

of the city of Villahermosa on October 31, there were more than 60 helicopters ready to carry out nonstop rescue and relief missions. President Calderon and half his cabinet were on the ground, giving televised updates on everything from how to use satellite phones in shelters to the drop points of millions of bottles of water. The President's reaction is most impressive, and I take this opportunity here on the House floor to applaud this leader's efforts.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution expresses the empathy of the United States House of Representatives during this time and pledges our continued assistance. We applaud the prompt humanitarian response of the Mexican government, international organizations, and relief bodies. We must continue to support these efforts as long as they are necessary.

In this resolution, it is resolved that the House of Representatives urge the U.S. Government to immediately make available all possible assistance to Mexican authorities and reaffirms its commitment to provide relief aid to the victims as the effects of the flooding continue to unfold.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

I stand to join my colleague, my good friend from American Samoa, today to express my sincere sympathy and support for those who have suffered as a result of the recent torrential storms in southern Mexico. The damage has been devastating. It is reported that as many as 1 million people have been affected by the flooding, with the homes of an estimated 500,000 people being destroyed or damaged. The Governor of the State of Tabasco has stated that 100 percent of the State's crops have been lost and 80 percent of his state is underwater. What a shame.

Sadly, with more than 300,000 people reported trapped inside their homes or on rooftops and additional downpour predicted, it is still too early to quantify the total destruction wrought by these unrelenting rains. Just over 2 months ago, Mexico was ravaged by Hurricanes Dean and Henriette. Now what President Calderon has characterized, and I quote, one of the worst natural disasters in the history of Mexico has followed.

I am awed by the perseverance of our friends in Mexico and commend the courage they continue to demonstrate in their efforts to overcome the damage of these storms. Furthermore, I admire the contributions made by relief organizations and private citizens from around the world to assist in the aftermath. My prayers are with the families and friends of those harmed by the perils of this storm.

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

Mr. FALCOMA. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to yield 10 minutes to

the distinguished gentlewoman from California (Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ).

Ms. LINDA T. SANCHEZ of California. I want to thank the gentleman for graciously yielding me so much time. I would also like to thank the distinguished chairman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Congressman TOM LANTOS, and the distinguished ranking member, Ileana Ros-Lehtinen, for supporting this important resolution that I am offering today.

The U.S. has had its share of natural disasters recently, from Hurricanes Katrina and Rita in 2005 to this year's southern California wildfires, some of which are still burning as I speak. As we have learned, it is difficult even for the United States, one of the wealthiest nations in the world, to adequately care for our victims and rebuild our communities once we have experienced one of these natural disasters.

In both of those disasters, our neighbor was there to help us with emergency relief units and firefighters. Now Mexico faces the challenge of a devastating natural disaster within its own borders.

This resolution recognizes the plight of our Mexican neighbors and expresses our desire and commitment to support Mexico during one of the worst natural disasters in its history, a disaster which the country's President has described as one of the worst not only because of the size of the area affected but because of the number of people affected.

As many Americans already know, a series of storms brought torrential rainfall to southern Mexico, especially the States of Tabasco and Chiapas, causing various rivers to overflow their banks.

At least half a million people's homes have been damaged or destroyed and perhaps double that number are without utilities or cut off from transportation routes.

In the State of Tabasco, as was already mentioned, 100 percent of the agricultural crops have been lost and 80 percent of the state is underwater. It's incredible.

Truly, this is a disaster of epic proportions. In this agricultural area, even those who were able to stay safe during the storm will face many challenges in the weeks ahead. Having lost their crops, which for many are their sole source of income, surviving and keeping their families fed and intact will be difficult.

In addition to picking up the pieces of their lives after losing their homes and crops and everything that they owned, the flood survivors face increased threats from diseases like malaria, dengue fever and cholera.

As a good neighbor, it is imperative that we do all that we can to help Mexico ensure that the flood victims can indeed get back on their feet. It is the least we can do for a neighbor who did what it could to help us in our times of need when we experienced natural disasters.

