

complete a championship season in 1948, as the team won the American League Championship and the World Series;

Whereas Satchel Paige threw an estimated 300 career shutouts;

Whereas in 1971, Satchel Paige became the first Negro League player to be inducted into the Major League Baseball Hall of Fame;

Whereas the legendary pitching of Satchel Paige earned him numerous awards and accolades, including—

(1) a nomination to the All Century Team by Major League Baseball as 1 of the greatest players of the 20th century; and

(2) a selection to the 50 Legends of Baseball by the Postal Service;

Whereas despite years of discrimination that limited the play of Satchel Paige to the Negro Leagues, his prowess on the pitching mound earned him the respect and admiration of fans and players throughout the world of baseball;

Whereas Satchel Paige passed away on June 8, 1982; and

Whereas the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest civilian honor in the United States, was established in 1945 to recognize citizens of the United States who have made exceptional contributions to—

(1) the security or national interests of the United States;

(2) world peace;

(3) the culture of the United States or the world; or

(4) the citizens of the United States or the world: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring). That it is the sense of Congress that the President should award the Presidential Medal of Freedom posthumously to Leroy "Satchel" Paige in honor of his distinguished baseball career and the contributions that he has made to the improvement of the society of the United States and the world.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) and the gentleman from Illinois (Mr. DAVIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which 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 Ohio?

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, Satchel Paige began playing baseball at a time when segregation prevented African American players from participating at the Major League level. He was a powerhouse pitcher for what was called the Negro League, and in 1933 pitched 62 consecutive scoreless innings for his team. With his animated personality, he was the main attraction at games and fans marveled at the famous pitches he creatively coined with names like "bat dodger" and "the hesitation pitch."

In July of 1948, after segregation in baseball had ended, Satchel Paige signed a contract with the Cleveland Indians. He was 42 years old at the

time and he was the oldest rookie in the Major Leagues. The Indians won the American League championship and the World Series that year, thanks in no small part to his pitching talent.

I would add as an addendum, Mr. Speaker, being from Cleveland, Ohio, that is the last time that the Cleveland Indians have won the World Series.

In total, Satchel Paige threw close to 300 career shutouts, and in 1971 he was the first Negro League player inducted into the Major League Baseball Hall of Fame.

He is remembered by his family and friends not just as a baseball player who made history, but as a man who was full of warmth, full of energy and quick to make people laugh. Satchel Paige's contributions to the sport of baseball and United States culture are undoubtedly exceptional, and I am happy to support this resolution.

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

Mr. DAVIS of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, it is believed that Leroy "Satchel" Paige was born on July 7, 1905. In 1965, 60 years after Page's estimated birth, he took the mound for the last time and threw three shutout innings for the Kansas City Athletics.

Paige's pitching was amazing and his showboating was legendary. Joe DiMaggio called Paige "the best and fastest pitcher I have ever faced." His career highlights spanned five decades. Pronounced the greatest pitcher in the history of the Negro Leagues, Paige compiled such feats as 64 consecutive scoreless innings, a stretch of 21 straight wins, and a 31-4 record in 1933. For 22 years, Paige mauled the competition in front of sellout crowds. His goal was to pitch in the Major Leagues.

In 1948, Paige's dream came true. The Cleveland Indians were in need of extra pitching for the pennant race. Paige stepped to the mound and helped the Indians win. He also played for St. Louis and Kansas City.

When Paige's Major League career was completed, he compiled a modest 28-31 record with a 3.29 earned run average. He also served as a coach for the Atlanta Braves in 1968. In 1971, Paige was given the ultimate honor. He was elected to join the very best in baseball history by being elected to the Hall of Fame.

Mr. Speaker, I am honored to support S. Con. Res. 91.

