

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 agree to the resolution, H. Res. 395.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

PROVIDING THAT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK MAY SERVE ON BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 676) to provide that the Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank or the Alternate Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank may serve on the Board of Directors of the Inter-American Foundation.

The Clerk read the title of the Senate bill.

The text of the Senate bill is as follows:

S. 676

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

SECTION 1. AUTHORITY TO APPOINT EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OR ALTERNATE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK TO THE BOARD OF DIRECTORS OF THE INTER-AMERICAN FOUNDATION.

The third sentence of section 401(g) of the Foreign Assistance Act of 1969 (22 U.S.C. 290f(g)) is amended to read as follows: "Three members of the Board shall be appointed from among the following: officers or employees of agencies of the United States concerned with inter-American affairs, the United States Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank, or the Alternate Executive Director of the Inter-American Development Bank."

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) and the gentleman from Colorado (Mr. LAMBORN) 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 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 yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this proposed legislation.

The Inter-American Foundation is an important agency of the United States Government that strengthens relations

between the United States and Latin America and makes significant contributions to economic development and civil society throughout the region. The foundation, which also receives contributions from the Inter-American Development Bank, primarily funds partnerships among grass-roots and nonprofit organizations and businesses and local governments. These partnerships are directed at improving the quality of life of poor people and strengthening civic participation, accountability, and democratic practices.

The foundation is therefore a vital agency that bolsters Latin America and ought to have the full support of relevant agencies and bodies, especially the Inter-American Development Bank.

The bill before the House today comes to us from the Senate. It simply makes explicit that the executive director of the Inter-American Development Bank should be eligible for appointment to the board of the Inter-American Foundation. While it was previously assumed that the head of the bank could be appointed to the foundation board, such eligibility was never codified in the law.

This bill is a technical fix that our good friends, the distinguished chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Mr. BIDEN; and the senior ranking member of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Mr. LUGAR, believe that this law should be installed.

I urge my colleagues to support this legislation.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, this legislation adds a technical clarification to the Inter-American Foundation Act. By background, this bill would amend the Inter-American Foundation Act to clarify that the President may appoint the U.S. executive director of the Inter-American Development Bank, or IADB, or his alternate to serve as a member of the Board of the Inter-American Foundation.

The Inter-American Foundation Act requires that three members of the nine-member board "shall be appointed from among officers or employees of agencies of the United States concerned with inter-American affairs."

The authors of this legislation appear to believe the clarification is necessary because some have recently questioned whether or not a U.S. executive director to an international financial institution, or IFI, like the IADB, is actually an officer or employee of agencies of the United States.

I would note simply that this question is largely a nonissue. To my knowledge, never before has Congress questioned whether a U.S. executive director could concurrently serve on the Inter-American Foundation's board.

Indeed, any experience with the day-to-day operations of the international

financial institutions would suggest that the U.S. executive directors to IFIs effectively function as officers or employees of the United States. In this regard the World Bank Web site states that "the U.S. executive director is an employee of the U.S. Department of Treasury and is supported by an alternate executive director for the United States, as well as a team of advisers representing different executive branch agencies."

The U.S. representatives to the IFIs receive detailed instructions from the Secretary of the Treasury regarding the position of the United States Government on all votes pending before the board, as well as on all outstanding policy matters. The U.S. representatives to these institutions are also eligible to receive employee benefits, and the Treasury Department serves as the employing office for collecting, accounting for all retirement and health insurance benefits payments made by these individuals.

Having said that, passage of this act will certainly do no harm and may serve to help expedite the consideration of Hector Morales to serve as a member of the Board of Directors of the Inter-American Foundation. Mr. Morales is currently serving as the United States executive director of the Inter-American Development Bank, a position to which he was appointed after receiving the advice and consent of the Senate in November 2004. The position on the Board of Inter-American Foundation would be a part-time appointment.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend, the gentleman from Colorado, for his most eloquent statement.

Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and 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 Senate bill, S. 676.

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. FALEOMAVAEGA. 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 question will be postponed.

