

Our community and the entire nation are proud of these brave men and women, and we are glad to see them home safely. Soldier-citizens who voluntarily make such a tremendous sacrifice are what have kept our nation safe, free and strong for over 200 years. The work performed in support of Operation Iraqi Freedom is important—requiring personal commitment and sacrifice. Your service to our country will not be forgotten.

Mrs. McMORRIS RODGERS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the return home of the 81st Brigade.

In August 2008, it was a cloudy day in Eastern Washington when our community said goodbye to the men and women serving in the 81st Brigade. These citizen soldiers volunteered to serve a year in Iraq. The day they departed, we all had tears in our eyes. However, I also saw in every mother, father, wife, husband, and friend how proud they were of their soldier. I am grateful for the uncommon commitment as a "citizen soldier" leaving not only family and friends, but putting your job and perhaps educational goals on hold.

I also want to applaud the families of the 81st Brigade. More often than not, as soon as a servicemember deploys, the spouse is faced with an unforeseen obstacle like their brand new car needing to go back to the shop or the refrigerator deciding not to work. The families of the 81st Brigade have much catching up to do. They will have a Thanksgiving to celebrate, Christmas presents to open, birthday candles to blow out, Easter eggs to hunt and many, many kisses and hugs to share.

The operations we face in Iraq and Afghanistan have now lasted longer than World War II. In the last five years our nation has tasked every branch of the military and every component; active duty, National Guard and Reserve. Each has responded admirably and consistently. Our Soldiers, Sailors, Airmen, and Marines are a vital part of that critical response in keeping America safe. We could not protect our nation if it were not for what each of them bring to the fight.

Mr. Speaker, the 81st Brigade recently returned on a sunny day back to Washington State. I am proud to welcome them home and congratulate them on a job well done.

Mr. SMITH of Washington. I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Washington (Mr. SMITH) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 627, as amended.

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

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

MOURNING THE LOSS OF LIFE ON AMERICAN SAMOA AND SAMOA AFTER THE EARTHQUAKES AND TSUNAMIS ON SEPTEMBER 29, 2009

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 816) mourning the loss of life caused by the earthquakes and tsunamis that occurred on September 29, 2009, in American Samoa and Samoa, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 816

Whereas, on September 29, 2009, at 1748 UTC, a powerful earthquake struck below the ocean about 140 miles southwest of Pago Pago, American Samoa, and 125 miles south of Samoa, centered only 11 miles below the seabed;

Whereas the earthquake registered 8.3 on the Richter scale and is recognized as the world's largest earthquake of 2009;

Whereas a second earthquake with a magnitude of 5.6 occurred at 1808 UTC in the vicinity of the first one;

Whereas the first undersea earthquake created a massive tsunami that crashed into American Samoa, Samoa, and neighboring Tonga, sweeping cars and people out to sea as survivors fled to high ground;

Whereas the tsunami, with towering waves that reached up to 20 feet in height and penetrated one mile inland, caused death and destruction on a nearly unprecedented scale;

Whereas the death toll, as of October 7, 2009, is estimated at 32 in American Samoa and 135 in the Independent State of Samoa;

Whereas many individuals and families affected in this region are now lacking basic survival necessities and there remains the risk of numerous additional deaths due to shortages of clean water, adequate shelter, food, sanitation, and basic healthcare;

Whereas the human cost of this disaster transcends mere statistics and has resulted in deeply personal tragedies for numerous families and communities in the region and throughout the world;

Whereas children in the United States Territory of American Samoa running for home unknowingly ran in the direction of the tsunami;

Whereas the villages of Fagamalo, Poloa, Amanave, Fai'lolo, Nua, Se'etaga, Afao, Asili, Amaluia, Leone, Fagasa, Fagatogo, Pago Pago, Aua, Afono, Vatia, Masefau, Faga'itua, Pagai, Utusia, Alofau, Auto, Alao, and Tula in American Samoa were devastated by the disaster;

Whereas in response to this disaster and call for assistance, the people of the United States have responded with a generous and heartfelt outpouring of aid;

Whereas a team of more than 300 responders from the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA), the American Red Cross, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and other Federal agencies is on the ground in American Samoa coordinating relief and recovery operations;

