the "Law against Organized Crime" and the "Law against the Trafficking and Consumption of Narcotics and Psychotropic Substances", brought Venezuelan law into compliance with the 1988 UN Drug Convention; however, it is not certain, according to the Department of State, whether Venezuela's political and judicial institutions are up to the task of vigorous and impartial implementation of such new laws;

Whereas on April 11, 2006, a commercial plane originating in Venezuela was seized in Mexico at the airport of Ciudad del Carmen, carrying 5.6 tons of cocaine with an estimated street value of \$100 million;

Whereas seizure statistics at the Simon Bolivar International Airport in Caracas are not available because the Government of Venezuela does not publicize such statistics;

Whereas estimates indicate that as much as 90 percent of the cocaine and heroin trafficked through the Simon Bolivar International Airport over the last 12 months was not intercepted;

Whereas the Government of Venezuela continues to fail to effectively utilize several airport security systems provided by the United States specifically aimed at increasing the Simon Bolivar International Airport counternarcotics capabilities;

Whereas the Government of Venezuela has not taken any steps unilaterally to prosecute any corrupt airport officials relating to cases of money laundering or drug trafficking at the airport despite credible intelligence estimates that there is potentially millions of dollars in narcotics proceeds passing through Simon Bolivar International Airport and Venezuela; and

Whereas the Government of Venezuela and the Venezuela National Anti-Drug Office (ONA) have officially reported only two seizures of currency in 2006, one for \$13,865 in United States currency and the other for 7,000 euros: Now, therefore, be it

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

(1) Congress—

(A) strongly condemns the actions and inactions of the Government of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela which have created fertile ground for criminal drug trafficking organizations;

(B) strongly condemns the failures on the part of the Government of Venezuela to stem the flow of illicit narcotics through its territory; and

(C) strongly condemns the complicity of senior Venezuelan Government law enforcement officials and transportation officials who are effectively enabling large scale ship-

ments of both cocaine and heroin at the Simon Bolivar International Airport and other transit points; and

(2) it is the sense of Congress that—

(A) it should continue to be the policy of the United States to support cooperation between Venezuela and partners in the Andean region to combat trafficking in narcotics and other controlled substances;

(B) steps should continue to be taken to restore bilateral law enforcement cooperation between Venezuela and the United States Drug Enforcement Administration;

(C) it should continue to be the policy of the United States to work with the international community, including the Organization of American States (OAS), to assist with a thorough review of the measures in place at the Simon Bolivar International Airport in Caracas;

(D) it should continue to be the policy of the United States to work with other member states of OAS to bring Venezuela into compliance and fully adhere to OAS conventions and comprehensive treaties to prevent, punish, and eliminate narco-terrorism, which constitutes "a serious threat to democratic values and to international peace and security";

(E) the Secretary of Transportation should provide to Congress not later than 180 days after the date of the adoption of this resolution, on behalf of the Department of State, Department of Homeland Security, Department of Justice, and the Department of Transportation, a report with an assessment of the process undertaken by the Government of Venezuela toward restoring airport security measures and controls that meet international standards of safety; and

(F) the Secretary of State should provide to Congress not later than 180 days after the date of the adoption of this resolution a report on Venezuela's compliance with its responsibilities under international counternarcotics treaties.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Indiana.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the gentleman from Florida (Mr. MACK).

Mr. MACK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of the resolution that is in front of us. Hugo Chavez every step of the way has gone against the grain when it comes to the ideals that we believe in as Americans. The ideals of freedom and democracy, liberty, the rule of law, and the trusting of people.

Hugo Chavez from the beginning has tried to make an enemy of the United States. In his own words, he talks about anti-American, anti-freedom. In his own words, out of his own mouth. Today's resolution is about drug trafficking.

Over 30 percent of the cocaine that comes into the United States comes

through Venezuela. That is a huge number. We can no longer allow Hugo Chavez to manipulate the minds and the hearts and the dreams of not only his own people, but the people of the United States.

Mr. Chairman, whether it is siding with Iran in trying to purchase military aircraft and weapons, his desire for nuclear technology, trying to intimidate the media in his own country, Hugo Chavez is not a friend of the United States.

In fact, he is doing everything he can to turn away from freedom and democracy. I strongly support the resolution in front of us. I hope that Hugo Chavez will wake up and understand that it is better to be a friend with the United States, it is better to be a friend and believer in the ideals of freedom, security and prosperity. I hope one day that he will understand that he has made major mistakes and that it is time to come back to what was once a Venezuela that believed in freedom and democracy.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in opposition to the resolution. While I have disagreements with some of the provisions in the preamble, and with the accusatory tone of some of the "resolves" clauses, what concerns me most is the timing of its consideration. Because a draft agreement between the Drug Enforcement Agency of the United States, and the Venezuelan antidrug office hangs in the balance.