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

Mr. LATOURETTE. 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 Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) that the House suspend the rules and concur in the Senate concurrent resolution, S. Con. Res. 91.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds of those voting having responded in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the Senate concurrent resolution was concurred in.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

HONORING THE MEMORY OF ARNOLD "RED" AUERBACH

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 497) to honor the memory of Arnold "Red" Auerbach.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 497

Whereas Arnold "Red" Auerbach was born on September 20, 1917, in Brooklyn, New York, the son of immigrants from Minsk, Russia;

Whereas Red started playing basketball as a public school student in Brooklyn and later became a star guard for Eastern District High School, making all-scholastic second team in his senior year;

Whereas Red started his coaching career at St. Albans Prep School and Roosevelt High School in Washington, D.C., before serving in the United States Navy from 1943 to 1946;

Whereas, in 1946, Red began his professional coaching career with the Washington Capitols in the Basketball Association of America (BAA) and led the team to the 1947 and 1949 division titles, joining the Boston Celtics as coach in 1950 after the BAA merged with the National Basketball Association (NBA);

Whereas Red's record of success on the basketball court and in the Celtics' front office is unmatched;

Whereas during Red's leadership of the Boston Celtics, the team won 16 NBA championships, including 9 championships, with a record 8 in a row, during Red's tenure as coach;

Whereas when Red retired from coaching in 1966 to become general manager of the Celtics, he was the winningest coach in NBA history with 1,037 victories and had won almost two-thirds of the games he had coached over a 20-year NBA coaching career;

Whereas during his nearly 57-year tenure with the Celtics as Head Coach, General Manager, Vice Chairman of the Board, and President, Red was the architect of one of the greatest dynasties in the history of professional sports;

Whereas Red infused the Celtics organization with the values of teamwork, respect, tenacity, and loyalty, creating a culture known as "Celtic Pride" that will be forever associated with the Boston Celtics franchise;

Whereas Red's imprint on the Celtics, the NBA, and the game of basketball is permanent and visible today in innovations that Red developed, including the "sixth man" role and fast break style of play;

Whereas Red was an effective and tireless ambassador for the game of basketball, both in the United States and overseas, conducting clinics, barnstorming with the Celtics, starring in the successful television series "Red on Roundball", writing 7 books on basketball, including the influential "Basketball For The Player, The Coach, and The Fan", and participating with Celtic great and Hall of Famer Larry Bird in the instructional video, "Winning Basketball";

Whereas Red received numerous awards and honors in recognition of his extraordinary achievements, such as selection as the NBA Coach of the Year in 1965, induction into the Naismith Memorial Basketball Hall of Fame in 1969, designation as the NBA "Executive of the Year" in 1980, and selection as "The Greatest Coach in the History of the NBA" by the Professional Basketball Writers' Association of America in 1980;

Whereas Red's lighting of his cigar in the closing moments of an imminent Celtics' victory became an enduring symbol of success in Boston and around the world;

Whereas Red's legacy extends beyond the game of basketball and includes his important contributions to the advancement of a colorblind society through his decision to draft the NBA's first African-American player, Chuck Cooper, in 1950, hire the first African-American head coach in professional sports, Bill Russell, in 1966, and field the first starting lineup in the NBA consisting entirely of African-American players in 1964; and

Whereas the name "Red Auerbach" will forever be synonymous with winning, intensity, integrity, and charitable causes: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) Arnold "Red" Auerbach was a basketball genius who embodied the values of creativity, determination, versatility, and commitment to helping the less fortunate;

(2) Red Auerbach was a leader in the effort to remove racial barriers and allow merit to prevail in professional sports, through his decisions to draft, hire, and prominently feature African-Americans on the Boston Celtics basketball team; and

(3) Red Auerbach's place among the greatest coaches and executives of all time is assured, his contributions to the betterment of society will always endure, and his life exemplifies the very best ideals of the United States.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) and the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia (Ms. NORTON) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Ohio.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, few coaches or managers in the history of sports, let alone basketball, are as legendary as Arnold "Red" Auerbach. His career with the Boston Celtics began in 1950, and right away he began setting new records and benchmarks.

The Celtics won nine NBA championships in 10 seasons under his watch as coach, and Auerbach's draft of an African American was a first for the NBA. He continued to break down racial barriers in sports as the first coach in the NBA to start with a lineup of all black players, and the first executive in the history of all professional sports to appoint a black coach.

He revolutionized the way basketball was played, focusing entirely on the team rather than on individuals, and he created an arsenal of tactics that had never been used before.

Red Auerbach will also be remembered for his lively personality on and off the court. His passion for the game was second to none, and Celtic fans awaited with anticipation for him to ceremoniously light his cigar on the sidelines, a signal to everyone that the game belonged to his team.

