and Prosecutor General appear unwilling to ef-
defectively enforce the rule of law, refusing to ar-
rest mob leaders like Mkalavishvili and Paata 
Bluashvili and not attempting serious prosecu-
tions. For example, the trial of Mkalavishvili has 
dragged on for more than a year, without a 
single piece of evidence considered yet. I 
would call on my colleagues in the Organization for 
Security and Co-operation in Europe to exert 
pressure on this government to enforce the rule 
of law.

Ironically, it appears that minorities religious 
beliefs are treated very differently. In fact, the 
assaults on minority religious groups will not be 
repealed. I also urge the government of 
Georgia to arrest and detain Mkalavishvili, 
Bluashvili and other indicted persons who con-
tinue to perpetrate violent criminal acts against 
religious minorities.

Undoubtedly, President Shevardnadze’s 
presence at the March 14th service and his 
statement illustrate his personal commitment to 
religious tolerance and basic law and order.

Yet, while I appreciate his gesture, it is time 
for real action. If the attacks are allowed to 
continue, we may see these minorities’ rights 
rein in this mob violence. If presidential orders 
are repeatedly ignored, it will only further 
weaken the government’s ability to enforce the 
rule of law. And, of course, we must not forget 
the plight of minority religious communities 
that continue to live in a state of siege, without 
any real justice or protection from their government.

Ironically, it appears that minorities religious 
communities are freer to profess and practice 
their faith in regions of Georgia not under the 
control of President Shevardnadze’s government.

In closing, I urge President Shevardnadze to 
fulfill his most recent commitment to punish 
the aggressors, thereby restoring Georgia’s 
international reputation and upholding its inter-
national commitments as a participating State in 
the Organization for Security and Co-operation 
in Europe.

I and other Members of Congress are 
acutely interested in seeing whether the Gov-
ernment of Georgia will actually arrest the per-
petrators of violence and vigorously prosecute 
them.

Representatives of all religions and na-
tions have to raise prayers for peace 
together.

My dear friends, Christians, dear Ambas-
sadors: I am here to give utterance to my 
contempt and admiration, which derives 
from seeing you, all Christians, or, to be 
more precise, representatives of all Christian 
folds, assembled here, under the same roof of 
this temple, in the capital of Georgia famed as 
the Virgin’s lot.

I am happy to be a witness to this occur-
rence. I am happy because you are together, 
because we are together. But all of us have 
our own faith.

I am an Orthodox believer, but we are all 
Christians. It is what we should always bear 
in mind and keep intact this wholeness and 
unity.

Georgia is one of those countries on the 
planet whose roots go back the farthest in 
history. Tolerance has become particularly 
entrenched in its history and nature since 
the days we embraced Christianity.

Christians, let that be together. And 
more than this: Georgia is a multinational 
country, where Muslims and followers of 
other confessions have dwelt along with 
Christians for centuries.

We live presently in a world of stark con-
tradictions. It remains anybody’s guess when 
a bomb may blast. You probably understand 
what I mean. Therefore, we should pray for 
peace, and these prayers should be raised by 
all of us: Christians, Muslims, representa-
tives of every religion, confession and na-
tion.

But prayers alone will not keep us to-
together. We have also to struggle, in order 
that the vision of peace, faith, love and 
respect to one another, may be put up 
resistance to the eradicating processes of 
which I already made a mention.

As was customary with my great ances-
tors, I go to an Orthodox church. But nor do 
I keep distance from synagogues, mosques or 
churches of different Christian confessions.

I feel respect for all who have confident be-
lief in kindness and its victory.

I am happy to see, along with Georgian 
citizens, the attendance of the distinguished 
ambassadors and diplomats accredited in 
Georgia, who have come this evening to 
share our happiness.

I cannot but express a deep sense of regret, 
even resentment at the gross infringement of 
our unity, mutual respect and freedom of 
faith by some of the aggressors.

As the President and a believer, I shall not restrict myself only to a mere ex-
pression of resentment. I do promise that the 
President and the Authorities of Georgia will 
do their utmost to grant each person free-
dom of expression of faith.

The state will exert its pressure on who-
ever comes in defiance of this principle.

I may stand assured that the aggressors will 
be brought to justice.

I would like to greet you once more and 
wish you happiness and advancement of 
goals. So as with Georgia, a multinational 
country of various religious confessions, my 
wishes are for joy, happiness and prosperity.

MEDICARE OUTPATIENT CO-
PAYMENT REDUCTION ACT OF 2003

HON. FORTNEY PETE STARK
OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, April 3, 2003

Mr. STARK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today with 
my colleagues, Representatives McDERMOTT, 
FRANK, FROST, JACKSON-LEE, MCNULTY and 
ABERCROMBIE to introduce legislation to expedite the timeframe for redu-
cing to 20 percent the coinsurance amounts 
that Medicare beneficiaries are required to pay 
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