I also want to take a moment to commend and comment on Mexican President Felipe Calderon for leading his country's rapid response to this devastation and for the work that he did before the rains fell to avert an even greater catastrophe. The President's swift reaction avoided even greater disaster, and I applaud his efforts. They really were impressive.

This resolution today expresses the sympathy of the U.S. House of Representatives during this time and pledges our continued assistance. We want to acknowledge the prompt humanitarian response that has come from many quarters, not just the Mexican Government but international organizations and relief bodies. We must continue to support these efforts as long as they are necessary.

I urge my colleagues not only to support this resolution but to work together to ensure that its goals are realized. I urge us to continue to work in a bi-partisan manner to address this humanitarian crisis. We must not just speak of our good intentions; we must act on them. We must immediately make assistance available to Mexican authorities so that Mexico can continue to provide relief aid to the victims as the effects of the flooding continue to unfold.

I strongly encourage my colleagues to support this resolution.

□ 1315

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

Mr. FALCOMA. Mr. Speaker, I commend the gentlewoman for her most eloquent remarks before the floor of this House and, again, I want to urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALCOMA) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 812, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. FALCOMA. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

#### MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

A message in writing from the President of the United States was communicated to the House by Ms. Evans, one of his secretaries.

#### SUPPORT FOR THE MUSEUM OF THE HISTORY OF POLISH JEWS ACT OF 2007

Mr. FALCOMA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass

the bill (H.R. 3320) to provide assistance for the Museum of the History of Polish Jews in Warsaw, Poland.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 3320

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

**SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

This Act may be cited as the "Support for the Museum of the History of Polish Jews Act of 2007".

**SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

Congress finds the following:

(1) Current and future generations benefit greatly by visible reminders and documentation of the historical and cultural roots of their society.

(2) It is in the national interest of the United States to encourage the preservation and protection of artifacts associated with the heritage of United States citizens who trace their forebearers to other countries and to encourage the collection and dissemination of knowledge about that heritage.

(3) According to the 2000 United States Census, nearly 9,000,000 Americans are of Polish ancestry.

(4) At the beginning of World War II, Poland had the largest Jewish population in Europe.

(5) In 1996, Yeshayahu Weinberg, a founding director of Tel Aviv's Diaspora Museum and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, created an international team of experts with the goal of establishing a Museum of the History of Polish Jews.

(6) The Museum of the History of Polish Jews will preserve and present the history of the Jewish people in Poland and the wealth of their culture spanning a period of 1,000 years.

(7) In 1997, the City of Warsaw donated a parcel of land, opposite the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising Memorial, for the explicit use for the Museum of the History of Polish Jews.

(8) In 2005, the Government of Poland and the City of Warsaw agreed to provide 40,000,000 Polish zlotys for the construction of the Museum of the History of Polish Jews.

(9) In 2005, an international architectural competition selected a Finnish firm to design the building for the Museum of the History of Polish Jews.

(10) In 2006, the building for the Museum of the History of Polish Jews moved into the last phase of project design.

**SEC. 3. ASSISTANCE FOR THE MUSEUM OF THE HISTORY OF POLISH JEWS.**

(a) IN GENERAL.—Assistance provided by the Bureau of Educational and Cultural Affairs of the Department of State shall be made available to assist in the development of the permanent collection of the Museum of the History of Polish Jews.

(b) AUTHORIZATION FOR ASSISTANCE.—To carry out the purposes of subsection (a), the Secretary of State is authorized to provide \$5,000,000, which shall remain available until expended, to the Museum for the History of Polish Jews.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from American Samoa.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to re-

vising 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 gentleman from American Samoa?

There was no objection.

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

First of all, I would like to commend and thank the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), my good friend and my colleague, for his sponsorship of this important legislation, and I also want to thank the distinguished gentleman from California (Mr. LANTOS), chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and the gentlewoman from Florida, our senior ranking member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, for their support of this legislation.