Coaches with the talent and spark like Red Auerbach are indeed rare. In honor of all he did for the game of basketball and professional sports as a whole, I urge all Members to join me in supporting this resolution.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of the resolution that recognizes the achievements and the life of famed basketball coach, Arnold "Red" Auerbach. Auerbach was both a player and a coach during his career in collegiate and professional basketball, but we all best remember Red as the cigar-chewing coach of the Boston Celtics.

As coach of the Celtics, Auerbach led his team to ten Eastern Division titles in 16 years and nine National Basketball Association titles overall. His most astonishing achievement of his 17-year career as coach of the Celtics was winning eight straight NBA titles, a feat unmatched before or since.

Red coached the Celtics from 1959 to 1966, but he did not stray far from the team when his coaching days ended. He moved from the court to the front office and was an executive with the franchise until 1980. Auerbach will always be remembered as the coach of one of the most famous basketball dynasties in history. He will always be regarded by many as the best NBA coach of all time.

The picture of Red Auerbach that most of us carry in our minds is the image of him lighting up a cigar on the sidelines after his Celtics had won another game, but there are a few lesser known facts about Auerbach that mean a great deal to me and to all African Americans.

Red's great vision led him to draft the first African American basketball player in NBA history, he was the first coach to start an all African American lineup in the NBA, and Auerbach was the first executive to hire an African American to coach a professional basketball team. Red changed the way professionals play the game of basketball, and these achievements helped to change the face of basketball as well.

On October 28, the basketball world lost a great coach, and the rest of us lost a great American citizen. Although we mourn his loss and will miss his presence at NBA events, we cannot help but see his influence on the game of basketball, wherever it is played. I ask for the adoption of this resolution.

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

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

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 3 minutes to the gen-

tleman from Massachusetts (Mr. MARKEY), the cosponsor of this resolution with me.

Mr. MARKEY. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentlewoman, and I thank the Members of the House for allowing us to have these few minutes on the floor of the House of Representatives to honor, to recognize one of the greatest Americans of the 20th century, one of the greatest basketball coaches of all time, but also a man who was a pioneer in race relations.

In 1950, he was the first person to draft in the NBA an African American. In 1966, he named Bill Russell as the coach of the Boston Celtics, the first African American coach of any major sport in the United States. In 1965, he won the NBA title playing five African American starters on an NBA team. No one had ever done that before, because he was blind to race.

I know this, because in 1959 when I was 13 years old, Red Auerbach decided that he was going to have four teams that would alternate playing a game at Boston Garden right before the Boston Celtic game at 1 o'clock. He had a YMHA team, Young Men's Hebrew Association; a Chinese American team; an African American team from Roxbury; and he had a CYO team, a Catholic Youth Organization team, and I was on that team. I was one of the 10 boys on that Catholic team. And we played alternating Sundays right before the Celtics game, in uniform with all the fans coming in; Chinese, African American, Jewish, white, in Boston, in 1959.

Red Auerbach was a very special man, because he was dedicated to being color-blind. He was dedicated to excellence, regardless of where the talent came from. It was a message that all of us in Boston saw and heard, and to a very large extent this new African American Governor, this great new Governor that we have in Massachusetts, Deval Patrick, he is a political godchild not only of Bobby Kennedy and John F. Kennedy and Martin Luther King, but also in Boston, in Massachusetts, of Red Auerbach and the message he was sending through Bill Russell, through these other players a generation ago, to all of us in our State. So we are so, so proud of him.

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He always knew that a team could be bigger than the sum of its parts if they all worked together. That was his message. That was something that made him the most successful basketball coach in the history of basketball. It was that notion of teamwork.

After each victory, he pulled out a cigar, and I know that it is in violation of House rules to smoke, although in the State of Massachusetts, in all public places, it is illegal to smoke, except written into the law Red Auerbach, because he had a special exception, and out here on the House floor today, to Red I say that you were the ultimate winner, that you were someone who not only won on the court but you won

in life and you sent that message to all of us. We thank you for your example.

I thank the gentlewoman from the District of Columbia for recognizing me.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution to honor “Red” Auerbach, the legendary basketball coach and executive of the Boston Celtics, who passed away in October at the age of 89.