Now, there has been considerable time and effort invested by both sides in this initiative, which I believe and I know others do, would be mutually beneficial to both Venezuela and the United States. But the passage of this resolution puts that at risk.

Because we all know that what we do here tonight will be interpreted in Caracas as a political statement to embarrass and intimidate the Chavez Government. That is simply the reality. And to think otherwise would be naive in the extreme.

Let us be candid. And my friend and colleague from Florida touched on many aspects of the relationship. But every one on the planet knows that the relationship between the Presidents of the United States, and Venezuela is poor. Prior to the coup in 2002, it was practically nonexistent.

But when it appeared to the Venezuelans that the Bush administration appeared to applaud the coup, that relationship proceeded to deteriorate to the point where it can only be described as bitter and hostile.

The rhetoric has become incendiary and insulting. And every action on either side is perceived to be motivated by hostility and political calculation. The unfortunate result is that what has evolved is a relationship that is hardened into profound mutual animosity that is having long-lasting and real world implications, whether it implicates terrorism, or drugs or anything.

We all know that while this resolution will be hardly noticed in this country, its language condemning the Chavez Government will provoke headlines in Venezuela, that will be used by Chavez's opponents in the forthcoming presidential campaign, and undoubtedly there will be a reaction from the Chavez Government.

Without a working, transparent and viable relationship between the Drug Enforcement Agency and Venezuela, there will be serious consequences to both countries. As I just said, I have no doubt that what we do here today will be interpreted in Caracas as yet another insult, which will provoke more inflammatory rhetoric, and make any potential constructive relationship on this particular issue much more difficult to achieve.

Now, let me be very clear. I know that that is not the intention of the chairman who has offered this resolution. But I am also confident, and I hope I am wrong, that this draft agreement will be the victim of this poisonous relationship and atmosphere that exists.

Let me emphasize, I am not giving up on the agreement. Earlier today I had a conversation with my friend and colleague from New York, Representative MEEKS. We agreed that this is simply too important. This agreement is simply too important not to make a final effort.

And we will go down, and we will encourage the government of Venezuela to finally sign the agreement, which hopefully will restore a working relationship between the DEA and the anti-drug office in Venezuela.

□ 2130

But I am not hopeful. Because I believe that the language in this resolution, whether it is intended or not, will exacerbate the tension that clearly exists. And the tragedy is that the people in both countries will pay a price, and that is sad.

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

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, before I yield to my vice chairman of the committee, Mr. WELLER, let me just make a couple of points.

First of all, I have high regard for my Democrat friend from Massachusetts. He and I are friends. We have a strong disagreement on this issue.

Let me just make a couple of points.

First of all, we were told by the Venezuelan government and the DEA was told by the Venezuelan government that they were going to work to reach an agreement on this draft agreement some time ago. Then they asked for an extension to July 8. And we were going to bring this resolution to the floor some time ago, and we decided, okay, we will wait until July 8. My friend from Massachusetts and Mr. MEEKS asked me to hold up on this. I think Mr. MEEKS asked. I can't remember. Mr. DELAHUNT did. And we held the resolution until July 8. We pulled it off the calendar and held it until July 8.

July 8 came, and we were told by the DEA that they refused to sign it, and Hugo Chavez said that he was not going to give us a time frame within which he would even consider signing it. So they asked for more time, we gave them more time, and when the time came they refused to sign, it and they won't give us a date to sign it now.

Now we are not trying to embarrass the government of Venezuela, but they have done such things as accused our DEA agents, who are fighting the drug war for the people of this country, of being spies for the United States. They have done everything they can to hamper the DEA's operation down there. And there have been \$100 million of cocaine that was confiscated at the Mexican airport that came from the Caracas Venezuela airport. And so we have not had any cooperation whatsoever.

I don't know much about what kind of publicity this is going to generate in Venezuela, but the fact of the matter is Mr. Chavez needs to be put on notice that the American people are not going to stand idly by and let Venezuela be a transit point for drugs into this country and killing American people.

Mr. Speaker, I will now yield to my colleague, Mr. WELLER, for 2½ minutes.

Mr. WELLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Con. Res. 400 and commend my chairman, Mr. BURTON, for his leadership on this issue.

This important resolution expresses this Congress's concern and frustration about the rising proliferation of narcotics from Venezuela and reaffirms the United States' commitment to stability and freedom in the Western Hemisphere.