RECOGNIZING AND WELCOMING THE DELEGATION OF PRESIDENTS, PRIME MINISTERS, AND FOREIGN MINISTERS FROM THE CARIBBEAN TO WASHINGTON, DC

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree

to the resolution (H. Res. 418) recognizing and welcoming the delegation of Presidents, Prime Ministers, and Foreign Ministers from the Caribbean to Washington, DC, and commending the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) for holding the Conference on the Caribbean.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 418

Whereas Presidents, Prime Ministers, and Foreign Ministers from Antigua and Barbuda, the Bahamas, Barbados, Belize, Dominica, Grenada, Guyana, Haiti, Jamaica, Saint Kitts and Nevis, Saint Lucia, Saint Vincent and the Grenadines, Suriname, Trinidad, and Tobago will travel to Washington, DC, to attend the Conference on the Caribbean and meet with Members of Congress;

Whereas for the first time in its history, through the cooperation of the Caribbean Community (CARICOM), the Department of State, and Congress, the Conference on the Caribbean is convening June 19, 2007, through June 21, 2007, in Washington, DC;

Whereas CARICOM was created through the Treaty of Chaguaramas in 1973 at Chaguaramas, Trinidad and Tobago;

Whereas CARICOM was established in order to improve labor standards, production, and sustained economic development, expand foreign trade and economic relations, increase economic leverage and effectiveness of Member States in dealing with third-party states, enhance the coordination of Member States' foreign policies and trade relations, and promote the tradition of democracy in the region;

Whereas CARICOM is developing stronger trade, economic relations, and overall cooperation with the United States Government;

Whereas the Conference on the Caribbean is a unique dialogue between leaders of the United States and Caribbean countries to develop regional strategies for economic development and better relations with Caribbean countries;

Whereas the United States has maintained deep and enduring relations with the peoples of Caribbean countries and is linked to the Caribbean not only through geography but also through common interests and values;

Whereas the United States and Caribbean countries can enhance their cooperation in many areas, including mutually beneficial trade and economic relationships, countering the transnational scourges of crime, drugs, and terrorism, combating the spread of infectious disease, protecting the environment and encouraging tourism, maintaining fisheries and other maritime resources, addressing climate change, energy security and renewable energy sources, and promoting democracy and good governance; and

Whereas there are increasing numbers of Americans of Caribbean heritage making myriad contributions to America's rich cultural fabric and diversity: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That House of Representatives—

(1) recognizes the deep and historic ties between the peoples of the United States and the Caribbean;

(2) expresses the hope that relations between the United States and the Caribbean will continue to grow closer in the future;

(3) commends the Caribbean Community (CARICOM) for holding the Conference of the Caribbean; and

(4) recognizes and welcomes the delegation of Presidents, Prime Ministers, and Foreign

Ministers from Caribbean countries to Washington, DC.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) 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 the resolution 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 yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution.

Let me first commend my distinguished friend and colleague, also a senior member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, the gentleman from New York, Mr. ELIOT ENGEL, chairman of the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, for introducing this important resolution, which welcomes an impressive delegation of Presidents, Prime Ministers, and Foreign Ministers from the Caribbean to Washington, DC for the Conference on the Caribbean.

Mr. Speaker, the Caribbean nations are as varied and stunningly exquisite as anywhere in the world. We are pleased to have a strong relationship with the Caribbean Community, also known as CARICOM, the free trade association that unifies these states.

For the first time in its history, through the coordination of the Caribbean Community, the State Department and Congress, the Conference of the Caribbean is convening in Washington. The Foreign Affairs Committee is pleased to be meeting with the members of this delegation when they convene here on June 19 through June 21. They will also be meeting with President Bush as well as members of the House Ways and Means Committee and the Congressional Black Caucus.

This is to be a historic meeting that ushers in a new era of cooperation between the United States and the nations of the Caribbean, an area of the world often neglected.

The United States and the countries of the Caribbean can enhance collaboration in several important areas, including mutually beneficial trade and economic relationships; battling crime, drugs, and terrorism; and combating the spread of diseases including HIV/AIDS. This will also be a golden opportunity for the Caribbean nations and the United States to cooperate on new and clean energy production technologies.