Whereas the United States Navy (USN), the United States Coast Guard (USCG), the Hawaii Air National Guard, and the U.S. Army Reserve American Samoa, under the leadership of Admiral Timothy J. Keating, Commander, U.S. Pacific Command (PACOM), and Command Sergeant Major (CSM) Iuniasolua T. Savusa, Senior Enlisted Leader, PACOM, with the support of Major General Robert G.F. Lee, the Adjutant General, State of Hawaii, provided critical transport of the life-saving and life-sustaining supplies and equipment to meet the immediate needs of the survivors, including more than 26,000 meals, 14,000 liters of water, 1,800 blankets, 800 tents, more than 800 cots, and 9 pallets of medical supplies and medical equipment in support of American Samoa's mass care operations;

Whereas foreign governments, including Kazakhstan, the People's Republic of China, the Republic of Korea, Palau, Thailand, Samoa, Fiji, Grenada, Hungary, Uzbekistan, Republic of China (Taiwan), Indonesia,

Nauru, Australia, Cambodia, Vietnam, Japan, Pacific Islands Forum members, and the Alliance of Small Island States (AOSIS) sent messages of support and offers of aid to the people of American Samoa;

Whereas organizations including the Li Ka Shing Foundation, the Hanwha Group, Save the Children, the American Red Cross, Habitat for Humanity, Latter-day Saint Charities, Catholic Charities, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee (JDC), National Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster, StarKist, Bumble Bee, the National Football League (NFL), and many others are providing assistance;

Whereas the Samoan community in areas such as California, Utah, Washington, and Hawaii have been instrumental in helping their "aiga" abroad;

Whereas President Barack H. Obama telephoned the Governor of American Samoa and American Samoa's Delegate to the United States House of Representatives to personally extend his and the First Lady's condolences to the families and loved ones of those who lost their lives in the earthquake and tsunami in American Samoa and the region, and to assure the Governor and the Delegate that he would speed the deployment of resources and provide the tools necessary for a full, swift, and aggressive response;

Whereas Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton also telephoned American Samoa's Delegate in his capacity as Chairman of the House Foreign Affairs' Subcommittee on Asia, the Pacific and the Global Environment to convey her sympathy and offer her full support which subsequently included the authorization to airlift emergency supplies to Samoa;

Whereas Speaker of the House Nancy Pelosi issued a press statement on behalf of the entire Congress promising to quickly address the needs of American Samoa and the Americans who live there; and

Whereas Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, House Majority Leader Steny H. Hoyer, Chairman John F. Kerry of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Chairman Howard L. Berman of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Chairman Nick J. Rahall, II, of the House Committee on Natural Resources, as well as many other Members of Congress also offered expressions of support in the aftermath of the devastating tsunami: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) mourns the loss of life caused by the earthquakes and tsunamis that occurred on September 29, 2009, in American Samoa, Samoa, and Tonga;

(2) offers its deepest sympathy and condolences to the families of the many earthquake and tsunami victims, and to Head of State His Highness Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese and Prime Minister Tullaepa Lupeolai Saillele Maleilegaoi of Samoa, as well as to His Majesty King George Tupou V and Prime Minister Feleti Vaka'uta Sevele of Tonga;

(3) pledges its full support to the people of American Samoa and the villages of Fagamalo, Poloa, Amanave, Fai'lolo, Nua, Se'etaga, Afao, Asili, Amaluia, Leone, Fagasa, Fagatogo, Pago Pago, Aua, Afono, Vatia, Masefau, Faga'itua, Pagai, Utusia, Alofau, Auto, Alao, and Tula as they begin the long and difficult process of rebuilding their homes and lives;

(4) recognizes the humanitarian response that is currently underway and commends the efforts of all persons and relief organizations who continue to alleviate the suffering by providing financial and material support;

(5) urges continued attention by donors and relief agencies to the needs of vulnerable

populations in the stricken areas, particularly the children and elderly who have been devastatingly affected by this disaster;

(6) expresses gratitude and appreciation to the foreign governments from around the world that are lending their support to the United States Territory of American Samoa;

(7) commends the over 100,000 Samoans residing in the United States from American Samoa and Samoa for coming to the aid of their "aiga" in the affected islands; and

(8) pays tribute to the people of American Samoa and Samoa for their strength of spirit and their deep and abiding faith in God which brings hope to all of us.

