According to the Department of Agriculture, nearly 27 percent of the 356 billion pounds of available food in America is wasted each year. That is nearly 100 billion pounds of waste, when according to the charity Feeding America only 5 billion pounds of food is needed to eliminate hunger. In a country with such a food abundance, it is criminal that children go to bed hungry. Our country has also developed a network of food assistance providers in place, Government agencies, community food banks, food pantries, soup kitchens, shelters and churches all strive to address the challenge of combating hunger. Let us provide them the resources they need. The legislation I am introducing today will do that and will stem the tide of hunger.

Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that the text of the bill be printed in the RECORD. There being no objection, the text of the bill was ordered to be printed in the RECORD, as follows:

S. 2655

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

SECTION 1. FINDINGS.

Congress finds that—

(1) more than 1 in 7 households in the United States struggled to find enough to eat during 2008; (2) poverty is the primary cause of food insecurity and hunger in the United States; (3) part of the Economic Research Service of the Department of Agriculture on household food security in the United States found that in 2008, 17,000,000 households were food insecure, an increase from 13,000,000 in 2007; (4) the term “low food security” means people being unable to consistently get enough to eat and the term “very low food security” means people being hungry at various times over the year and being unable to eat because of lack of money to purchase food; (5) the 17,000,000 food insecure households in the United States are home to 49,000,000 Americans, of whom—

(A) 17,000,000 are children, among whom nearly 5,000,000 in the developmentally critical years under the age of 6 are going hungry; and

(B) 12,000,000 adults and 5,200,000 children reportedly going hungry, possibly going days without eating;

(6) good nutrition is necessary for learning and academic achievement; and

(7) Black and Hispanic households experienced food insecurity at far higher rates (25.7 percent in the case of Black households and 26.9 percent in the case of Hispanic households) than the national average.

SEC. 2. AVAILABILITY OF COMMODITIES FOR THE EMERGENCY FOOD ASSISTANCE PROGRAM.

Section 2201(a) of the Food and Nutrition Act of 2009 (7 U.S.C. 2006(a)(2)) is amended—

(1) in subparagraph (B), by striking “and” at the end; (2) by redesignating subparagraph (C) as subparagraph (E); (3) in subparagraph (E) (as so redesignated)—

(A) by striking “each of fiscal years 2010 through 2012” and inserting “fiscal year 2012”; and

(B) by striking “paragraph (B) and inserting “paragraph (D)”;

and

(4) striking after subparagraph (B) the following:

“(C) for fiscal year 2010, $500,000,000;”

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 335—EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE THAT THE GOVERNMENT OF THE ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF IRAN HAS SYSTEMATICALLY VIOLATED ITS OBLIGATIONS TO UPHOLD HUMAN RIGHTS PROVIDED FOR UNDER ITS CONSTITUTION AND INTERNATIONAL LAW

Mr. LEVIN (for himself, Mr. McCaIN, Mr. CASSAR, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. NIEHMERMAN, Mr. CORKIE, and Mr. NELSON of Florida) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. Res. 335

Whereas the 1979 Constitution of the Islamic Republic of Iran guarantees certain human rights and fundamental freedoms, which encompass civil and political rights, along with economic, social, and cultural rights;

Whereas the Islamic Republic of Iran is a party to four major United Nations human rights treaties: the Convention on the Rights of the Child (which it ratified on July 13, 1994), the International Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination (which it ratified on August 29, 1988), and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (both of which its ratified on June 24, 1975);

Whereas the Government of Iran has routinely violated the human rights of its citizens, including—

(1) torture and cruel, inhuman, or degradating treatment or punishment, including flogging, and amputations;

(2) high incidence and increase in the rate of executions carried out in the absence of international legal standards, including public executions and executions of juvenile offenders;

(3) stoning as a method of execution and persons in prison who continue to face sentences of execution by stoning;

(4) arrests, violent repression, and sentencing of women exercising their right to peaceful assembly, a campaign of intimidation, such as those presently imposed on women; and

(5) increasing discrimination and other human rights violations against persons belonging to religious, ethnic, linguistic, or other minorities;

(6) ongoing, systematic, and serious restrictions of freedom of peaceful assembly and association and freedom of opinion and expression, including the continuing closures of media outlets, arrests of journalists, and the censorship or expression in online forums such as blogs and websites; and

(7) severe limitations and restrictions on freedom of religion and belief, including arrest, intimidation, and lengthy jail sentences for those exercising their right to freedom of religion or belief, including a provision in the proposed draft penal code setting out a mandatory death sentence for apostasy, the abandoning of one’s faith;