Our relations with the Caribbean also hit very close to home as there are increasing numbers of Americans of Caribbean heritage making significant

contributions to our culture here in America. I need only to cite a few that come to mind, and one of the gentlemen I had the privilege of meeting years ago was none other than Mr. Harry Belafonte, whose roots are also from the Caribbean. What about the late and former Congresswoman Shirley Chisholm, the first African American woman to run for President of the United States, and she certainly distinguished herself in representing her constituents from New York.

□ 1515

Also, at the meeting, I had the privilege of meeting with a gentleman by the name of Sidney Poitier from the Caribbean, of Caribbean heritage. And of course none other than former Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, and also former Secretary of State, Mr. Colin Powell, whose heritage is also from the Caribbean.

We need to continue to work on ways to strengthen the open markets and economic ties that have brought prosperity to many Caribbean nations that promise to lift up those in need. We all look forward to seeing some real tangible results coming out of this upcoming conference.

I urge my colleagues to give this resolution its fullest support.

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

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 418 that welcomes the delegations of presidents, prime ministers and foreign ministers from the Caribbean to Washington to meet with the U.S. Congress. This delegation brings the President of Suriname, the prime ministers of Barbados, Belize, Grenada, St. Lucia, St. Vincent and the Grenadines, and Trinidad and Tobago, foreign ministers from the CARICOM countries, and the Assistant Secretary General of the Caribbean Community.

These unprecedented meetings are part of the CARICOM Conference on the Caribbean that will take place from June 19–21.

The Caribbean Community, or CARICOM, was established in 1973 to unify member countries on foreign policies and trade relations with outside states, and to improve the economic conditions of the region.

Fourteen member states will be represented at the meeting, which will focus on trade relations with the United States, energy cooperation, and security concerns, including small arms trafficking and counternarcotics efforts, immigration and the reintegration of the Portuguese in the region, and the prevention of HIV/AIDS.

There is always room to improve U.S. relations with our southern neighbors. Other such areas to be addressed during the discussions include encouraging tourism, protecting the environment, addressing energy security and renewable resources, combating the spread of infectious disease, and promoting democracy and good governance. This bill

recognizes the deep and historic ties between the people of the United States and the Caribbean, and it commends the Caribbean Community for the establishment of the first-ever conference of this kind.

I applaud this important step, and look forward to working with CARICOM to improve the overall relations between the U.S. Congress and our Caribbean allies.

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my good friend and colleague from Arkansas for his support of this important legislation.

Mr. Speaker, I forgot to mention as part of my commenting on this, the tremendous number of world-renowned athletes also coming from the Caribbean. I can only think of Bob Clemente from Puerto Rico. I know of one other, but I am going to get back to you on them, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker, at this time it is my privilege to yield such time as he may need to the chief sponsor and author of this proposed legislation, my good friend and colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL).

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my good friend from American Samoa, my classmate, who came to Congress together in 1989, for yielding me this time. I would like to thank Chairman LANTOS for marking up this resolution, and for the support of many members of the Foreign Affairs Committee.

I would also like to thank my colleagues. This is the first speech I am making on the House floor since the passing of my dear mother, and I want to thank my colleagues for their support and for their strength and caring for me and my family.

Mr. Speaker, this resolution welcomes a delegation of presidents, prime ministers and foreign ministers from 14 Caribbean nations to Washington, D.C., for the Conference on the Caribbean, which will be held next week.

I am the chairman of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, and I can tell you that the relationship that the United States has with the Caribbean nations is of paramount importance. In fact, in many of the trips that we have gone on, people have said to us they want the United States to be involved. They have a sense, many times, that we have looked elsewhere, and they don't understand why.

So I think it is important for our subcommittee to be involved, our committee to be involved and for the U.S. Congress to be involved in helping to foster good ties with the Caribbean nations; and of course this resolution lays the groundwork, and the interaction with the delegations from the Caribbean that will be here this week is very, very important.

As Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA said, the Caribbean nations are as culturally varied and physically beautiful as anywhere

in the world. It is important to expand our strong relationship with the Caribbean Community, also known as CARICOM. This is an historic conference. For the first time in its history, through the coordination of the Caribbean Community, the State Department, the Congress, the Conference on the Caribbean is convening in Washington. I cannot state how important that is and how significant that is and what kind of important role the United States Congress can play.