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

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution mourning the loss of life caused by the earthquakes and tsunamis that occurred on September 29, 2009, in American Samoa, in the independent state of Samoa and in Tonga.

On September 29, 2009, a powerful earthquake, which registered 8.3 on the Richter scale and is recognized as the world's largest earthquake of 2009, struck below the ocean about 140 miles southwest of Pago Pago and 125 miles south of Apia, in the state of Samoa, creating a massive tsunami, or tidal wave, that crashed into American Samoa, the Independent State of Samoa, and the Kingdom of Tonga, sweeping cars and people out to sea as survivors fled to high ground. The tsunami, or tidal wave, with towering waves that reached up to 20 feet in height and penetrated 1 mile inland, caused death and destruction on a nearly unprecedented scale.

The human cost of this disaster transcends mere statistics and has resulted in deeply personal tragedies for numerous families and communities in the region and throughout the world.

In the U.S. territory of American Samoa, children running for home unknowingly ran in the direction of the tsunami. The villages of Fagamalo, Poloa, Amanave, Failolo, Afao, Asili, Amaluia, Leone, Fagasa, Fagatogo, Pago Pago, Aua, Afono, Vatia, Lau'i, Faga'itua, Masefau, Alao, Tula, and Aoa in American Samoa were devastated by the disaster. Villages were also wiped out in the independent state of Samoa.

In response to this tragedy, President Barack Obama speedily deployed the

tools necessary for a full, swift and aggressive response by FEMA.

Secretary of State Hillary Clinton also offered her full support and authorized the airlift of emergency supplies to the independent state of Samoa.

Speaker of the House NANCY PELOSI issued a special statement on behalf of the entire Congress, promising to quickly address the needs of American Samoa and the Americans who live there.

Senate Majority Leader HARRY REID, House Majority Leader STENY HOYER, Chairman JOHN F. KERRY of the Senate Committee on Foreign Relations, Chairman HOWARD L. BERMAN of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, Chairman NICK RAHALL of the House Committee on Natural Resources, as well as many other Members of Congress also offered expressions of support in these trying times.

I especially want to thank my colleague and dear friend, Congresswoman LAURA RICHARDSON, for her working side by side with my office in support of our Samoan communities living in her district and in Samoa, as well as in American Samoa. Congresswoman RICHARDSON has stood by us every step of the way and has earned her rightful place in our hearts for leaving no stone unturned in relief efforts.

I also want to thank our Samoan communities and congregations—churches from Hawaii, Washington, Utah, and California—which collected critical supplies that will now be airlifted or transported by surface transportation to Samoa and, hopefully, also to American Samoa.

I want to also thank the Reverend Liki Tiatia, the Reverend John Mailo, the Reverend Misipauena Tagaloa, and High Chief Loa Pele Faletogo, who have been instrumental in gathering emergency supplies for our families abroad.

With so many people in need of basic supplies, words cannot express how grateful I am to all of my fellow Americans and to our friends from around the world who have responded to this disaster and to our call for assistance with a generous and heartfelt outpouring of aid. More than 300 responders from the Federal Emergency Management Agency, the American Red Cross, the U.S. Corps of Engineers, the Department of Health and Human Services, and other Federal agencies are on the ground in American Samoa, coordinating relief and recovery operations.

□ 1130

Organizations including the Li Ka Shing Foundation, the Hanwha Group, Save the Children, Habitat for Humanity, Latter-Day Saint charities, Catholic Charities, the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee, tuna canneries like StarKist, Bumble Bee, even the Polynesian professional football players with the National Football League and the coalition of various Sa-

moan organizations like the Office of Samoan Affairs and many others that are providing assistance.

The United States Navy, the Coast Guard, the Hawaii International Guard and the U.S. Army Reserves in American Samoa provided critical transport of the life-saving and life-sustaining supplies and equipment to meet the immediate needs of the survivors.

On behalf of the people of America Samoa, I express my gratitude for all of those who have stood by us when we have needed you most.