Venezuela historically has the potential to be a key ally in the global war against the narcotics trade. However, its government is not stepping up to the plate. According to the State Department, approximately 150 metric tons of cocaine and increasing quantities of heroin move through its territory annually. Mr. Speaker, Venezuela is becoming a safe haven for the drug trade and those who profit from it.

Corruption is a growing problem in the Venezuelan government, and the airports are not immune. Simon Bolivar International Airport is becoming a haven for crime, where personal property theft, muggings and "express kidnappings" have become the norm. One of the nation's main transportation hubs, this airport has millions of dollars of narcotics flowing through it annually, and in the past year an estimated 90 percent of the cocaine and heroin trafficked through this airport have not been intercepted. These illicit drugs are headed to locations through our hemisphere and pose a significant threat to the health and safety of U.S. citizens.

The Government of Venezuela has failed to adhere to its obligations under international narcotics agreements; and, despite credible evidence that the airport is a transit point for

the trade, they have not taken any unilateral steps on their part to prosecute corrupt airport officials involved in drug trafficking.

Mr. Speaker, the Government of Venezuela has repeatedly assured us they would sign the new DEA Implementing Accord, an affirmation that Venezuelan and U.S. law enforcement would cooperate to combat trafficking and distribution of narcotics. The signing date for this accord has come and gone with no satisfactory explanation and no new firm signing date. With this resolution, we are expressing our apprehension over the lack of law enforcement cooperation the Government of Venezuela will allow and our concern about the growing use of Venezuelan territory as a transit route for drug trade in our hemisphere.

Mr. Speaker, the United States and Venezuela cooperated successfully historically in the past; and we need to continue to do so in the future. Narcotrafficking is a direct threat to democracy, a threat to peace, a threat to security within the Western Hemisphere, and together the U.S. and Venezuela must work together to combat it.

I sincerely hope that Venezuela will step up to its responsibility as a leader in our hemisphere by restoring cooperation with U.S. law enforcement and fulfilling its obligation to combat narcotrafficking within its own borders.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, I yield as much time as he may consume to my friend and colleague who serves on the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee and has spent considerable time in Venezuela and is familiar with the nuances of that relationship, my friend, Mr. MEEKS.

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Mr. Speaker, I understand the concerns of the chairman; and I believe I understand his intent for introducing this piece of legislation. But the bottom line is we have got to make sure that we accomplish something here.

The real deal here is not about the chatter between President Chavez and President Bush and the statements that have gone back and forth. The bottom line here is, what do we do to make sure that we are stopping the flow of drugs?

While we are here debating the merits of this resolution, the experts are still in Venezuela completing the specifics of an agreement that would reestablish the relationship between the Drug Enforcement Agency and the appropriate Venezuelan authorities. The fact that we are debating it on the floor today, as Mr. DELAHUNT says, it really threatens our relationship and makes it so that the possibility of getting this thing done becomes remote at best.

We don't need to continue to politicize this issue. What we need to do is to make sure that we are staying out of it, actually, and allowing the experts to really sit down to work to complete their job.

The Department of State's Bureau of International Narcotics and Law Enforcement Affairs of 2006 reported and identified 20 countries as major drug transit or major illicit drug-producing countries, despite increased drug seizures during the past 4 years; and these are the real facts.

In an effort to reduce the proliferation of drugs throughout the region and into the United States, the presidents of Venezuela and Colombia have started a process of military modernization to shore up the fence along their countries' borders; and Venezuela has extradited a number of leading armed actors from the ELN and the FARC to Colombia.

In fact, I spoke with DEA officials in my office, and I know they want this agreement signed so that they can continue to do their jobs. I also have been in communication with the Venezuelans; and they have expressed, I believe, a sincere desire to finally get this agreement signed.

Our actions today condemning the Venezuelan government for being complicit in efforts to secure airport facilities to prevent trafficking of controlled substances, narcotics and laundered money does not fit the action of negotiating in good faith to finalize this agreement. We cannot play into the hands of being somewhat obstructionist and widen the gap between our two governments, which already has a very strained relationship.

In the resolution itself, Mr. Speaker, it urges Venezuela to support strategies for ensuring secure airport facilities that meet international certifications to prevent trafficking of controlled substances, narcotics and laundered money. However, when the data-sharing agreement is signed, according to the DEA mandate, title 21, chapter 13, subchapter 1, part E, this concern will be addressed and covered. So passage of this resolution will either prevent or substantially delay this agreement from being signed.

The resolution also, you know, there is some truth, but sometimes the truths are half-truths. It states, drug trafficking through Venezuela significantly increased in 2005, when in fact over 25 percent of drug seizures occurred at the Simon Bolivar Airport in 2005, and 2005 also witnessed a 58 percent increase in drug seizures compared to the previous year. In addition, drug seizures are up in Venezuela compared to this time last year by as much as 30 percent.

