

and will continue to do so as long as it remains a significant threat in the Middle East. I urge the swift passage of this resolution.

INTRODUCTION OF "THE INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S FREEDOM ACT OF 2009"

HON. CAROLYN B. MALONEY

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 16, 2009

Mrs. MALONEY. Madam Speaker, today I introduce "The International Women's Freedom Act of 2009" along with my friend and colleague, Representative CHAKAH FATTAH. I am also pleased that Senator BOXER has introduced the companion measure in the Senate.

This legislation establishes an "Office of International Women's Rights" within the State Department headed by the appointed Ambassador at Large, and additionally, would create a United States Commission on International Women's Rights.

The International Women's Freedom Act condemns violations of women's rights and gender equality while advocating for the improvement of the status of women of the world and the achievement of their equality with men. It also seeks to channel U.S. security and development assistance to governments other than those found to be engaged in gross violations of the rights of women.

I modeled this bill after another piece of legislation that created the United States International Commission on Religious Freedom in 1998. The Commission on International Religious Freedom has made substantial progress towards expanding religious freedom in Saudi Arabia and Turkmenistan, among others. In addition to religious freedom, we require the State Department to issue reports on battling

international bribery, sex trafficking, and narcotics control and these reports make a difference in people's lives. It is my hope that this bill will make a similarly profound difference in women's lives. I strongly believe that we owe it to the women of the world to shine a spotlight on the status of their rights in an effort to improve them.

RECOGNIZING MARILYN HORNE ON THE OCCASION OF HER 75TH BIRTHDAY

HON. MIKE THOMPSON

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Friday, January 16, 2009

Mr. THOMPSON of California. Madam Speaker, I rise today to pay tribute to a treasure of American cultural life and music, Marilyn Horne who is celebrating her 75th birthday. Ms. Horne has had a long and distinguished career that has spanned the globe and endeared her to music-lovers everywhere.

Ms. Horne has always demonstrated a passion for music, first performing publicly at the age of 2. After studying voice and song/recital works at the University of Southern California, she has gone on to perform in more than 1300 recitals, made over 100 recordings and received three Grammy Awards including the Lifetime Achievement Award in 1989. She has lent her mezzo-soprano voice to some of the most challenging roles in music and has been a fixture in the world of classical music for the last four decades.

She has also shown a commitment to sharing her passion with the next generation of vocalists through her work as a visiting professor at some of the Nation's great music programs and as director of the Voice Program at the Music Academy of the West in Santa Barbara, a program she has led since 1997. When Ms.

Horne became concerned about the diminishing recital opportunities for promising young vocalists, she founded the Marilyn Horne Foundation in 1993 to ensure that young singers would continue to have the opportunity to excel and to preserve vocal recital as a treasured and living art form in the United States. Since its inception, the Foundation has reached over 55,551 children via 649 school programs, supported 262 recitals of promising young vocalists in 26 States, and helped to share the gifts of these young people with millions of others by promoting radio broadcasts of these recitals. Many of the foundation's alumni can now be seen performing on some of opera's most famous stages, including Carnegie Hall, The Met and the New York City Opera.

The honors that Ms. Horne has received in her lifetime are too numerous to list here. But, most prominent among them are the National Medal of the Arts in 1992, being named a Kennedy Center Honoree in 1995, and being inducted into the American Classical Music Hall of Fame. She has also attracted international acclaim and her worldwide honors include the Commander of the Order of Arts and Letters from France's Ministry of Culture, Commendatore al Merito della Repubblica Italiana, and the Fidelio Gold Medal from the International Association of Opera Directors. She was also the inaugural winner of Italy's Rossini Medaglia d'Oro, which was created especially to recognize her contribution to reviving many of Rossini's greatest operas.

Madam Speaker, it is appropriate at this time that we honor Marilyn Horne for her lifetime of achievements, her passion for music, and her dedication to future generations of vocalists. We wish her the best of luck in her continuing work, and I am so honored to call her my friend.