Mr. Speaker, Red Auerbach was a winner. As a coach, he won more than a thousand games, including 9 world championships and an unbelievable 8 in a row—a record that still stands today. Overall, he won almost two-thirds of the games he coached over a 20-year NBA career. The 16 world championship banners that hang from the rafters in Boston Garden today are an everlasting testament to Red’s incredible talent.

As an executive leading the Celtics, he was the architect of one of the greatest dynasties in the history of professional sports. The players he brought onto the Celtics—often by outwitting and outmaneuvering the general managers of the other teams in the league—remain among the greatest to ever play the game: Bill Russell; Bob Cousy; John Havlicek; Kevin McHale; and of course, Larry Bird.

Red understood that it took much more than individual stars to win consistently. That’s why he constructed teams with players who knew and excelled at their specific roles, building a whole that always was greater than the sum of its parts. It wasn’t unusual for players from other teams to suddenly start playing better when they joined the Celtics than they ever had with their previous team.

Red infused the entire Celtics organization with the values of teamwork, respect, tenacity and loyalty, creating a culture known as “Celtic Pride” that forever will be associated with the Boston Celtics franchise.

It’s impossible to overstate Red’s impact on the City of Boston and the entire New England region. With his leadership, the Celtics became hometown heroes, and Red was a living legend.

Growing up as a boy in Massachusetts, I always got a thrill when Red would let the CYO teams from across the state play on that incredible parquet floor in Boston Garden. It was a highlight for us, and it also was an example of Red’s work to break down racial and class barriers. To have white kids and black kids, Hispanic and Jewish kids from communities across the state mixing together was unusual in Boston in the 50s and early 60s, and Red was the one making it happen.

Red’s lasting impact on our country transcends basketball. His unrivalled ability to identify gifted players was fueled by his laser focus on talent and attitude, which left no room for considerations of race, creed or color.

In 1950, Red drafted the NBA’s first African-American player, Chuck Cooper. He hired the first African-American head coach in professional sports in 1966 in Bill Russell and was the first coach to put together a starting lineup consisting entirely of African-American players in 1964.

While Red made his indelible mark in Boston, his home remained in Washington, DC throughout his career with the Celtics. I was fortunate to be invited to Red’s famous lunches at the China Pearl restaurant, where Red would hold court in the middle of a di-

verse group of journalists, athletes, doctors, coaches, and other friends he had made over the years. Watching Red, it was clear that he was a natural leader—he would have made a great Speaker of the House in his day.

Red’s place among the greatest coaches and executives of all time is assured, his contributions to the betterment of society will always endure, and his life exemplifies the very best ideals of our country.

There will never be another Red Auerbach—he was an American original. Our hearts go out to Red’s family and friends. I encourage my colleagues to support this resolution in Red’s honor.

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

I thank the gentleman for those comments. That is a very appropriate pro to use this time. I have just an additional word about Red Auerbach.

Mr. Speaker, when you have won two-thirds of the games you ever coached over a 20-year period, there is hardly anybody in America who is not going to claim you. Brooklyn has every right to claim Red Auerbach for growing up there. Boston certainly claims him. Actually, Russia could claim him. The man was born in Russia, and we remember the time when Russia used to claim to invent everything whether it happened there. Well, this did happen there.

I am here to claim Red Auerbach, too, because he actually began his coaching career right here in the District of Columbia, coaching on two high school teams, one, a private high school team, St. Albans; the other, a public high school team, Roosevelt High School. Wouldn’t you know it?

The great characteristics of sportsmanship should be remembered as much as the more than thousand games that Red Auerbach won, the notion of respect and loyalty, the culture he brought to the game, which, if I may say so, often today seems absent from the game and from sports. As we remember Red Auerbach, I hope we will remember his standards and the culture that he insisted upon by the example he set in the sport where he excelled above all others.

He never stopped working for basketball in countless ways, as an ambassador of the game, his television series, Red on Round Ball. The man wrote seven books about basketball.

Finally, of course, today it may seem unbelievable that as recently as 1950 Auerbach distinguished himself by drafting the first African American player in the NBA, Chuck Cooper. Goodness sakes, very late in the history of our country, particularly if we consider that the game is, if anything, inordinately dependent today on African American players.

