

sale of its assets to fund democracy promotion, civil society and rule-of-law programs in Russia, as well as economic reform efforts.

At the same time, we have democracy promotion programs under way across Russia and the rest of the region, through the National Endowment for Democracy, the National Democratic Institute, and the International Republican Institute.

So there is obviously a possibility that duplications of efforts will take place unless this Congress finds ways to ensure that it doesn't. We don't want to see U.S. Government-funded organizations compete to do the same kinds of activities if that leads to duplication and waste, and the democracy promotion in that region is too important to see money wasted at a time when Russian President Putin and others are forcing their own brand of authoritarian government on their nations.

This measure has been amended in a way that seeks to mandate that any successor to the U.S. Government-funded Enterprise Fund in Russia has to reach an agreement with the Eurasia Foundation before it engages in any democracy promotion efforts in that country. Hopefully, that will eliminate duplication to some degree.

The bill, as amended, does not go as far as some of us would like, I must note. It does not address the similar situation that will arise in the Ukraine in the next few years when our U.S. Government-funded Enterprise Fund there closes down and seeks to set up its own successor foundation that may, once again, end up duplicating the work done by the Eurasia Foundation in the Ukraine.

It also does not address a completely separate question about how the assets of such U.S. Government-funded Enterprise Funds in Russia and Ukraine will be disposed of, an issue that involves hundreds of millions of dollars in U.S. taxpayer funds. It has been the practice to ensure that the taxpayers get back at least 50 percent of the funds held by such funds when they close down their operations.

There is an effort in the House-passed fiscal year 2008 foreign aid appropriations bill, however, to allow our fund in Russia not to turn back to our Treasury half of its assets. That would mean that the taxpayers would lose \$160 million, or perhaps even more than that, depending on the value of the assets sold in the case of the Russia fund alone. Those are monies that might otherwise go to help fund other worthwhile programs.

Perhaps this is not the bill in which to debate that issue, and our efforts in committee to address it in this measure were unsuccessful. But I take this opportunity to point out that issue in the hopes that the administration will be supported by Congress in its efforts to follow current practice and ensure that our Treasury gets back that very significant sum of money.

Mr. WEXLER. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of H.R. 2949, authorizing 15 million dollars in appropriations to the Eurasia Foundation for Fiscal Years 2008 and 2009. This legislation will enable the Eurasia Foundation—which has been operating in the former Soviet Union since 1992—to continue to engage at the highest level in democracy building, civil society promotion and private sector expansion.

I wish to thank Chairman LANTOS and Ranking Member ROS-LEHTINEN for their support of this legislation, as well as Congressman GALLEGLY who was the lead sponsor of this legislation in the 109th Congress. All of these Members have been tireless advocates for providing critical aid and support to former Soviet countries.

Mr. Speaker, this legislation comes at a critical time in our relations with Eurasian states that are still in political, economic and social transition following the collapse of the Soviet Union. It is also coming at a time when U.S. aid to the region is unconscionably shrinking. To this end, organizations such as the Eurasia Foundation are critical components of our strategy to remain engaged at governmental and non-governmental levels in a region that stretches from Armenia to Uzbekistan and from Ukraine to Kazakhstan.

This legislation recognizes the important work being done by the Eurasia Foundation and its efforts to promote civil society, public administration and rule of law—in a region of the world that needs America's attention, assistance and support. Passage of H.R. 2949 today will provide the Eurasia Foundation—a partner of the U.S.—the funds it needs to continue to issue thousands of grants and operate programs in Eurasia that have proven to be effective over fourteen years.

Again, I want to thank Chairman LANTOS and Ranking Member ROS-LEHTINEN for supporting this important legislation and urge my colleagues to vote in favor of this legislation when it comes to the floor for a vote.

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

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

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 2949, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CONGRATULATING NICOLAS
SARKOZY ON HIS ELECTION TO
THE PRESIDENCY OF FRANCE

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 379) congratulating

Nicolas Sarkozy on his election to the presidency of France, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 379

Whereas the Marquis de Lafayette and the people of France offered unparalleled friendship to the people of the United States in their pursuit of freedom and democracy during the American Revolution;

Whereas there are deep cultural ties between the American and French people, as exemplified by the large flow of visitors each year between the two nations, as well as extensive exchanges between United States and French academic institutions, museums, and sister cities;

Whereas the United States is France's 6th largest export market, and its top export market outside of the European Union, and for the United States, France is its 9th largest trading partner, and the United States is the largest foreign investor in France;

Whereas the United States and France are working together to solve important international crises;

Whereas Nicolas Sarkozy, upon winning the election to become the next President of France, said that the United States can count on France as a friend; and

Whereas the people of the United States support any effort by the Governments of France and the United States to maintain and grow a spirit of friendship and cooperation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives congratulates Mr. Nicolas Sarkozy on his election to the presidency of France and welcomes President Sarkozy on the occasion of his appearance before a Joint Meeting of Congress.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL) and the gentleman from Arkansas (Mr. BOOZMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from New York.

GENERAL LEAVE

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

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

There was no objection.

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

I would first like to commend our distinguished colleague, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. POE), for introducing this important resolution that congratulates Mr. Sarkozy on being elected the next President of France.

Over two centuries ago, the people of France assisted the people of the United States in their pursuit of independence during the American Revolution. Since then, the U.S. and France have shared an extensive and mutually beneficial relationship. Today, the United States and France are major economic partners, with nearly \$1 billion in trade taking place between the two countries each and every day.