I also join with Governor Togiola Tulafono and First Lady Maryanne Togiola Tulafono of American Samoa conveying my deepest condolences to the families of the many earthquake and tsunami victims, and to the Head of State, his Highness Tui Atua Tupua Tamasese and Prime Minister Tuilaepa Lufesoliai Sailele Malielega of Samoa, as well as to His Majesty King George Tupou V and Prime Minister Feleti Vaka'uta Sevele of Tonga.

As we begin the long and difficult process of rebuilding, we thank God for the prayers you have offered on our behalf and express appreciation to all persons and relief organizations who continue to alleviate our suffering.

In memory of those who are no longer with us, I urge my colleagues to support passage of House Resolution 816, mourning the loss of life caused by the earthquakes and tsunamis that occurred on September 29, 2009, in American Samoa, Independent State of Samoa and the Kingdom of Tonga.

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

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, as my friend from American Samoa said, a terrible tragedy occurred on September 29, 2009, in the South Pacific. American Samoa and Samoa were struck by separate tsunami waves which devastated numerous communities on each of the islands. We offer our deepest sympathies and condolences to the many victims in the region.

The outreach of support and humanitarian efforts to assist each of the islands in their recovery efforts has to be commended. Federal agencies, military services, foreign governments, relief organizations, and private citizens have all reached out to assist these island nations.

These islands face months, if not years, of recovery actions. They will depend on Congress and the continued efforts of the Federal Government, relief organizations, and private citizens to recover.

I urge all of us to be steadfast in our support for the communities on American Samoa and Samoa and assist them to recover from this terrible event.

Finally, I would like to commend and extend my best wishes to our friend and colleague, Eni Faleomavaega, who has worked tirelessly on behalf of his constituents to meet the needs of his

constituents who have suffered much during this very, very difficult period.

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

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend and gentleman from Washington for his support and endorsement as well as the chairman of our Committee on Natural Resources, NICK RAHALL, for his support.

At this time I would like to yield 2 minutes to my distinguished friend and colleague, the gentlelady from the State of Hawaii (Ms. HIRONO).

Ms. HIRONO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H. Res. 816 which expresses the condolences of the Congress to the Samoans following the natural disasters in the South Pacific.

I cannot stress how much these terrifying events were so deeply felt throughout the State of Hawaii because of our close familial, historical, cultural, and geographical ties to these islands.

I would like to extend a heartfelt "mahalo"—my thanks—to Hawaii's Army Air and Army Guard Medical Communication and search and rescue specialists who assisted in the recovery efforts. It is worth noting that this was the first time the Hawaii National Guard had deployed such a sizable tax force outside our State in support of a Pacific partner.

I would also like to thank the 15 Red Cross volunteers from Hawaii who focused on outreaching to the families who lost loved ones in the disasters and served meals that included local favorites like spam and saimin. I would also like to thank the many Hawaii businesses who made monetary or in-kind donations.

The outpouring of support for relief efforts from Hawaii's Samoan community has been tremendous. I know that much of their strength in the wake of these disasters is derived from their personal faith for which I have long had great admiration.

I want to close by letting my dear friend and colleague, Congressman ENI FALEOMAVAEGA, know that I stand ready along with other Members of Congress to continue to support his efforts to help the people of American Samoa and Samoa in any way that we can.

Mahalo.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. I thank the gentlelady for her kind remarks from the State of Hawaii.

At this time, I would like to yield 4 minutes to my good friend from California, Congresswoman LAURA RICHARDSON.

Ms. RICHARDSON. Mr. Speaker, I thank the gentleman for yielding, and I rise in strong support of H.R. 816, to mourn the loss of the lives and all of the tragedy that we had with the earthquake and the subsequent tsunami that devastated American Samoa and the independent State of Samoa.

May I first of all take a moment to really commend Congressman ENI

FALEOMAVAEGA from American Samoa. There is no tougher time as a Member that we have when a disaster hits our community to respond where he has been working over the last week visiting all of the territories, all of the areas to assess and to understand how we can help best.