This bill that was introduced by my good friend, the gentleman from New Jersey, is a bill that seeks to preserve the cultural heritage of Poland's Jewish population. Mr. Speaker, the history of the Jewish people in Poland dates back over a millennium, when the country initially provided one of Europe's most tolerant homes for the Jewish people and housed one of the world's most vibrant Jewish communities. This tolerance waned from the 17th century onwards, as incidents of political and personal anti-Semitism began to increase.

However, when Poland regained its independence in the early 20th century, its Jewish population remained one of the largest in the world. Indeed, in 1939, over 3 million of the Jewish people lived in Poland, comprising the largest Jewish population of any country in Europe. Mr. Speaker, this situation changed radically when the Nazis occupied Poland, as over 90 percent of Poland's Jewish population was brutally killed or murdered and tortured during the Holocaust. Of the few who survived, around 200,000 people, most emigrated from Poland. Many came to the United States, while others fled to Israel and South America.

Mr. Speaker, estimates of Poland's Jewish population range from 3,500 to 15,000, out of a total population of over 38 million. This dramatically reduced post-war Jewish population has led to some false claims that there were no Jews in Poland. Given the long history of Poland's Jews, combined with the tragic decline of their population during the Holocaust, it is singularly important that steps are taken to preserve and protect their cultural heritage. Indeed, the nearly 9 million Americans who claim Polish lineage will benefit from visible reminders of their forebearers.

Mr. Speaker, for almost over 10 years now, a team of international experts has worked tirelessly to establish a Museum of the History of the Polish Jews for this very purpose. This museum aims to preserve the history and culture of Jewish people in Poland over

the last 1,000 years, beginning with their 11th century emigration from Western Europe to escape persecution in their vibrant community between the world wars.

Mr. Speaker, the City of Warsaw and the Polish Government have been active supporters and contributors to this project. In 1997, the city donated the land near the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising Memorial on which to construct this new museum. This area is located in Warsaw's former Jewish quarter, which previously housed a thriving community of about 400,000 Jewish people.

Mr. Speaker, in 2005, two years ago, the city and the government donated 40 million zlotys, currently worth about \$14.5 million, for the museum's construction. In the year 2005, again, two years ago, a Finnish architectural firm was selected to design the project. In June of this year, Polish authorities broke ground at the site. Construction is expected to take two years, enabling the museum to open by the year 2010.

This bill authorizes U.S. funding to assist in the development of the permanent collection of the museum. This money will ensure the protection of artifacts documenting the heritage of the Jewish Polish people and many of their descendants who currently live in the United States.

Museum organizers have already asked the people of Poland to donate memorabilia to the project, collecting photographs, documents, and other remaining items. One such object includes a penknife provided by a woman whose father, a forced laborer in a Nazi arms factory, obtained from a fellow prisoner who had received it as a bar mitzvah gift. American funding will help these efforts.

I strongly support this bill and ask my colleagues to join me in ensuring the preservation of such a rich cultural legacy.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 3320, a measure to provide support for the Museum of the History of Polish Jews, which was introduced by the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH), my good friend. This bill would authorize funding to assist in the development of the permanent collection of the Museum of the History of Polish Jews.

As we all know, the knowledge of history is tremendously important, both to understand our heritage and to our efforts to ensure that mistakes made in the past are avoided now and in the future. The Jewish people have a long and rich history in Poland. In fact, at the beginning of World War II, Poland had the largest Jewish population in Europe. Tragically, almost all of that population in Poland was murdered in the Holocaust.

The Polish Government has donated land and has also agreed to provide

millions of dollars for construction of the museum. I ask my colleagues to support this bill, which would go on to assist in the development of the museum's collection. The tremendously rich 1,000-year history of the Jewish people in Poland should not be forgotten, Mr. Speaker. I urge my colleagues to pass this bill, and I reserve the balance of my time.

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

Mr. BILIRAKIS. Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the sponsor of this bill, the gentleman from New Jersey (Mr. SMITH).

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend and colleague Mr. BILIRAKIS for yielding and Chairman FALÉOMAVAEGA for his very strong words in support of this legislation; TOM LANTOS, the chairman of our committee; and LEANA ROSLEHTINEN, who were very strong supporters and backers of the bill before us today as well.

