

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

A PROCLAMATION HONORING
NANCY CHILES DIX**HON. ROBERT W. NEY**

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2000

Mr. NEY. Mr. Speaker, I commend the following article to my colleagues:

Nancy Chiles Dix has spent her life serving people. As a member of the Ohio State Senate, she worked tirelessly in Columbus to represent the people of our area with honor. For years, Nancy has also been an avid supporter of the Republican party, always willing to put forth the extra effort to support the party and its candidates.

Additionally, Nancy devotes her time to supporting increased cancer research and educating our young people. She was recently honored at the John A. Alford Memorial Dinner for her commitment and support of cancer research and named the President of the Par Excellence Learning Center in Newark, OH.

Over the years, Nancy has proven herself to be a great friend not only to myself but to our entire area.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that my colleagues join me in honoring Nancy Chiles Dix. Her lifelong service and commitment are to be commended. I am proud to call her a constituent and a friend.

INTRODUCTION OF H. CON. RES.
259—EXPRESSING THE CONCERN
OF CONGRESS REGARDING
HUMAN RIGHTS VIOLATIONS
BASED ON SEXUAL ORIENTATION**HON. TOM LANTOS**

OF CALIFORNIA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, March 8, 2000

Mr. LANTOS. Mr. Speaker, with the support of 30 of our colleagues—including both Republicans and Democrats—I introduced House Concurrent Resolution 259, a bill decrying human rights violations based on sexual orientation and gender identity. I did this, Mr. Speaker, because I believe very strongly that we in the Congress must send a strong message that—no matter what any of our colleague's views may be on the question of the lifestyle of gays and lesbians—that gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender people must be treated with dignity and respect, not with hatred and violence.

All around the world, Mr. Speaker, unacceptable violations of human rights have taken place against individuals solely on the basis of their real or perceived sexual orientation. These ongoing persecutions against gay people include arbitrary arrests, rape, torture, imprisonment, extortion, and even execution.

The scope of these human rights violations is staggering, and for the victims there are few avenues for relief. Mr. Speaker, some states create an atmosphere of impunity for rapists and murderers by failing to prosecute or investigate violence targeted at individuals because of their sexual orientation. These abuses are not only sanctioned by some states, often, they are perpetrated by agents of the state.

Mr. Speaker, in Afghanistan, men convicted of sodomy by Taliban Shari'a courts are placed next to standing walls by Taliban officials and subsequently executed as the walls are toppled upon them, and they are buried under the rubble. Police in countries such as Turkey, Albania, and Russia, among others, routinely commit human rights abuses such as extortion, entrapment, and even physical assaults.

In Brazil, a lesbian couple was tortured and sexually assaulted by civil police. Despite the existence of a medical report and eye-witness testimony, their case remains unprosecuted. Many of us in the Congress protested when, in Zimbabwe, members of "Gays and Lesbians of Zimbabwe" were threatened and brutally assaulted for forming an organization to advocate for social and political rights. In Uganda, the president ordered police to arrest all homosexuals, and the punishment for conviction of homosexual activity is life in prison.

Mr. Speaker, around the world, individuals are targeted and their basic human rights are denied because of their sexual orientation. The number and frequency of such grievous crimes against individuals cannot be ignored. Violence against individuals for their real, or perceived, sexual orientation violates the most basic human rights this Congress has worked to protect and defend.

H. Con. Res. 259 puts the United States on record against such horrible human rights violations. As a civilized country, we must speak out against and condemn these crimes. Our resolution notes the violence against gay people in countries as wide ranging as Saudi Arabia, Mexico, China, El Salvador, and other countries. By calling attention to this unprovoked and indefensible violence, this resolution will broaden awareness of human rights violations based on sexual orientation.

H. Con. Res. 259 reaffirms that human rights norms defined in international conventions include protection from violence and abuse on the basis of sexual identity, but it does not seek to establish a special category of human rights related to sexual orientation or gender identity. Furthermore it commends relevant governmental and non-governmental organizations (such as Amnesty, Human Rights Watch, and the International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission) for documenting the ongoing abuse of human rights on the basis of sexual orientation. Our resolution condemns all human rights violations based on sexual orientation and recognizes that such violations should be equally punished, without discrimination.

This legislation is endorsed by a broad coalition of international human rights groups, gay rights groups, and faith-based organizations, among others. They include: Amnesty International, International Gay and Lesbian Human Rights Commission, Human Rights Watch, National Gay and Lesbian Taskforce, Human Rights Campaign, Log-Cabin Republicans, Liberty Education Fund, National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA, Equal Partners in Faith, the United Church of Christ, the National Organization of Women (NOW), NOW Legal Defense and Education Fund, and the Anti-Defamation League.

Mr. Speaker, the protection of gender identity is not a special right or privilege, but it should be fully acknowledged in international human rights norms. I ask that my colleagues join with me in wholeheartedly embracing and supporting basic human rights for all people, no matter what their sexual orientation might be. It is the only decent thing to do.

Mr. Speaker, I ask that the text of H. Con. Res. 259 be included in the RECORD.

HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 259

Expressing the concern of Congress regarding human rights violations against lesbians, gay men, bisexuals, and transgendered individuals around the world.

Whereas treaties, conventions, and declarations to which the United States are a party address government obligations to combat human rights violations, and the overall goals and standards of these treaties, conventions, and declarations in promoting human rights of all individuals have been found to be consistent with, and in support of, the aspirations of the United States at home and globally, as well as consistent with the Constitution of the United States;

Whereas articles 3 and 5 of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights, articles 6 and 7 of the 1966 International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the 1984 Convention against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment, guarantee all individuals the right to life, liberty, and security of person, and guarantee that no one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment;

Whereas the fundamental human right not to be arbitrarily deprived of life is violated when those convicted of homosexual acts in Afghanistan are sentenced to be executed and are crushed by having walls toppled over them, and there remain a number of other countries around the world that call for the possible execution of those convicted of homosexual acts, including Saudi Arabia, Yemen, Kuwait, Mauritania, and Iran;

Whereas the fundamental right not to be subjected to torture or other cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment is violated when gay men, lesbians, bisexuals and transgendered individuals are subjected to severe beatings while in police custody in Turkey and Albania, and individuals in these groups are also routinely the victims of human rights abuses, such as extortion, entrapment, physical assaults, and rape, committed by the police in Mexico, Argentina, and Russia, among other countries;

● This "bullet" symbol identifies statements or insertions which are not spoken by a Member of the Senate on the floor.

Matter set in this typeface indicates words inserted or appended, rather than spoken, by a Member of the House on the floor.