I am honored to be the chairman of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee, and I will do everything in my power to help facilitate relations between the United States, United States Congress and the nations of the Caribbean.

The Foreign Affairs Committee is pleased to be meeting with the members of this delegation on June 20 at 2:30 p.m., and I encourage all our colleagues, both on our committee and on our subcommittee, and even people that are not on our committee, to attend this meeting.

The delegation will also be meeting with President Bush, as well as members of the Ways and Means Committee and the Congressional Black Caucus, and as well as, of course, our Foreign Affairs Committee.

Mr. Speaker, I visited four Caribbean countries in the last 6 months and have learned much from our friends in the south. In Haiti, leaders are very appreciative for the support of the United States and for the recent passage of the HOPE legislation, but want to make sure we coordinate closely with the government on our assistance plan.

Further to the south, leaders of the many small island nations feel neglected by the United States and are looking for closer cooperation on energy, security, crime, education, health and other issues. Countries like China are stepping in and filling the vacuum left by the United States in these small, but strategically important countries. This is our hemisphere, the Western Hemisphere, and we simply must be more engaged. We cannot stand back and think that other countries are not going to move into the vacuum. You know, we used to go to school when we were kids and learn about the policy of "hands off the Americas," but that's not true anymore. Other countries, like China and like Iran and other places, will step in if we neglect these countries.

Our friends in the Caribbean have offered their support for U.S. efforts to combat global terrorism. With the recent revelation that the suspects from Trinidad and Tobago and Guyana were involved in the plot to blow up JFK Airport in New York City, we need more than ever to work closely with our allies in the Caribbean to defeat terrorism.

I was just in Trinidad with a delegation. We met with the leader of Trinidad, and he told us in emphatic terms how closely he wanted to work with

the United States to combat terrorism. They're willing, they're able, they want to work with us. We just need to show that we want to work with them.

Terrorism is not just a single region issue, it impacts all areas of the world. When we have friends reaching out to us in our hemisphere as allies on the war on terror, we must closely engage with them.

I am looking forward to this historic meeting that ushers in a new era of cooperation between the United States and the Caribbean, an area of the world to which, again, I don't believe we have been paying adequate attention.

The United States and the countries of the Caribbean can enhance collaboration in several important areas, including mutually beneficial trade and economic relationships, battling crime, drugs and terrorism, and combating the spread of diseases, including HIV/AIDS. There is also a golden opportunity for the Caribbean nations and the U.S. to cooperate on new and clean energy production technologies. And, again, when we were in Trinidad, we visited some of those technologies, Trinidad being a major supplier of natural gas to the United States of America.

Our relations with the Caribbean also are very important as there are large numbers of Americans of Caribbean heritage, as the gentleman from American Samoa pointed out, making significant contributions to our culture in America. I represent the New York City area district. In New York City and in the suburbs, and in my district alone in New York, there are very, very large numbers of Caribbean residents, including Jamaicans, Haitians, Dominicans, and many, many others. The Dominican Republic is a country that wants to work closely with us, a very important country. Haiti needs our attention. Grenada, where the United States invaded when Ronald Reagan was President, now we seem to be neglecting them. We visited there as well. So these are countries that we need to watch, to work with.

The gentleman on the other side of the aisle mentioned St. Vincent and the Grenadines. It's just coincidental that the foreign minister of St. Vincent and the Grenadines, who will be here, went to college with me some 40 years ago in New York City. And we have maintained our friendship through all those years, never knowing that I would eventually go to Congress and he would become the foreign minister of St. Vincent in the Grenadines. And so I hope to work with him on these issues. His name is Louis Straker. These are important relationships, and we need to continue to foster them.

And finally, we must continue to work on ways of strengthening the relationships that have brought prosperity to many Caribbean nations and that promise to lift up those in need. It

is my hope that our friends in the Caribbean can see some real concrete results coming out of this important Caribbean Conference in Washington.