You might ask how I got involved. Why would an 8.3 magnitude earthquake 120 miles away, that caused a tsunami, that caused death throughout many of our communities, why would I be engaged? Well, in the United States we have over 80,000 Samoans who live here, over 52,000 who live in California, and almost 30,000 of those actually live in my district. So this is beyond an issue of just a concern of a community that had a disaster. It's actually family and friends and people that I've worked with for a long time who are looking for help and assistance.

So when we stand today, I want to stand in full support with Congressman ENI FALEOMAVAEGA to really look at the tragedy that has happened but also how we can move forward. The Congressman has been successful in working with the Secretary to be able to send aid this very week that's going to go to western Samoa which the chairman has been a chairman over for many years on the committee. But we need to continue to work so when disasters like this occur, we can get help and assistance quickly, and time should not be with delay.

I also want to thank Secretary Clinton publicly for her assistance. We appreciate the initial efforts that had been done in American Samoa, but much more needs to be done, and we will work in concert to ensure that that continual work supplies things that many people care desperately for actually get to the people.

As I conclude my comments, I want to say that as Members, as we stand together to deal with this tragedy, people should know that there are over 60 organizations in my district who have now donated over 200,000 pounds of various supplies: water, food, clothing, things that people desperately need. But what they really need is they need to also know from us as leaders that they're not there alone, that we are watching what's happening, we are watching the response of FEMA and the other aspects of our government, and we are committed to them not only today but we're committed as they're going to have to rebuild which will take for many months to come.

I commend you, Congressman, for all your efforts. You passionately lead the people in your community. We're fortunate to have you here. And I will work with you and other members of our caucus to ensure not only this support, but all of the support that you need that you have us right there standing side by side.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself 1 minute to again ex-

press my sincere appreciation to the comments by my dear friend and colleague, Congresswoman LAURA RICHARDSON.

Just to give my colleagues a sense of what took place, as I said earlier in my remarks, it was an earthquake right on the fringe of the Tonga Trench. The Tonga Trench is one of the two deepest trenches in the world, second only to the Marianas Trench. And when the earthquake struck at almost 7 in the morning, it caused tremors in the Samoan Islands for about 3 minutes, but the shock wave was traveling at about 500 miles an hour. So there was no way that anybody could possibly prepare for this disaster to occur because in a manner of minutes—I've seen tidal waves before, and what happens is that the water is totally sucked out from the shoreline from the reefs so pretty much you can prepare yourself to anticipate the coming of the tidal wave.

What made this disaster so different is the fact that the tremors occurred for about 3 or 5 minutes, then 5 minutes later, the tidal wave was up there 20 feet in height coming to the many people who were so surprised and shocked that early morning at 7 o'clock when the tidal wave came in.

So we're looking at two disasters: an earthquake that caused a lot of problems and then the tsunami. So the two disasters occurred at the same time.

I wanted to share that with my colleague that this is what made a very unusual disaster because there was no way that anybody could properly prepare for what was coming when this earthquake occurred.

At this time, Mr. Speaker, I would like to yield 2 minutes to my colleague from the Virgin Islands, DONNA CHRISTENSEN.

Mrs. CHRISTENSEN. I thank you for yielding, and I want to rise also in strong support of H.R. 816, mourning the loss of life caused by the earthquake and tsunami that occurred on September 29, 2009, in American Samoa and Samoa, and to extend my thoughts and prayers and that of the people of the Virgin Islands to the victims of that 8.0 magnitude earthquake and tsunami that devastated our brothers and sisters in the U.S. territory of American Samoa and the Nation of Western Samoa and to offer our condolences to those that lost loved ones as a result of that tragedy.

Like my colleague from California, I've been to American Samoa several times with the Congressman. We were there in early August and visited his own village of Leone—which we heard so much about in the wake of the earthquake and the tsunami because they were so hard hit—and I remember how the people came out and welcomed us. They fed us. We had a joyous time with them. That evening they showered us with so many gifts, and we just hope that we can return those gifts to them in their time of greatest need.

As I speak to you, there is a young girl—and I wish I had her name with

me—who has started a drive at home for the people of American Samoa and Western Samoa. When I go back home on Saturday, I will join her at one of our shopping centers to continue to raise supplies and funds to help our neighbors.