Whereas, since March 9, 2007, Robert Levinson, a United States citizen, has been missing in the Islamic Republic of Iran, and the Government of Iran has provided little information on his whereabouts or assistance in ensuring his safe return to the United States;

Whereas Ja’far Kiani was publicly stoned to death in July 2007 in the Islamic Republic of Iran in contravention of an order from the Head of the Judiciary granting a temporary stay of execution;

Whereas, since May 2008, Reza Taghavi, a 71-year old Iranian-American, has been imprisoned without a trial or formal charges;

Whereas, on October 15, 2008, authorities in the Islamic Republic of Iran, Esha Momeni, a graduate student at California State University, Northridge, for her peaceful activities in connection with the women’s rights movement in the Islamic Republic of Iran, and refused to grant her permission to leave Iran for 10 months following her release from prison in November 2008;

Whereas, on August 1, 2009, authorities in the Islamic Republic of Iran began a mass trial of over 100 individuals in connection with election protests, most of whom were held incommunicado for weeks, in solitary confinement, with little or no access to their lawyers and families, many of whom showed signs of torture and drugging;

 Whereas, in early October 2009, the judiciary of the Islamic Republic of Iran sentenced four individuals to death after the disputed national election, simply for providing the individuals adequate access to legal representation during their trials;

Whereas the Supreme Leader of Iran, Ali Khamenei, issued a statement on October 28, 2009, effectively criminalizing disagreement regarding the national election in the Islamic Republic of Iran this past June, further restricting the right to freedom of expression;

Whereas the Government of Iran does not allow independent nongovernmental associations and labor unions to perform their role in peacefully defending the rights of all persons;

Whereas, on November 4, 2009, security forces in the Islamic Republic of Iran used force to disperse thousands of protesters, resulting in a number of injuries and arrests, in violation of international standards regarding the proportionate use of force against peaceful demonstrations;

Whereas, after the national election in the Islamic Republic of Iran last June, the Government of Iran expelled students from universities, particularly over the past two years, in reprisal for their being critical of the government;

Whereas the Government of Iran has imposed restrictions on the travel of individuals, including artists and filmmakers since the recent elections, in reprisal for their political views or their criticism of the government, such as those presently imposed on human rights lawyer Abdolfattah Soltani,

It is the sense of the Senate—

(1) that the Government of Iran has systematically violated its obligations to uphold human rights provided for under its Constitution and international law;

(2) by redesignating subparagraph (C) as subparagraph (E);

(3) sever limitations and restrictions on freedom of religion and belief, including arrest, intimidation, and lengthy jail sentences for those exercising their right to freedom of religion or belief, including a provision in the proposed draft penal code setting out a mandatory death sentence for apostasy, the abandoning of one’s faith;
human rights activist Emad Baghi, film director Jafar Panahi, and actress Fatemeh Motamed Arya; and

Whereas, according to Amnesty International, at least 20 people were known to have been executed in 2008, including eight juvenile offenders and two men who were executed by stoning; Now, therefore, be it

Resolved—

(1) calls for authorities in the Islamic Republic of Iran to respect the rights of the people of Iran to freedom of speech, press, religious association, and assembly;

(2) condemns the Government of Iran's human rights violations and calls on the Government of Iran to hold those responsible accountable;

(3) reminds the Government of Iran of its constitutional obligations under its 1979 Constitution and four international covenants to which it is a signatory;

(4) calls for the immediate release from detention of opposition figures, human rights defenders, journalists, and all others held for peacefully exercising their right to expression, assembly, and association;

(5) urges the Government of Iran to ensure that anyone placed on trial for committing acts considered to be criminal acts benefits from all of his or her rights to a fair trial, including proceedings that are open to the public, the right to be represented by counsel, and guarantees that no statements shall be admitted into evidence that were shown to have been obtained through torture, inhumane, or degrading treatment;

(6) calls for the Government of Iran to ensure those currently in detention are treated humanely, to provide detainees immediate prompt access to their families, lawyers, and any medical treatment that may be needed, and calls for the Government of Iran to hold accountable those responsible for torture of detainees; and

(7) calls for authorities in the Islamic Republic of Iran, consistent with their obligations under the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, to guarantee all persons the "freedom to seek, receive and impart information and ideas of all kinds, regardless of frontiers, either orally, in writing, in the form of art, or through any other media of his choice".