Let me just conclude by saying the time for rhetoric is over. It is now time for action and a real enhancement of our relations with the Caribbean.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank my colleagues for their support of this legislation. I thank the chairman. I thank the gentleman from the American Samoa, the gentleman from Arkansas. We all need to work together. This should be bipartisan. This is good for America. We need to strengthen our ties with the Caribbean.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the subcommittee chairman for his hard work. Also, I want to thank the chairman of the full committee, Mr. LANTOS, and Ms. ROSLEHTINEN for bringing this forward along with our staff.

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I want to commend my colleague and chairman of our Subcommittee of the Western Hemisphere. Not only am I an original cosponsor of this important resolution, but also, as a member of the Western Hemisphere Subcommittee, it has been my privilege over the years to also visit some of our countries here in the Caribbean area. And as my friend from New York has said, sometimes we neglect these so-called small states.

A couple of weeks ago, I had the privilege of hosting several presidents and prime ministers from the South Pacific, from the Pacific region. Currently, in the United Nations they have what is known as a small states association, which is comprised primarily of states or countries from the Caribbean, and also from the Pacific region. And they number about a little over 42 members in the United Nations.

The point I wanted to make, Mr. Speaker, is these are sovereign, independent nations, and we are not to look at them as just because they're small, that they are not important as far as our national needs are concerned. We ought to be very sensitive to the needs of small states, no matter where they are.

I also want to note with a sense of irony that right in the middle of the Caribbean we have 4 million U.S. citizens living in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico. I failed to mention that with my love and passion for the sport of golf, it was my privilege to meet a couple of years ago the great golfer from Puerto Rico, Chi Chi Rodriguez. I stated earlier Sammy Sosa. We have so many names here, Mr. Speaker, I just wanted to share with my colleagues and my good friend from Arkansas, tremendous contributions of talent coming from the Caribbean region. I don't need to say them in terms of the wealth of talent coming from the Caribbean as far as the sport of baseball is concerned. I just want to share that note with my colleagues.

And again, I want to commend my good friend, the chairman of our Foreign Affairs Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere. We look forward to meeting with these presidents and prime ministers coming from the Caribbean region.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. Mr. Speaker, as a daughter of the Caribbean and the only member of the House from the English-speaking Caribbean, I rise in strong support of H. Res. 418, which recognizes and welcomes the delegation of Presidents, Prime Ministers, and Foreign Ministers from the Caribbean to Washington, DC, and commends the Caribbean Community, CARICOM, for holding their Conference on the Caribbean.

It is with great pride that I join my colleagues in applauding the heads of Government of the CARICOM Caribbean Community of nations for convening their conference on the Caribbean—A 20/20 Vision—here in Washington. The theme of the conference is: CARICOM DEVELOPMENT IN THE 21st Century: Economic Growth with Social Equity.

I want to thank and commend my colleague and friend the chairman of the Subcommittee on Western Hemisphere, Representative ENGEL for introducing H. Res. 418 and for shepherding it on to the floor of the House today.

Mr. Speaker, the nations of the Caribbean, some of the longest and most stable democracies in the region, have long been among our closest friends and staunch allies. In recent years, the region was described as America's "third border" because events there have a direct impact on the security of the United States. However, while we have made statements about bolstering political and economic stability in the region, the reality is that our friends to the south have been suffering from our benign neglect.

Whether it has been our position on Caribbean bananas at the WTO, or our insistence that our Caribbean neighbors make costly upgrades to their air and seaports to comply with our post-September 11th security concerns, to the recently instituted Western Hemisphere Initiative, our Caribbean neighbors have been taking it on the chin economically as a result of policy decisions we have made to address our domestic and foreign policy agendas.

I also hope that the recently uncovered plot to blow up a fuel supply line at the JFK Airport in NY, allegedly involving four men from Guyana and Trinidad and Tobago will not lead to the belief that the Caribbean is becoming a "hotbed of terrorism".

In holding their conference in Washington, our Caribbean neighbors hope to strengthen the relationship between the United States and CARICOM by addressing priority areas for future Caribbean growth and development, including issues related to trade, competitiveness and investment, in mutually beneficial and reinforcing ways.