The resolution further identified that on April 11 of this year, a commercial plane originating in Venezuela was seized in Mexico at the airport of Ciudad del Carmen, carrying 5.6 tons of cocaine with an estimated street value of \$100 million. Well, Mr. Speaker, the truth of the matter is, according to Mexico's Defense Department, the army was waiting for the plane on Monday at the Airport del Carmen 550 miles east of Mexico City after receiving information from the Venezuelan

Government and U.S. authorities; and this is according to Mexican Army General Carlos Gaytan.

Mr. Speaker, I have a newspaper article that I would ask unanimous consent to have added to the RECORD indicating the very same with quotations from the general.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MACK). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from New York?

There was no objection.

MEXICO ARMY SEIZES HUGE COCAINE HAUL ON PLANE

MEXICO CITY.—Mexican soldiers seized 5½ tons of cocaine worth more than \$100 million from a commercial plane arriving from Venezuela, Mexico's Defense Department announced Tuesday.

The army was waiting for the plane on Monday at the airport of Ciudad de Carmen, 550 miles east of Mexico City, after receiving information from Venezuelan and U.S. authorities, Gen. Carlos Gaytan told a news conference.

The cocaine was stacked in 128 black suitcases marked private.

Soldiers arrested Colombian Miguel Vazquez, 47, who was the plane's co-pilot, but the pilot escaped, Gaytan said. There were no passengers.

The soldiers also arrested two Mexicans who were waiting at the airport with another plane.

Gaytan said airport officials initially stopped soldiers from approaching the plane, claiming there was an oil leak and that it might explode. The officials are being investigated to see if they were in league with the traffickers, said Mexico's top drug prosecutor, Jose Luis Santiago Vasconcelos.

U.S. and Mexican officials say that cocaine and heroin is increasingly passing from Colombia through Venezuela to Mexico where it is smuggled into the United States. While drug traffickers used planes to smuggle large quantities of drugs in the 1990s, most Mexican traffickers now use land and sea routes.

A U.S. State Department report released in March said that Venezuela has become a key transit point for drugs because of "rampant corruption at the highest levels of law enforcement and a weak judicial system."

Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez suspended cooperation with the U.S. Drug Enforcement Administration in August, accusing its agents of spying.

Mr. MEEKS of New York. Mr. Speaker, we are also told that statistics on drug seizures at the Simon Bolivar International Airport in Caracas are not available, but the truth of the matter is no one must have asked for the information. Because I called and asked for the information, and they provided me with the following, and I have charts that I would like to present for the RECORD.

There is a chart identifying where seizures took place in 2005, two charts define how much cocaine and heroin was seized at the airport and at Santiago Marino Airport since 2002. I have a chart identifying nationality of individuals involved in drugs and have been caught since 2002. And I have several charts identifying the type of drug and the quantity confiscated in Venezuela in 2005, the number of security agencies and personnel involved in drug confiscation throughout Ven-

ezuela, persons from Venezuela arrested for drugs in Venezuela, and the number of foreigners arrested for drugs in Venezuela. So I have all of these that I would also like to submit at the end for the RECORD. Their information is available. They have been sharing this with us.

This resolution further threatens the delicate relationship between our two countries. And, consequently, for me, I am really concerned. I happen to represent an international airport, JFK, John F. Kennedy International Airport; and I understand the importance of keeping drugs out. To me, that is what the bottom line is. This isn't about us against them. For me, it is about securing our country so that we can keep the drugs from coming in and doing what we have to do.

The resolution basically I think, and I hope I am wrong, as Mr. DELAHUNT said, what it will do is it will assure that we won't have an agreement. And if we don't have an agreement, then what we have accomplished is that there can be more drugs getting into this country.

We have got to do just the opposite. We have got to make sure that we do everything that we possibly can to secure and to prevent drugs from entering into the United States of America. I think that this is the wrong way of doing it, so therefore I will oppose this resolution and ask all Members that, if you truly want to stop drugs, we need to get an agreement with Venezuela.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, before I yield to my colleague from California, let me just take 1 minute.

First of all, when my colleague and good friend (Mr. MEEKS) says that we have a delicate relationship with Venezuela, I would like to point out to him that President Chavez is in Tehran today. He is over there talking to the ayatollahs who he has invited to Venezuela. He has been buying thousands of AK-47s. He is trying to expand his military operation down there. He goes on television every Sunday for 5 hours, and he calls the President of the United States a donkey and other names.

So if you are talking about a delicate relationship being in jeopardy, let me just say the reason for the delicate relationship being in jeopardy is because Mr. Chavez is shooting off his mouth. I have met with him several times with you folks, and he always says he is going to tone down the rhetoric, and he never does.