France is the United States' ninth largest partner for trade in goods and sixth largest partner for trade and services. The United States and France are scientific and technical partners as well. Research institutions and private companies in both countries participate in extensive scientific collaboration on a wide range of issues, including computer development, biotechnology, and space exploration.

This spirit of cooperation also typifies the cultural exchange that takes place between American and French academic institutions, museums, and theatres. In light of our continued friendship between the people of the United States and France, we are honored that President Sarkozy will be appearing before a joint session of Congress this week on November 7, 2007.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution, which congratulates Mr. Nicholas Sarkozy on his election to the presidency of France and welcomes President Sarkozy to Washington.

I might also add that it is especially nice that the leader of France has demonstrated time and time again that he has warm feelings towards the United States of America and is, indeed, a pro-American leader of France. The relations between the United States and France in the past several years has been a little frosty, and it's nice to see that those frosty relations have thawed. It's nice to see a leader of France who understands and wants to work with the United States and understands that we have a very close, long-standing relationship between our people.

I welcome President Sarkozy. I look forward to hearing him when he speaks before a joint session of the House and Congress later on this week. I think that this resolution is a fitting tribute to him, and I believe that the United States and France, under his leadership, will enjoy warm ties.

If I can think a bit about my French from grammar school, I could say, *Vive la France*.

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

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

The great nation of France and the United States of America have a shared heritage of commitment to freedom and independence. From time to time, of course, we have made different choices or followed different paths in our commitment to the rule of law, human rights and democracy, but we in the United States are always grateful to have France's collaboration in advancing important foreign policy and security objectives. The newly elected President of France, Mr. Nicholas Sarkozy, is this week paying an official visit to Washington and will address a joint meeting of this Congress during his visit.

His visit prompts us to recall some of the expressions of support Mr. Sarkozy has offered to our country and some of the concrete steps he has, indeed,

taken to join with the United States in addressing key issues of our day.

On the eve of the fifth anniversary of the September 11 attacks, then-French Interior Minister Nicholas Sarkozy traveled to New York City to demonstrate solidarity with the American people on that occasion. During his visit, Mr. Sarkozy paid tribute to New York City's Police and Fire Departments as part of the commemoration of the anniversary and noted as part of his remarks the following: "One thing is sure in the history of our two peoples, each time we faced a challenge, France was able to count on the United States of America."

He then presented to the New York Fire Department the French Medal of Honor, the very first time that the medal, the highest award for French firefighters, has been awarded to foreigners. By taking such actions, as both Minister of the Interior and now as the President of France, Mr. Sarkozy has won the appreciation of the American people.

I note that his attitude regarding the necessity of preventing Iran from achieving its nuclear ambitions, his expressed support for the nation of Israel and his praise for the United States as a land of opportunity are very much appreciated as well.

Mr. Speaker, we are glad to have France as an ally, and we hope to deepen the friendship and partnership that the United States and France have enjoyed so many times in the history of our two countries. As the cochair of the Congressional French Caucus, I believe that the resolution before us today helps send a message of continued friendship with the people of France while congratulating President Sarkozy on his election and welcoming him to the United States.

I ask all of my colleagues to join in supporting this very timely resolution.

I have one additional speaker.

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I would continue to reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. BOOZMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield to the gentleman from California (Mr. DREIER) as much time as he may consume.

Mr. DREIER. I thank my good friend from Arkansas, the cochair of the U.S.-French Caucus, and appreciate his thoughtful remarks as well as the remarks of my friend from New York.

Mr. Speaker, I rise because I think it is really a great day that we are once again, after what could only be considered as somewhat of a hiatus in this institution, underscoring the importance of the relationship between the United States and France. It's very clear that there was a period of time when we were quite critical of France and, in fact, we all know that the sort of the politically correct thing to do was to engage in French bashing.

I always had a tough time with that myself. One of the reasons is that as we are here in this Chamber, the portrait just to my right is of the man who

underwrote the American Revolution, Marquis de Lafayette. In fact, his portrait is the only portrait of a non-American that hangs anywhere in this great building, the U.S. Capitol.

For us to recognize, as my friend from Arkansas just has said in his remarks, the great new, renewed friendship with the election of President Sarkozy between the United States and France is, I think, a great thing. I am very enthused about 11 o'clock Wednesday morning when we are in this very Chamber going to hear the words of France's new President.

As my friend said, for Nicholas Sarkozy, before he became President, when he was a minister on the fifth anniversary of September 11, to go to New York and demonstrate his solidarity with those who stood up to the terrorists and, again, his great assistance in working with us in supporting the State of Israel, in making sure that we do everything that we can to diminish the threat of the potential nuclear buildup in Iran; of course, the kinds of missions that Nicholas Sarkozy has embarked on most recently to return the hostages of many conflicts around is something that, I believe, is to be heralded. We just had the news this morning that President Sarkozy personally was able to see the return of, I think it was seven nurses, who had been held hostage.

So his commitment to the cause of freedom and liberty, and I will say, yes, his underscoring the great importance of the relationship and the alliance between France and the United States of America is a great thing for us. I congratulate my colleagues for their support and urge everyone to support this resolution.

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

Mr. ENGEL. 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 New York (Mr. ENGEL) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 379, as amended.

The question was taken.

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

Mr. BOOZMAN. 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.

EXPRESSING CONCERN RELATING TO IRANIAN REGIME AND MAHMOUD AHMADINEJAD

Mr. ENGEL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 435) expressing concern relating to the threatening behavior of the Iranian regime and its leader