They also hope to deepen and broaden the dialogue between the Governments and people of CARICOM and the Government and people of the United States of America that should result in the renewed appreciation of the Caribbean.

We—the Congress and the Bush Administration—owe it to these small and vulnerable friends to seriously consider the issues they will raise with us during the conference. These include, trade and competitiveness, immigra-

tion, cooperation on security issues including the return of criminal deportees, disaster preparedness and mitigation and health-care including HIV/AIDS.

The Caribbean and its peoples have deep and historic ties with the United States and its peoples. It is my fervent hope that through this conference and the meetings that will take place with President Bush and the Members of Congress, including the Congressional Black Caucus, that relations between the United States and the Caribbean will continue to grow closer in the future.

I urge my colleagues to support adoption of this resolution.

Ms. JACKSON-LEE of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 418, recognizing and welcoming the delegation of Presidents, Prime Ministers, and Foreign Ministers from the Caribbean to Washington, DC, and commending the Caribbean Community, CARICOM, for holding the Conference on the Caribbean.

I will first begin by thanking my colleague on the Foreign Affairs committee and chairman of the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, Representative ELIOT ENGEL, for introducing such an important key resolution, which welcomes to Washington, DC, Presidents, Prime Ministers, and Foreign Ministers from all nations of the Caribbean. Through cooperation between CARICOM, the Department of State and the United States Congress, delegates will meet for the first time in history for a three day—June 19—June 21, 2007—Conference on the Caribbean.

As a member of the United States House of Representatives, I recognize the deep and historic ties between our American people and those of the Caribbean. I would like to take this opportunity to commend the Caribbean community, CARICOM, for holding this conference, as well as to recognize and welcome all delegates to the United States. I look forward to working with the Caribbean community in maintaining and strengthening the relations between both countries.

CARICOM was created through the Treaty of Chaguaramas in 1973 to aid in developing stronger trade and economic relations, improving labor relations, and sustaining economic development and overall cooperation when dealing with third-party states. It will be the hope of all delegates convened to usher in a new era of cooperation between the U.S. and the Caribbean; an area of the world that is often neglected.

As a strong supporter of the notion of a global marketplace of ideas, I strongly believe that this meeting can serve as a landmark toward creating mutually beneficial relationships, as well as enhancing collaboration in several areas such as trade and economic relationships, crimes, drugs and terrorism, while also combating the spread of diseases, including HIV/AIDS. The Conference on the Caribbean also allows the two countries to cooperate on new and clean energy-production technologies.

As a leader in one of the most diverse metropolitan districts in the nation, as well as a member of the Foreign Affairs Committee here on Capitol Hill, I strongly cherish the bond that our two nations share. I can attest to the significant contributions that Americans of Caribbean heritage are making in America. Houston

is a multicultural city with a large and even advancing international community; for that reason, I strongly support and value a cultural outreach effort.

I thank you once again, Mr. ENGEL, for your efforts in introducing this piece of legislation. I am looking forward to witnessing the results of this upcoming conference.

Mr. Speaker, I ask all of my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. 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 agree to the resolution, H. Res. 418.

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. 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, further proceedings on this question will be postponed.

RECOGNIZING THE STRONG ALLIANCE BETWEEN THE REPUBLIC OF KOREA AND THE UNITED STATES

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 295) recognizing the strong alliance between the Republic of Korea and the United States and expressing appreciation to the Republic of Korea for its efforts in the global war against terrorism, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 295

Recognizing the strong alliance between the Republic of Korea and the United States and expressing appreciation to the Republic of Korea for its efforts in the global war against terrorism.