Regarding the \$100 million of cocaine that came out of Venezuela into the Mexican airport, we have talked to intelligence sources and they said there was no information coming from Venezuela about that shipment. They said that is totally false.

Mr. Speaker, I yield to my good friend from California (Mr. ROYCE) for 2 minutes.

□ 2145

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I thank the chairman for yielding.

Let me say that last week the Subcommittee on International Terrorism that I chair held a hearing on Venezuela's link to terrorism. On May 15, the State Department designated Venezuela as not cooperating fully with U.S. anti-terrorism efforts. Mr. Speaker, from what we heard from the Department officials, it is not that Venezuela is not cooperating fully, it is that Venezuela is not cooperating at all.

Disconcerting was the testimony we heard from the State Department that Venezuelan passports can be forged with child-like ease and that the U.S. is detaining at our borders an increasing number of third country aliens carrying false Venezuelan documents. According to a 2003 U.S. news report, thousands of Venezuelan identity documents are being distributed to foreigners from Middle Eastern nations including Syria, Pakistan, Egypt and Lebanon.

It is not just anti-terrorism in which we see no cooperation, as pointed out in this resolution, it is also counter-narcotics, and today, Hugo Chavez, President Chavez, is in Moscow signing a multibillion dollar agreement for advanced fighter jets for attack helicopters, for 100,000 Kalashnikov assault rifles and a license to build a Kalashnikov factory in Venezuela. He is trying to negotiate two or three submarines, and frankly, these are not helpful in terms of regional stability.

It is not helpful that he is traveling to Iran and to North Korea, and it is not helpful when he says he is trying to create a common ideological front against the United States.

Frankly, these weapons are to allow his self-described socialist revolution to become a military force to be reckoned with in Latin America. This resolution is an important one, and I urge its adoption.

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

I intend to yield to the gentleman from Ohio, but I am very glad that my friends raise the issue of Iran and Tehran, because the gentleman that spoke here today, that spoke in this, to this House, in this institution, has yet to denounce the military cooperation agreement between Iran and Iraq that exists as we speak.

Let me remind my friends, too, that the foreign minister of Iraq by the name of Zebari made this statement to the international community: We should not press Tehran about their nuclear program because they tell us that it is for peaceful purposes. We do not need a guarantee, let us just simply accept, accept what they say.

I am really glad you brought up Tehran because what I am beginning to see is an emerging relationship, if not an alliance, between Iraq and Iran. It is clear that there is a huge Iranian influence in Iraq today, a place where we have lost over 2,500 men and women, where we have expended hundreds of billions of dollars. And yet what do we

hear? Nothing about Iran. We hear no condemnation of Hezbollah, none whatsoever.

I am glad you brought up Iran. Go back and check about that bilateral military cooperation agreement. I know one does not currently exist between Iran and Venezuela, but it does between our friends in Iraq and Iran. We have really created a hegemony in the Middle East, Iran.

But also, I think it is important that because the chairman spoke about the DEA, and I am sure they have gone through and I understand they have verified or they have had serious consultations. As a matter of record, if the chairman tells me, I will accept it, does the Drug Enforcement Administration believe that the passage of this resolution will accelerate the signing of this agreement?

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. DELAHUNT. I yield to the gentleman from Indiana.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, in answer to your question, I do not think anything is going to accelerate this until Mr. Chavez decides what he wants to do, and Mr. Chavez was given, if the gentleman will let me finish, Mr. Chavez and you, my good friend, asked for us to give them an extension to July 8. We did that, and on July 8, they did not sign it, and they would not give us a date after that. You know that.

So what we are trying to do is point out to the United States and the Venezuelan people that they reneged on their commitment.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Reclaiming my time, there was, and I would remind my friend that there was a very tense issue between Venezuela and the United States regarding air traffic between our countries. Quiet diplomacy, patience, restraint resulted in the resolution of that problem. So that today between Venezuela and the United States, there is air travel, it is working. So accord can happen.

I share the frustration of my friend from Indiana. I know that he is someone who is a very can-do kind of guy, and at times, one might describe his temperament as somewhat impetuous. Unfortunately, diplomacy does not necessarily work that way.

Now, I understand, too, that the State Department INL had this to say. I am quoting from our own State Department. This is after all of the problems that you described between the DEA and the anti-drug officer of Venezuela. This is a quote. "In spite of the political tensions, DEA continued working with its law enforcement contacts, developing information and leads that have contributed," listen carefully, "have contributed to record seizures by Venezuelan law enforcement." The DEA is acknowledging that there have been record seizures, according to their own official report, the INL. "After decertification, political sniping faded and government officials expressed renewed willingness to cooper-

ate. Government of Venezuela officials have linked cooperation to the signing of a new bilateral counternarcotics working arrangement."