Then, of course, about 16 years later, it would seem he hired the first African American head coach in professional sports. That is a real breakthrough because you have to have the courage to move with someone whom you believe can do exactly what you are doing and what those who are leaders of the game

did, and of course he found the right man and the right time in Bill Russell. As recently as 1964, Red started the first all African American lineup of players. I think there was some reluctance to do that by some. Regardless of what it might have done for the game before that, Red Auerbach simply did it.

There are many ways, Mr. Speaker, for a man or a woman to show courage on race. There are many ways to be a civil rights leader. For America and especially for those who needed him most, we in the House today say thanks, Red.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Con. Res. 497. As a Boston Celtics fan, I am proud to be a cosponsor of this resolution, which honors the memory of Arnold “Red” Auerbach.

Red Auerbach was known as the man who turned the Boston Celtics into a dynasty franchise. A fiery and competitive coach, he understood the importance of each individual player’s role on a team. He was also a savvy businessman who made his decisions based on what was best for his team, regardless of how society might have viewed him. His methods and coaching styles were copied by many, leading to Auerbach being called the inventor of modern professional basketball and one of the greatest coaches in professional sports history.

Born on September 20, 1917, in Brooklyn, NY, Auerbach was a basketball captain and also school president at Eastern District High School. He went on to earn both a bachelor’s and a master’s degree from George Washington University, where he played basketball for three years. His marriage in 1941 to Dorothy Lewis, as well as his ties to his alma mater, led Auerbach to establish his home in the Washington, DC area, where he also began his basketball coaching career. In 1950, he began his legendary run as the head coach of the Boston Celtics.

As the Celtics coach, he won nine National Basketball Association championships, including eight straight from 1959 to 1966, which still stands as a record in North American professional sports. Fearless and not easily swayed by the prevalent attitudes surrounding him, Auerbach drafted the NBA’s first black player, named the first black coach in any professional sports league, and had the first all-black starting lineup in NBA history. After the 1966 season, he decided to hand over the coaching reins, but remained with the Celtics as an executive, and he would be affiliated with the organization for the rest of his life.

Red Auerbach passed away on October 28, 2006, just shy of attending his 57th straight Celtics game opener in Boston. Red Auerbach was the epitome of the Celtics, and his legendary status made it seem he would live forever. While it is hard to picture the Celtics and the world without him, Red Auerbach has left his mark. His guiding principles—family, loyalty, teamwork—should not only be taught on the basketball court, but guidelines we should all follow.

Red Auerbach leaves behind two daughters, Nancy Collins and Randy; one granddaughter; and three great grandchildren. May we keep his loved ones in our thoughts and prayers, and may his memory live on forever.

Ms. NORTON. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. LATOURETTE. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of our time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. ADERHOLT). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Ohio (Mr. LATOURETTE) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 497.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds of those voting having responded in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONDEMNING ST. DENIS, FRANCE, FOR NAMING STREET IN HONOR OF MUMIA ABU-JAMAL

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 1082) condemning the decision by the city of St. Denis, France, to name a street in honor of Mumia Abu-Jamal, the convicted murderer of Philadelphia Police Officer Danny Faulkner.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. RES. 1082

Whereas on the night of December 9, 1981, Police Officer Danny Faulkner was shot and killed in cold blood during a traffic stop in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania;

Whereas in the process of arresting the driver of a car traveling the wrong way down a one-way street, the driver's brother appeared from across the street and proceeded to open fire on Officer Faulkner while his back was turned away; the driver's brother was identified as Mumia Abu-Jamal;

Whereas Mumia Abu-Jamal struck Officer Faulkner four times in the back with his gun; although seriously injured, Officer Faulkner returned fire, striking his attacker; undeterred, Mumia Abu-Jamal stood over Officer Faulkner and shot him in the face, mortally wounding him; Mumia Abu-Jamal attempted to flee, but collapsed several feet from the slain Officer Faulkner, murder weapon in hand;

Whereas Mumia Abu-Jamal was charged and convicted of first degree murder by a jury of his peers; although Mumia Abu-Jamal has had numerous legal appeals, including appeals to the Pennsylvania Commonwealth Court of Appeal, the Pennsylvania State Supreme Court, and the United States Supreme Court, his conviction has been upheld each time;

Whereas on April 29, 2006, the municipal government of St. Denis, a suburb of Paris, dedicated a street in the honor of Mumia Abu-Jamal;