Mr. Speaker, at the beginning of World War II, Poland had the largest Jewish population in Europe. Over 50 percent of world Jewry has family ties to this pre-war community. Tragically, as a result of the Holocaust, a once thriving community was virtually destroyed.

In 1996, a group of people developed the idea for a museum dedicated to the culture, art and history of Poland's Jews. As one of the founders of the museum told me when I visited Warsaw a couple of years ago, We often learn how Jews died, but rarely how they lived. The Museum of the History of Polish Jews will change this. Indeed, it will solemnly remember the 3 million Polish Jews who died during the Holocaust and World War II, but also it will celebrate the rich 1,000 years of Polish Jewish life.

The interactive museum will allow visitors to view the long history of Jews in Poland in context, examining their lives through nine thematic galleries that illustrate their culture, their accomplishments, and the challenges they faced. The museum will measure 14,000 square feet and incorporate state-of-the-art multimedia installations that showcase the museum's collection, an archive of over 60,000 computer files of images collected from around the world. The nine galleries that house the museum's core exhibition provide 43,000 square feet of space that will be equipped with the latest technology to showcase a variety of multimedia displays. These exhibitions are being developed by a team of scholars, historians and museum experts from Poland, Israel, and the United States.

A crown jewel of the museum and a key element to serving the public will be the 5,400 square-foot state-of-the-art education center that includes a resource center for visitors. Multimedia displays and Web-based kiosks will share the museum's data base of 60,000 documents and objects with visitors,

who will also have access to a reading room as well as a library.

Today, Mr. Speaker, despite the robust efforts of many good people, anti-Semitism remains a dangerous and a growing force in Europe and elsewhere in the world. By looking at the life of Polish Jewry and also documenting the events of the Holocaust, the museum and its educational center will make a major contribution in combating anti-Semitism. A better understanding of the great contributions that Polish Jews have made to society will help fight off the ignorance and the lies that bring about this bigotry.

There is no better time for a living monument to stand against anti-Semitism than now, and no better place than in the heart of Europe, the place where the Nazis put so many Jews to death. In 1997, the City of Warsaw donated land adjacent to the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising Monument for the construction of this museum. In June of 2007, authorities broke ground for its construction. It is now slated for opening in 2010, but there still is a significant deficit in funding.

It is one of the first institutions in post-European Poland to be built through a partnership of public and private support. The Government of Poland and the City of Warsaw have each designated some \$15 million for the museum, and a number of private corporations and individuals from Israel, the United Kingdom, Sweden, the Netherlands, and elsewhere, of course that includes the United States, have also agreed to contribute. Just yesterday, the Government of Germany signed an agreement to donate over \$7 million to the effort. All donors are united in preserving the memory of a magnificent people, who have made such a positive difference, and to combat the rising ugly tide of anti-Semitism.

As you can imagine, it's a costly and difficult project to assemble artifacts and memorabilia from Polish Jewry. Not only did the Nazis systematically destroy Jewish men, women and children, they sought to erase all memory of a noble people. The Nazis also decimated most of the City of Warsaw. Our contribution of \$5 million will be more than just a symbol of American commitment to these principles, although that is important. It will be more than a reminder of the historical ties that bind many descendants of Polish Jews in the United States and elsewhere to Polish Jewry, although that, too, is a worthy goal. This contribution will be an important aid in making this project a reality. It will help bring it to completion.

I urge support for H.R. 3320. As one supporter called this, this is a "restitution of memory."

Mr. FALÉOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I want to compliment and commend my good friend from New Jersey for a most eloquent statement. Whenever he speaks, I listen; not only as a great advocate and champion of human rights

throughout the world, but I cannot think of a more appropriate piece of legislation where his mark is made to the fact that the persecutions that took place among the Jewish people during World War II. Again, I thank the gentleman from New Jersey for his efforts in bringing this piece of legislation to the floor for consideration.