That is what we all want, and if we can achieve that, we have done something positive. We know the rhetoric is going to fly back and forth. We know there is going to be finger-pointing and all kinds of nasty words spoken on either side, but what is most important, what is most important is that we protect our own children.

I think the decertification process, I wonder if we have any standards for ourselves. In the last 6 years, have we taken steps to adequately decline, to adequately reduce the demand that fuels the narcotics coming in to this country?

Mr. Speaker, with that, I yield the balance of my time to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH), my friend.

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman.

When you look at the resolution, and it says in part, "steps should continue to be taken to restore cooperation between Venezuela and the United States Drug Enforcement Administration," I think everyone in this Congress would readily agree with that, but the language and condemnation actually separates us from that goal.

I think this is a consistent problem that we face here in the Congress. We desire a certain type of behavior from another government and then we tear them to shreds with our rhetoric. So it may be that we need to think again about our approach towards diplomacy and the approach that we take in these resolutions.

I understand the intention of my friend from Indiana who is a good man and who has been consistent in challenging illegal drug trafficking into the country, but I also understand that we need to look at the approach we are taking and see if this kind of approach is where a resolution is going to be most effective.

Echoing what Mr. DELAHUNT said, we need to also take a look very deep into our souls about what is driving this demand in this country for cocaine.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to the gentleman from California (Mr. ROYCE).

Mr. ROYCE. Mr. Speaker, I thank my friend for yielding.

Concerning, Mr. Speaker, the relationship between Hugo Chavez and Iran, let me explain why this is actually problematic, and we had an effort to bring pressure at the IAEA. We had the board of governors in an attempt by countries to pressure Iran not to go forward with its nuclear proliferation program. It was Venezuela, along with Cuba and one other country, I think it was Belarus, that voted against that effort.

Why are these points important? In the fall, there will be a seat on the Security Council that will open up. Venezuela is actively lobbying for that seat.

In light of this type of conduct, it is quite important that we point out the facts about the current efforts with Venezuela.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I have listened to with great interest the rhetoric coming from the other side, and now I intend to get to the facts of the matter. So I hope my friend from Massachusetts will indulge me and listen to me as attentively as I have listened to him.

First of all, let me just show, we have here a map from the maritime authorities, the Joint Interagency Task Force, showing from January 1 to December 31, 2005, the number of maritime trips involving drug activity originating in Venezuela, and it is 385 times.

Suspected air activity from January 1 to December 31, 2005, again from the Joint Interagency Task Force, 137 trips involving drug trafficking originating in Venezuela.

Let me just go through some of the issues that are very, very important to this debate.

First of all, DEA agents in August 2005 were accused of being spies for the United States and not doing their job as DEA agents. The fact of the matter is that was not the case. Nobody has proven or really indicated with any degree of authority that our DEA agents are doing anything more than trying to interdict drugs coming into the United States.

We received credible reports that traffickers are paying Venezuelan airport authorities a percentage of the money and drugs transported through the Simon Bolivar International Airport. Furthermore, the government of Venezuela has not taken any steps, any at all, unilaterally to prosecute any corrupt airport officials.

There are estimates that as much as 2,000 kilograms of cocaine and 200 kilograms of heroin were seized at the Simon Bolivar International Airport over the last 12 months. There are almost estimates there are 10 times that amount of cocaine, perhaps 20 times that amount of heroin, could be smuggled through that airport.

Seizure statistics at the Simon Bolivar Airport are not produced by the Venezuelans. The Venezuelan government does not track those statistics. Information regarding any seizures at the airport were not shared by the Venezuelan government with the DEA last year.

□ 2200

On April 11, 2006, a commercial plane, which we talked about earlier, originating in Caracas was seized in Mexico carrying 5.6 tons, tons of cocaine with an estimated street value of \$100 million. Counternarcotics experts who we consulted agreed a 5.6 ton load of cocaine is not a test run. We can only speculate how this route was exploited by traffickers previously, how many millions of dollars and hundreds of tons

of cocaine came through that route. And we know, as I said, there were 137 trips on that route last year.

The Venezuelan government has claimed the interdiction in Mexico was the result of a Venezuelan tip-off. That is what they said. So we checked. We have received assurances from our intelligence sources and other intelligence sources that those claims are categorically false. The Mexican police and government found that when that plane landed. They were not tipped off by anybody in Venezuela. Quite the contrary. The belief is that the Venezuelan people who are working at the airport were involved in the transport of these drugs amounting to \$100 billion.