Whereas for more than 50 years since the outbreak of the Korean War, a close relationship has existed between the United States and the Republic of Korea, which has been of enormous economic, cultural, and strategic advantage to both nations;

Whereas President George W. Bush and President Roh Moo Hyun have demonstrated their mutual willingness to forge a deeper alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea to enhance stability in East Asia;

Whereas the 29,000 United States armed services personnel who are stationed in the Republic of Korea serve as a testament to the enduring strength of the 1953 U.S.-R.O.K. Mutual Defense Treaty;

Whereas the foundation of the relationship between the United States and the Republic of Korea rests on a shared interest in and commitment to peace, democracy, and freedom on the Korean Peninsula, in Asia, and throughout the world;

Whereas the Republic of Korea and the United States are both deeply committed to the Six Party Talks and have a mutual interest in keeping the Korean Peninsula free of nuclear weapons;

Whereas the Republic of Korea has more than 1,200 armed services personnel deployed in Iraq, constituting the third largest coalition contingent in Iraq behind the United States and the United Kingdom;

Whereas the Republic of Korea has more than 200 armed services personnel deployed in Afghanistan; and

Whereas the Republic of Korea has pledged \$460,000,000 toward reconstruction and stabilization in postwar Iraq: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives recognizes the strong alliance between the Republic of Korea and the United States and expresses appreciation to the Republic of Korea for its contributions to international efforts to combat terrorism.

□ 1530

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from American Samoa (Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) 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 the resolution 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 yield myself such time as I may consume, and I rise in strong support of the resolution.

Mr. Speaker, let me first commend our distinguished colleague and former member of the Foreign Affairs Committee, my good friend and colleague, the gentleman from New York (Mr. KING), for being the author of and introducing this important resolution.

Mr. Speaker, the strong alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea has been a pivotal relationship in world affairs since our involvement when we fought side by side in the Korean war over half a century ago. Out of that conflict was born one of the most significant dividing lines of the Cold War, a demilitarized zone on the 38th parallel that splits the Korean Peninsula and marked the divide between Communist Asia and democratic Asia. The partnership between our two countries held this line for decades. Today we help maintain a stable peace in Southeast Asia.

In the post-Cold War period, the Republic of Korea has remained a steadfast U.S. ally. It has contributed troops and pledged reconstruction funds for Iraq, and its forces are deployed in Afghanistan. As a key member of the six-party talks to denuclearize North Korea, it shares an important responsibility for broader security in Northeast Asia. Today we are committed absolutely to compelling the dangerous North Korea regime to eliminate its nuclear program.

Overall, South Korea is a key partner and an ally in the challenge of com-

bating world terrorism. The combination of emerging terrorism threats and the North Korean challenge makes this resolution particularly important today.

I certainly want to commend my good friend, Assistant Secretary Christopher Hill of the State Department, for his diligence and efforts in negotiating with the North Koreans in the six-party talks. I would be remiss if I did not also recognize a most significant contribution made by the Republic of China and the help that they have contributed in bringing the North Koreans to the negotiating table and for which the negotiations are now ongoing, hopefully to bring about a resolution to this important problem.

In economic realms, Mr. Speaker, the U.S. relationship with the Republic of Korea is one of our strongest in Asia. The Republic of Korea was one of the original East Asian Tigers and served as a model for other countries in Asia with its booming economic growth in the seventies, eighties and nineties. South Korea now is the United States' seventh largest trading partner in the world.

This resolution honors the close alliance between the United States and the Republic of Korea and recognizes South Korea's important contributions to fighting not only terrorism around the world, but also welcomes a strengthening and deepening of the relationship between our two countries and our peoples.

Mr. Speaker, when I was in Vietnam, I remember vividly the presence of some 50,000 soldiers from South Korea who served alongside us, the U.S. forces. I kind of like to say now you know where your real friends are.

I am reminded of a Chinese proverb: there are many acquaintances, but very few friends. South Korea was one of those few friends who was willing to put their action where their talk is; and the fact that 50,000 soldiers were there fighting along U.S. forces and in that terrible conflict that we faced in Vietnam, I cannot help but express my personal commendation and appreciation to the leaders and to the people of South Korea when they were there with us when we needed help.

I visited South Korea several times and I consider them the most industrious people on this planet. There are over 1 million Korean Americans living in our country today, some among the most prominent in the areas of science and doctors. They have become lawyers, engineers and are in all types of businesses. I have a very strong affection for the Korean people and those fellow citizens who happen to be of Korean ancestry.

So I think this resolution is most fitting. Again, I commend my good friend, the gentleman from New York, for offering and proposing this resolution.

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

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