SENATE RESOLUTION 356—CALLING UPON THE GOVERNMENT OF TURKEY TO FACILITATE THE REOPENING OF THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE'S THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL OF HALKI WITHOUT CONDITION OR FURTHER DELAY

Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. BROWNBACK, Mr. REID, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. SNOWE, and Mr. MENENDEZ) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. Res. 356

Whereas the Ecumenical Patriarchate is an institution with a history spanning 17 centuries, serving as the center of the Orthodox Christian Church throughout the world; and

Whereas the Ecumenical Patriarchate sits at the crossroads of East and West, offering a unique perspective on the religions and cultures surrounding it; and

Whereas the title of Ecumenical Patriarch was formally accorded to the Archbishop of Constantinople by a synod convened in Constantinople at the beginning of the 4th century; and

Whereas since November 1991, His All Holiness, Bartholomew I, has served as Archbishop of Constantinople, New Rome and Ecumenical Patriarch; and

Whereas Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I was awarded the Congressional Gold Medal in recognition of his outstanding and enduring contributions toward religious understanding and peace; and

Whereas during the 110th Congress, 75 Senators, at the request of the majority of members of the Committee on Foreign Affairs of the House of Representatives wrote to President George W. Bush and the Prime Minister of Turkey requesting the Government of Turkey to facilitate the reopening of the Theological School of Halki, an institution that has come to symbolize the fight for the rights of individuals and minorities faced by the Patriarchate, the remnant of the Greek community in Turkey and other religious and ethnic minorities in that country.

I had the pleasure to meet Bartholomew I during an official visit to modern-day Istanbul in 1998. He impressed me as a man of good will, anchored in his deep personal faith, seeking to promote understanding, justice and respect for the human rights and dignity of each individual. His personal qualities that prompted the Congress a year earlier to award him the Congressional Gold Medal. Indeed, his leadership extends well beyond the borders of Turkey to the Orthodox community around the world.

The Ecumenical Patriarch repeatedly returned to the issue of the Halki Seminary in various meetings during his trip to the U.S., including at this oval office meeting with President Obama. Earlier this year, several of my colleagues from the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe, which I chair, joined me in a letter to the President underscoring our longstanding concern over the continued closure of this institution.

Here are the details:

Founded in 1844, the Theological School of Halki, located outside modern-day Istanbul, served as the principal seminary for the Ecumenical Patriarchate until its forcible closure by the Turkish authorities in 1971; whereas the alumni of this preeminent educational institution include numerous prominent Orthodox scholars, theologians, priests, bishops, and patriarchs, including Bartholomew I.

Whereas the Republic of Turkey has been a participating state of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) since signing the Helsinki Final Act in 1975; whereas in 1989, the OSCE participating states adopted the Vienna Concluding Document, committing to respect the right of representatives of religious personnel in appropriate institutional settings; whereas the continued closure of the Ecumenical Patriarchate’s Theological School of Halki has been an ongoing issue of concern for the American people and the United States Congress and has been repeatedly raised by members of the Commission on Security and Cooperation in Europe and by United States delegations to the OSCE’s annual Human Dimension Implementation Meeting;

Whereas in his address to the Grand National Assembly of Turkey on April 6, 2009, President Abdullah Turkey called for freedom of religion and expression lead to a strong and vibrant civil society that only strengthens the state, which is why steps like reopening Halki Seminary will send such an important signal internationally.

Whereas in a welcomed development, the Prime Minister of Turkey, Recep Tayyip Erdogan, met with the Ecumenical Patriarch on August 15, 2009, and, in an address to a wider gathering of minority religious leaders that day, concluded by stating, "We should not be of those who gather, talk, and despere. A result should come out of this.";

Whereas during his visit to the United States in November 2009, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I met with President Obama, congressional leaders, and others; and

Whereas Prime Minister Erdogan is scheduled to make an official visit to Washington, D.C., in early December 2009: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) welcomes the historic meeting between Prime Minister Recep Tayyip Erdogan and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew I;

(2) urges the Government of Turkey to facilitate the reopening of the Ecumenical Patriarchate’s Theological School of Halki without condition or further delay; and

(3) urges the Government of Turkey to address other longstanding concerns relating to the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

Mr. CARDIN. Mr. President, I was pleased to meet with the Ecumenical Patriarch, Bartholomew I, again last month during his visit to Washington. Together with the congressional leadership, we heard his impassioned call for support for the reopening of the Theological School of Halki, an institution that has come to symbolize the fight for the rights of individuals and minorities faced by the Patriarchate, the remnant of the Greek community in Turkey and other religious and ethnic minorities in that country.

I urge Prime Minister Erdoğan to follow through on his commitments to those remarks by actions that will facilitate the reopening of the Halki Seminary without condition or further delay. As Chairman of the Helsinki Commission,