I know as a Congresswoman from the U.S. Virgin Island, a community of islands that is also vulnerable to tropical disasters, I am very aware of the toll it can take on the people, infrastructure, and our time and resources. I know how hard it has been on our colleague, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA to be home. I called him one morning, forgetting that it was 5 o'clock in the morning in American Samoa, but he was already up and preparing to go and visit just another area that had been devastated.

The people of my district, the U.S. Virgin Islands, have asked me to express their solidarity with the people of American Samoa at this time of their distress, and to extend our support to our colleague, Congressman ENI FALEOMAVAEGA, as they make and we make with them the necessary arrangements to mobilize and deploy urgently needed emergency assistance and to assure them that all of the American people, but especially those on the other off-shore territories, are ready to assist them.

In visiting American Samoa you cannot help but be struck by the strong community spirit that exists there and the strong faith, and I know that will bear them up through this difficult time, but they still need our support, and we're here for them.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to yield 4 minutes to the gentlelady from Florida, the ranking member of the Foreign Relations Committee, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. I thank the gentleman for the time.

Mr. Speaker, I was honored to join my good friend, Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA, in serving as an original cosponsor of this critical resolution. This resolution offers the condolences in a heartfelt way of the Congress to those who endured suffering and loss in American Samoa and Samoa and neighboring Tonga during the tragic events of September 29 and the aftermath. We join with the people of American Samoa, Samoa and the entire Samoan community here in the United States in mourning those who have died in this terrible disaster.

□ 1145

The previous tragic events of 2004 made us all keenly aware of the devastation which can be wrought by a tsunami after an earthquake takes place in ocean waters.

Waves from this tsunami in American Samoa were reportedly 20 feet high and rushed 1 mile inland, causing unprecedented death and destruction. The latest death toll reported is 32 dead in American Samoa and 135 dead in Samoa. Children mistakenly running in the direction of the tsunami were among the victims.

The Governor of American Samoa was quoted as saying that the quake and subsequent tsunami ranked right up there with some of the worst disasters to hit the area. Survivors are in urgent need of necessities, including water, adequate shelter, food, sanitation, and health care. Three hundred emergency responders have reportedly been dispatched by FEMA. The Red Cross, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and the Department of Health and Human Services are coordinating relief and recovery operations.

The U.S. military, under the direction of the U.S. Pacific Command in Hawaii, is providing emergency assistance, including food, water, tents, blankets, and medical supplies. In this regard, military personnel are helping their friends and colleagues, as the young people of American Samoa are well known for their patriotic spirit of service in the United States military, including in both Iraq and Afghanistan. We appreciate and honor that service.

I urge my colleagues to give their strong support to this resolution.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, again, I thank my good friend, the senior ranking member of our House Foreign Affairs Committee, for her kind comments, mentioning also about the military participation of the sons and daughters of American Samoa.

According to the recent reports of USA Today newspaper, American Samoans have the highest percentage per annum in the whole United States in terms of those who sacrificed their lives in the war in Iraq and Afghanistan, with about 136 percent above all States and territories. I do want to thank the gentlelady for reminding us of that.

Mr. Speaker, if I could ask how much more time do we have?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from American Samoa has 5 minutes remaining, and the gentleman from Washington has 16 minutes remaining.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. I yield 1 minute to the gentlelady from California, my dear friend, Ms. CHU.

Ms. CHU. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of House Resolution 816. Last month's magnitude 8.0 earthquake in Samoa, Tonga, and American Samoa was devastating, setting off tsunamis that washed over islands killing 168 people.

The quake generated three separate tsunami waves, the largest measuring 5.1 feet, completely destroying villages, leaving families whose entire lives had washed away with nothing. On the small islands, ocean waters washed away houses, cars, and main access roads, making it all the more difficult for rescue parties and aid to reach hard-hit areas.

In the aftermath of the disaster, local aid agencies, foreign nations, the U.S. Coast Guard, and FEMA instituted a quick and much-needed response. With the lack of proper sanitation, water and shelter continuing to be a

problem, I urge relief organizations to bolster their efforts to keep residents safe and healthy.

I commend President Obama for declaring American Samoa a major disaster area. My heart goes out to the Samoan community, many of whom live in my area of Los Angeles County.