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H. Res. 3320, introduced by my friend and colleague, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. This bill would authorize the United States to provide \$5 million to assist in the development of the permanent collection of the Museum of the History of Polish Jews.

This past May, I had the opportunity to travel to Poland and, while there, met with Jerzy Halbersztadt, the director of the museum, and Ewa Wierzynska, the deputy director. The museum they are helping to establish is truly an historical undertaking and one that deserves the support of the United States.

Warsaw was once home to the largest Jewish community in Europe, and if we are to truly understand what was lost in the Holocaust, we must try to wrap our minds not only around the figure of 6 million, but around the 1,000 years of Polish Jewish life that preceded that tragedy. Poland is not only a place where Jews died, but a place where they lived and flourished. Moreover, it is estimated that 80 percent of all Jews and over nine million Americans trace some of their ancestry to the Polish Jewish community. This museum has the potential to touch the lives of our own citizens in deeply personal ways.

As chairman of the Helsinki Commission, I am heartened by the educational role this museum can play in fulfilling the goals that the OSCE participating States have undertaken in the field of combating anti-Semitism. I believe this museum will contribute to tolerance and mutual respect in Poland, will help counter the broader phenomenon of anti-Semitism in Europe, and will serve as an inspiration to the thousands of visitors who will come every year. The historical record of the Polish Jewish community must be preserved and shared with future generations.

Unfortunately, my own schedule did not permit me to return to Poland for the June 26 groundbreaking ceremony for the museum, which will be located in the heart of the pre-World War II Jewish district and next to the monument to the Jews who resisted the Nazis during the 1943 ghetto uprising. However, I did send a member of the Helsinki Commission staff, who witnessed firsthand the extraordinary turnout for this event. Among those present was the Chief Rabbi of Tel Aviv Meir Lau, whose parents were from Poland and who suggested that invited Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, who has denied the Holocaust, be among the first to visit the museum.

I don't know if the Iranian President will accept this invitation, but I have no doubt that many Americans will be among the 500,000 people who are expected to visit the museum on an annual basis. I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this extraordinary museum, with an extraordinary mission.

Mr. FALÉOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I have no additional speakers, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BILIRAKIS. 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 American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 3320.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX and the Chair's prior announcement, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

□ 1330

#### CONDEMNING THE NOVEMBER 6, 2007, TERRORIST BOMBING IN AFGHANISTAN

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 811) condemning the November 6, 2007, terrorist bombing in Afghanistan and expressing condolences to the people of Afghanistan and the members of the Wolesi Jirga.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

#### H. RES. 811

Whereas on November 6, 2007, a terrorist carried out a suicide bombing in the Baghlan province of Afghanistan that deliberately targeted a delegation of 18 members of the Wolesi Jirga, the directly elected chamber of the National Assembly of Afghanistan;

Whereas this horrific bombing was the deadliest suicide attack since the liberation of Afghanistan from the brutal Taliban regime in 2001, reportedly killing at least 50 Afghan citizens, including several schoolchildren, and wounding dozens of others;

Whereas at least six members of the Wolesi Jirga were killed in the attack, including Sayed Mustafa Kazemi, Chair of the Economic Commission of the Wolesi Jirga and former Minister of Commerce; Engineer Abdul Matin, a member from the province of Helmand; Sibgatullah Zaki, a member from the province of Takhar; Haji Sahib Rahman Hemat, a member from the province of Kunar; Nazik Mir Sarferaz, a member from the Kunduz province; and Mohammad Arif Zarif, a member from Kabul;

Whereas the legislative delegation transcended political, ethnic, and regional divisions and was targeted by this heinous act while carrying out its official duties in service to the Afghan people;

Whereas nearly six years after the liberation of Afghanistan from the Taliban, who provided al-Qaeda with a safe haven for planning the attacks of September 11, 2001, Afghanistan remains under siege, and the democratically elected Government of Afghanistan remains subject to attacks from remnants of the Taliban who have regrouped along with other insurgent groups, including al-Qaeda;