It is widely reported that the government of Venezuela is providing safe haven and logistical support to members of the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, FARC, the FARC guerrillas, which is designated as a foreign terrorist organization and was in 1997. And there is strong evidence that the Venezuelans are supporting the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia, the FARC, with ammunition, safe houses, documentation, training, and weapons.

There is no formal mechanism to designate entities as drug trafficking organizations, but links between the FARC and drug trafficking were evident as far back as the mid to late 1980s, according to our State Department. It is precisely through this support for the FARC that we have estimates of as much as half of the Colombian cocaine moving to the United States and Europe as passing through Venezuela. Almost half of the cocaine coming into this country is coming through Venezuela.

You know, I have had the opportunity, with Mr. DELAHUNT and Mr. MEEKS, to go down and meet with President Chavez in Venezuela, and at the U.N. in New York. He is a very engaging fellow. He is Clintonesque, if you will, in the way he meets people. He was very engaging. I was impressed with the fella. When we talked to him about toning down the rhetoric that would lead to a better relationship, or a relationship between Venezuela and the United States, he said he was going to do that. But he didn't.

Every week on television, for 5 hours, and I watched the tapes and I have listened to the translations, he maligns and beats up on not only the President but the Secretary of State. He says very demeaning things about Condoleezza Rice, our Secretary of State, and they are things that don't lead to any kind of a relationship between us and the Venezuelan leadership.

In addition to that, he is tied in very closely and he considers Fidel Castro, a Communist leader who wanted to revolutionize all of South America, he sent Che Guevara down there back in the 1980s to try to destroy any semblance of democracy throughout our hemi-

sphere, and Che Guevara was killed. Now Chavez' mentor is Fidel Castro.

He is also tied in with Daniel Ortega and Mr. Morales of Bolivia, and all of these people want to move the South American continent to the left. And these are things we cannot tolerate. So the drug trafficking is only part of it.

Regarding Chavez' current trip, he is going to North Korea, he is going to Tehran, and he is meeting with what we consider the cabal of terrorists. He has also invited these people to visit him in Venezuela. In addition, as my colleague from California said a while ago, he is buying all kinds of military equipment, which really isn't necessary because there is no big threat to him down there, all kinds of military equipment to build up a huge military operation in South America and Venezuela.

We have got big problems down there. We want to talk to Mr. Chavez. We want to work with Mr. Chavez, but when we say to him we have an agreement that we have worked out, and his people hammered out the agreement with us, and he said he needed more time, until July 8, and you asked me for more time, Mr. DELAHUNT, we gave them more time, and when July 8 came, they would not sign the agreement nor would they give us a date certain when they would sign the agreement, and that is why this resolution is here on the floor tonight.

We want to have peace in our hemisphere. We want to work with all the presidents in our hemisphere, but we don't want revolution and we certainly don't want drugs coming through Venezuela into the United States damaging American women and children and hurting their families.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, will the gentleman yield?

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. I will yield for one question, yes.

Mr. DELAHUNT. First of all, my friend made a misstatement about Chavez going to North Korea, but that is irrelevant to the revolution.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. He is not going to North Korea?

Mr. DELAHUNT. He is not going to North Korea, but let me focus on something.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. He is not going to Tehran, either?

Mr. DELAHUNT. He has been to Tehran, like Mr. Maliki has been to Tehran, and Mr. Zebari and Mr. Chalabi, all of the friends of the neoconservative movement, they have lived in Tehran for a considerable period of time.

But let us talk about this today. The rhetoric that we have heard about is about terrorists, it is about, this is not within the purview of this thing. But I have to tell you something, when this plays down in Caracas, like I said in my opening remarks, it is just going to make it impossible.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Reclaiming my time, and I just want to say this. If there is a problem that has evolved out

of this discussion tonight, it lays at the feet of Hugo Chavez. It lays at his feet. Because there was an agreement that was hammered out between his people and the DEA here in the United States. He asked for more time, we gave them more time. He wouldn't sign it nor would he give us a date certain when he would sign it.

How long do you wait? How long do you wait for drugs to continue to come into the United States before we get an agreement saying we are going to allow the DEA to do their job?

Mr. DELAHUNT. Today is the 26th of July, Mr. Speaker. The 26th of July. You know that I, and hopefully accompanied by others, was going to go to Caracas this August, have a conversation, and come back with a signed agreement. That is the hope. But with this language in this particular resolution, I will tell you what we have done. We have buried that agreement. And that is a tragedy because drugs will come into this country. That is the sadness.

Mr. BURTON of Indiana. Well, I didn't yield any more time to my colleague, he just started talking. But that is okay, I have a high regard for him.