Mr. HASTINGS of Washington. Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to yield 1 minute to my namesake and friend from Florida (Mr. HASTINGS).

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida. I thank my colleague for yielding. I did not ask my distinguished good friend, because I didn't know how many speakers he had, and I didn't want to interdict the program as it is set forth.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in very strong support of the resolution offered in a bipartisan fashion and demonstrating very strongly how we do respond to those who are in need.

In the case of ENI FALEOMAVAEGA, American Samoa has had for a considerable period of time a distinguished Member of this body who has helped so many of us when we have had difficulties such as in Hurricane Andrew. Those that live in these areas, or my friend that just spoke from Hawaii, all of us understand these dynamics.

ENI, our heart goes out to you. As one who has visited American Samoa with you on three different occasions and had the good fortune of bringing my son there, I just want you to know how heavy my heart was when I saw those places, and my heart goes out to you and all.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I yield 1 minute to my good friend from the Northern Mariana Islands, Congressman SABLAN.

Mr. SABLAN. Mr. Speaker, 2 weeks ago I came to the floor to offer my condolences to the people of American Samoa and to their far-flung families who were still reeling from the initial shock from the tsunami and from the many losses suffered. Today, we meet in a more formal manner to broaden the expression of these condolences to include this House and all the people we represent from across our Nation.

I said before that the people of the Pacific, though separated by thousands of miles, feel that we are part of one family. We understand the vulnerability and isolation of life on an island in the midst of a sea, a vast sea. That shared understanding makes us one.

Today, I rise that all Americans, though separated by experience and culture, by language and distance, are part of one family. It is inexplicable how this may be so, but this evidence makes clear that it is so. When many of us are in need, as American Samoa is and will continue to be, then we find we are not alone. Then we remember we are all Americans.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, how much time do I have remaining?

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The gentleman from American Samoa has 3 minutes remaining.

Mr. FALEOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, at this time I yield 1½ minutes to my

good friend from Texas (Mr. AL GREEN).

Mr. AL GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I believe that there is but one race, and that is the human race. I believe that one God created all humanity to live in harmony. I am honored to be here today to express my sympathies and my oneness with the people of American Samoa, Indonesia, as well as the Philippines.

I also want to make it very clear that my district is a polyglot melting pot. It is, in fact, a culture of cultures. Because it is such, I have a special kinship and relationship with the persons who have been devastated by these natural disasters.

I believe that we cannot do enough to help them recover. But I also understand in my heart that when you cannot do enough, you have a duty to do all that you can. I want us to do more because these are our fellow human beings. They are part of the one race, the human race.

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

Mr. FALÉOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I again want to thank my good friend from Washington for his assistance and partnering with me in putting this resolution before our colleagues.

I also have a proverbial expression, going along with what my good friend from Texas has said, that, yes, there truly is only one race, and that's the human race. That's what makes this country so great.

I also believe that this country is but a microcosm of the whole world in itself, and the fact that it seeks no race or creed or boundaries to the extent that we are all fellow human beings, and whenever there is a need, it's our moral responsibility to do all that we can to give assistance.

There is also a saying among the Chinese people that says there are many acquaintances but very few friends.

I will say, Mr. Speaker, to express my deepest appreciation and gratitude to my colleagues who truly are my friends, when I am in need, just from the fact that many of our colleagues have had occasions of having to appear before the floor and expressing and asking for assistance when disasters occur in their States and their territories, this is what the Congress is all about. This is what democracy is all about in this great country.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I cannot say enough words to express my deepest appreciation and gratitude for the offered help from the administration, from our colleagues on the other side of the aisle, from everybody in the Congress, knowing of the difficulties that we are going through. I am going to say, our people are in good spirits. The prayer services, all that has been offered has been tremendous. I just want to say again, thank you to my colleagues.

Mr. RAHALL. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 816 and to express my con-

lences and deepest sympathies to the people of American Samoa and Independent Samoa for the loss of life that was caused by the earthquakes and tsunamis that hit these islands on September 29, 2009.