Whereas poppy cultivation and opium production, which directly support, sustain, and finance insurgents, militias, and terrorist organizations operating in Afghanistan, continue to dramatically increase;

Whereas the security of Afghanistan is closely intertwined with the security of its regional neighbors, and therefore cooperation and support from its neighbors in defeating insurgents and establishing security is urgently required;

Whereas the international community, including the Government of the United States, has expressed its ongoing commitment to supporting the efforts of the Government and people of Afghanistan to build a stable, secure, and democratic nation with the achievement of the Afghanistan Compact in 2006;

Whereas Afghanistan remains a critical front in the global struggle against terrorism, and supporting the development of democratic institutions in Afghanistan is critical to defeating this threat; and

Whereas the House Democracy Assistance Commission of the United States House of Representatives has worked in partnership with the Wolesi Jirga to strengthen its institutional capacity, and remains committed to a strong and mutually-beneficial partnership: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

(1) condemns in the strongest terms the November 6, 2007, attack in the Baghlan province of Afghanistan and all other attacks against the democratic freedom and sovereignty of the Afghan people;

(2) expresses its condolences to the people of Afghanistan and the members of the Wolesi Jirga;

(3) supports the efforts of the Government of Afghanistan to investigate the attack and bring the perpetrators to justice;

(4) reaffirms the long-term commitment of the United States to the establishment of security, the strengthening of democratic and civil institutions, and the promotion of economic opportunity as the basis for a stable, secure, and democratic Afghanistan; and

(5) calls upon the United States and other responsible nations to strengthen their efforts to further the goals and standards set forth in the Afghanistan Compact for improvements in security, governance, and economic development.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) and the gentleman from Florida (Mr. BILIRAKIS) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from American Samoa.

#### GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. 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 this proposed legislation.

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

There was no objection.

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

Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to recognize the chief sponsor and author of this important legislation, my good friend, the gentleman from North Carolina (Mr. PRICE) and I also want to thank the chairman of our Foreign Affairs Committee, Mr. LANTOS, and our ranking member, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN of Florida, for their support and leader-

ship in bringing this legislation to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, last week the United States was reminded once again that amongst the weekly sacrifices of Americans in Iraq, the continuing concern of Iran and the recent developments in Pakistan, there still exists in the geographic center of the Middle East and South Asia a country that faces a growing insurgency that directly threatens its stability and the national security and interests of the United States and its allies.

On November 6, a suicide bomber targeted a delegation of members of the Afghanistan National Assembly, or the Wolesi Jirga, killing at least 50 Afghans, including school children, ordinary citizens and half a dozen elected members. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to strongly condemn this attack and to echo again our unified commitment to the stabilization and development of Afghanistan.

This House shares a special bond with the Wolesi Jirga, which participates in a partnership in our House Democracy Assistance Commission, and it is indeed a tragedy to see our fellow legislators or parliamentarians be murdered in such a way.

A few months ago, this House passed on an overwhelming and bipartisan basis the Afghanistan Freedom Support and Security Act of 2007. This act reaffirmed our long-term commitment to the security and development of Afghanistan by reauthorizing a comprehensive package of assistance to a country in dire need of the international community's support.

Mr. Speaker, if there is any lesson to be taken from the tragic events like these, it is that now is the time to act. Poppy cultivation is up manifold, suicide attacks have increased dramatically in the past year, and Afghanistan still suffers as being one of the poorest countries in the world. In that regard, I urge my colleagues in the Senate, the other body, to take up an Afghanistan reauthorization bill as early as possible so that we may help that country drive out the forces of extremism and intolerance and bring the forces of moderation and progress in.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of the bipartisan resolution before us condemning the cowardly suicide bombings in Baghlan, Afghanistan, recently which killed at least six members of the Afghan Parliament and dozens of innocent men and women and children. Countless others were wounded.

Those who oppose the emergence of a free, democratic and stable Afghanistan mistakenly believe that through such nefarious acts they can deter the Afghan people from realizing their goal of a viable and independent Afghanistan that is secure and free from terrorism. This cowardly act will not deter us, nor will it deter the people of