Whereas December 9, 2006, marks the 25th anniversary of Officer Danny Faulkner's murder at the hand of Mumia Abu-Jamal; and

Whereas the official recognition and celebration of a convicted murderer of a United States police officer is an affront to law enforcement officers across the Nation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) condemns the murder of Philadelphia Police Officer Danny Faulkner;

(2) urges the municipal government of St. Denis to take immediate action to change the name of Rue Mumia Abu-Jamal and, if such action is not taken by the municipal government of St. Denis, urges the Government of France to take appropriate action

against the city of St. Denis to change the name of Rue Mumia Abu-Jamal; and

(3) commends all police officers in the United States and throughout the world for their commitment to public service and public safety.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. SENSENBRENNER) and the gentleman from Michigan (Mr. CONYERS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Wisconsin.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. SENSENBRENNER. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on House Resolution 1082 currently under consideration.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of House Resolution 1082, the resolution that condemns the decision by the city of St. Denis, France, to name a street in honor of Mumia Abu-Jamal, the convicted murderer of Philadelphia Police Officer Danny Faulkner. In 1981, Officer Faulkner was shot multiple times by Abu-Jamal, who was then convicted and sentenced to death. Although Abu-Jamal's conviction was upheld on appeal, the death sentence was overturned on habeas review in 2001, 20 years after the crime was committed.

The city of St. Denis exhibited gross disregard for the family of Officer Faulkner, the city of Philadelphia and the families of slain law enforcement officers all over the United States when it callously announced the naming of a street to honor Abu-Jamal during the 2006 National Police Week.

House Resolution 1082 condemns the heinous murder of Officer Daniel Faulkner and urges the city of St. Denis to reconsider the decision to name a street after a convicted police murderer. Should the city of St. Denis fail to act, the resolution asks the government of France to take action to correct this injustice and concludes by commending all police officers for their commitment to public service and safety.

This resolution has received the support of the Fraternal Order of Police and the National Troopers Coalition.

I would like to thank the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. FITZPATRICK) for his leadership on this issue. I urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

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

Mr. CONYERS. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself as much time as I may consume.

I am today joined by a number of my colleagues in expressing strong opposition to this measure in the manner in which it comes before us today.

This proposal, introduced only 2 weeks ago, has conveniently made its way here to the House floor without the benefit of a single hearing, markup or any other consideration or discussion by our committee.

Now, one could understand the need to circumvent the safeguards embodied in the traditional legislative process if this measure proposed to solve some of the problems of the 46 million Americans who every day go without health insurance.

One could also understand the need to rush the bill through if it sought to improve our local schools, proposed to make college more affordable, or attempted to enhance the standard of living of roughly 38 million people in America who currently live in poverty.

Unfortunately, this bill fails to address any pressing public policy problems, but instead its sole aim is to influence the decisions of a local government located several thousand miles away in Paris, France.

As many may know, the details surrounding the conviction of Mumia Abu-Jamal for the murder of Police Officer Daniel Faulkner are filled with a great deal of controversy. Legal experts have questioned the numerous irregularities that occurred during the course of the trial, including the failure to conduct adequate ballistic tests on Abu-Jamal's gun and the clearly contradictory testimony given by at least two of the prosecution witnesses.

Yet and still, and regardless of one's personal feeling with respect to Abu-Jamal's guilt or innocence, we should not be using the precious time we have to address the needs of the American people with a resolution such as this.

Let us agree to let the French Government focus on the needs of its people while we focus on the needs of everyday, hardworking people here in America.

We can start by providing better jobs, better schools, more affordable health care, not by passing this resolution.

I must note that since his imprisonment, Abu-Jamal has continued his political activism and has completed his bachelor of arts from Goddard College, has earned a master of arts from California State University, and from his cell has made commencement speeches to graduating classes in a number of colleges across the country. He was a guest speaker on the immortal techniques on the musical album. The organization, Access of Justice, interviewed him for their job. Vanity Fair wrote that a supporter of Mumia's, Phillip Block, visited him in prison and asked Jamal whether he regretted shooting a cop, to which Mumia allegedly answered yes. Block, who otherwise supported Mumia, stated he came forward after he grew concerned about the vilification of Officer Faulkner, and this story goes on.

I think this is not one of the great suspension matters which we should be bringing to the floor at this particular time.