Let me just say once again that we have gone the extra mile on this agreement with Mr. Chavez. He wouldn't sign it, nor would he give us a date certain when he would sign it. We adhered to my colleague and others' requests to extend the time period, he wouldn't sign it, and that is why we have this resolution tonight.

I don't know how it is going to play in Caracas, all I can say is it is time we get an agreement, and the DEA needs to be able to do its job.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 400, to express my concern that the government of Venezuela do what it can to secure its airport facilities from the trafficking of illegal goods. It is always essential to restrict the transport of these substances and the transport of laundered money from their sales.

International certifications in airport facilities help to ensure that such restrictions are in place. Recent evidence shows a general lack of enforcement in Venezuela of the measures necessary to avoid the trafficking of narcotics and other controlled substances. Especially in light of the discovery in April of a Venezuelan plane filled with narcotics en route to Mexico, we must seriously question the compliance of Venezuela's airports with such standards. I ask that my colleagues join me in requesting that the government of Venezuela exercise more effort in the future to ensure the security of their airport facilities.

This resolution would also express our wish to work closely with Venezuela and the other nations of this region that are so severely affected by this issue to combat the trafficking of narcotics and other controlled substances. It is not only out of concern for the welfare of our own Nation if illegal substances and laundered money are allowed safe passage here; we must also express our concern for the welfare of Venezuelans and others around the world. The control of harmful substances is an international effort in which we must all take part.

It should be the policy of the United States to work with the international community in ensuring adherence to the Organization of American States conventions and comprehensive treaties on narco-terrorism. This concurrent resolution serves to respect this and to assist in a review of the Simon Bolivar International Airport in Caracas in particular, in light of recent events.

I thank my colleagues on the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee of the Committee on International Relations for drafting this resolution and urge my other colleagues in the House to support this legislation.

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Indiana (Mr. BURTON) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 400, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

AMENDING THE IRAN AND LIBYA SANCTIONS ACT OF 1996

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 5877) to amend the Iran and Libya Sanctions Act of 1996 to extend the authorities provided in such Act until September 29, 2006.

The Clerk read as follows:

H.R. 5877

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

SECTION 1. EXTENSION OF AUTHORITIES UNDER THE IRAN AND LIBYA SANCTIONS ACT OF 1996.

Section 13(b) of the Iran and Libya Sanctions Act of 1996 (Public Law 104-172; 50 U.S.C. 1701 note) is amended by striking "on the date that is 10 years after the date of the enactment of this Act" and inserting "on September 29, 2006".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. DELAHUNT) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the bill under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in strong support of H.R. 5877, a bill I introduced yesterday with Chairman HYDE of the House International Relations Committee;

Mr. LANTOS, coauthor of the Iran Freedom Support Act and ranking member of the International Relations Committee; and my ranking member on the Subcommittee on the Middle East and Central Asia, Mr. ACKERMAN.

This bill is a simple housekeeping measure to, on one hand, prevent the original Iran and Libya Sanctions Act from lapsing; and, on the other hand, to afford additional time for the House and Senate to reach an agreement on the final text of the comprehensive Iran legislation, the Iran Freedom Support Act.

The focus of the Congress continues to be that articulated through the Iran Freedom Support Act, which is to address the totality of the Iranian threat and strengthen our approach to this rogue state; to hold Iran accountable for its threatening policies; and to induce greater cooperation from our allies to compel Iran to cease and desist in its pursuit of nuclear weapons capabilities.

To achieve that end, Mr. Speaker, we need H.R. 5877, which would extend the original ILSA until September 29 of this year, affording us the additional time to finalize the text of the Iran Freedom Support Act to be sent to the President for his signature.

I ask for a "yes" vote on this bill.

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

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this legislation, and I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, the Iran and Libya Sanctions Act is scheduled to lapse within days, and the legislation before the House will extend it until September 29. This reauthorization for a brief duration is necessitated by the fact that the House and Senate are still negotiating language on a new legislative construction of the Iran Libya Sanctions Act.

We hope to complete this process soon with the passage of new legislation that will strengthen sanctions against Iran and remove from law the outdated references to sanctions on Libya, sanctions which anyway no longer apply because Libya has fulfilled the required conditions.

I urge passage of this legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 4 minutes to the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. KUCINICH).

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, as the work of the committee continues on this temporary reauthorization, I think it is important to have a few reflections. This is the 10th anniversary of the original sanctions law, and I think it would behoove us to ask what those sanctions have accomplished. This legislation seeks to renew for a period of 2 months a confusing, ineffective and, at best, counterproductive, at worst, counterproductive sanctions policy against Iran.

Iran justly remains a focal point of security concerns for our Nation. It supports those who use violence as a means of settling political disputes. It