Struck by towering waves that reached up to 20 feet in height, the people of American Samoa, Independent Samoa and Tonga are today confronting staggering losses of life and property as they watched helplessly as the in-rushing sea swallowed up coastal towns and villages.

As of last week it is estimated that 32 American Samoans and 135 residents of Independent Samoa lost their lives. And today, many families in the affected areas still lack basic necessities resulting in the risk of additional deaths because of scarce clean water, shelter, food and basic health care.

I was pleased to have had the opportunity to visit American Samoa earlier this year with my good friend and colleague, Congressman ENI FALÉOMAVAEGA, the author of the resolution we are debating today. Among the places we visited while we were there was the Village of Leone; one of the areas on American Samoa that was severely impacted. I want to express my profound condolences to the people of Leone for their suffering as well as to thank them once again for the warm welcome and hospitality they offered us.

I want to also commend Congressman FALÉOMAVAEGA for his efforts in marshalling the response of the federal government in responding to the disaster in his home island. ENI and his staff labored around the clock to coordinate the efforts of FEMA, the Red Cross, Army Corps and the other federal agencies tasked by President Obama to speedily deploy all the resources and tools necessary for a full, swift and aggressive response.

Mr. Speaker, American Samoans in the Pacific and in the mainland United States are an integral part of our country's history and of our American social fabric. They are our brothers who fight valiantly in our wars and contribute immensely to the prosperity of our country. Today, I send my thoughts and prayers to the victims and their family members in this moment of grief and tragic loss. We stand in solidarity with our brothers and pray for their speedy recovery.

Mr. ABERCROMBIE. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to support H. Res. 816 in mourning the loss of life caused by the earthquakes and tsunamis that occurred on September 29, 2009, in American Samoa and Samoa.

I want to express my sincere condolences to those that have lost family, friends and other important people in their lives. Despite this loss, the people of American Samoa and Samoa remain strong and resilient. They are continuing on, picking up the pieces of what can be salvaged, cleaning their homes and cities and helping each other through the struggles of trying to regain the life they once had. As thousands of people continue to struggle with this tragedy, I join my colleagues in our commitment to the relief efforts and offer support for the families of the many victims.

I would like to commend Representative ENI FALÉOMAVAEGA for his tireless efforts to help relieve the suffering and devastation in American Samoa. I will do everything I can to assist my friend and colleague in speeding any additional federal assistance needed to the area.

I am also proud of the rapid response by Major General Bob Lee and the Hawaii Na-

tional Guard, which is a testament to their training and professionalism. I know FEMA, the Hawaii Red Cross and other relief organizations are on the ground, as well, aiding communities to cope with the devastation.

There are many people in Hawaii with friends or family back in American Samoa and Samoa. They are our brothers and sisters of the Pacific and we will do all we can to help and support them.

I urge my colleagues to support this resolution and the people of American Samoa and Samoa.

Ms. BORDALLO. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to offer my support and sympathy to the people of the U.S. Territory of American Samoa and Western Samoa in the aftermath of the devastating tsunami that hit the region last week. The wave claimed over 200 lives and left thousands more homeless. I ask that this body support our colleague, Congressman Faleomavaega and his community as they recover from this disaster. All necessary aid to this region in the South Pacific should be brought to bear for our fellow Americans.

We on Guam have experienced our share of disasters. I recognize the efforts of my constituents, many of whom have banded together to raise money and donate clothes, blankets, and food to the relief effort for Samoa. The people of American Samoa and Western Samoa have shown great courage in the face of this tragedy. Following the disaster they have pulled together and expressed their determination to recover what was lost. They deserve our backing and support in their time of need. My thoughts and prayers will remain with the families and those impacted by this disaster.

Mr. FALÉOMAVAEGA. 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. FALÉOMAVAEGA) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 816, 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. FALÉOMAVAEGA. 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 CONDOLENCES AND SUPPORT TO INDONESIA IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE EARTHQUAKE THAT STRUCK SUMATRA

Mr. FALÉOMAVAEGA. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 810) expressing condolences to the citizens of Indonesia and support for the Government of Indonesia in the aftermath of the devastating earthquake that struck the island of Sumatra.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 810

Whereas, on September 30, 2009, a 7.6 magnitude earthquake originated northwest of