

Personal Envoy for Western Sahara to end the prevailing referendum stalemate;

Whereas talks between the Kingdom of Morocco and the Front for the Liberation of Saguia el Hamra and Rio de Oro (also known as the Polisario Front) mediated by Mr. Baker have achieved agreement on ways to end the referendum stalemate;

Whereas the end of the stalemate over the Western Sahara referendum would allow for the release of civilian political prisoners and prisoners of war held by Morocco and the Polisario Front; and

Whereas the United States supports the holding of a free, fair, and transparent referendum on self-determination for the people of Western Sahara: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) expresses its full support to former United States Secretary of State James Baker III in his mission as Personal Envoy of the United Nations Secretary General for the Western Sahara;

(2) expresses its support for a referendum on self-determination for the people of Western Sahara that should meet the following criteria:

(A) free, fair, and transparent and held in the presence of international and domestic observers and international media without administrative or military pressure or interference;

(B) only genuine Sahrawis, as identified in the method agreed to by both sides, will take part in the referendum voting; and

(C) the result, once certified by the United Nations, is accepted by both sides;

(3) encourages the release of civilian political prisoners and prisoners of war held by Morocco and the Polisario Front at the earliest possible date; and

(4) requests the administration to fully support former United States Secretary of State James Baker III in his mission of organizing a free, fair, and transparent referendum on self-determination for the people of Western Sahara without military or administrative constraints.

The SPEAKER pro tempore, Mr. LAZIO, recognized Mr. ROYCE and Mr. MENENDEZ, each for 20 minutes.

After debate,

The question being put, *viva voce*,

Will the House suspend the rules and agree to said resolution, as amended?

The SPEAKER pro tempore, Mr. LAZIO, announced that two-thirds of the Members present had voted in the affirmative.

So, two-thirds of the Members present having voted in favor thereof, the rules were suspended and said resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider the vote whereby the rules were suspended and said resolution, as amended, was agreed to was, by unanimous consent, laid on the table.

¶130.31 FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed with amendments in which the concurrence of the House is requested, A bill of the House of the following title:

H.R. 2607. An Act making appropriations for the government of the District of Columbia and other activities chargeable in whole or in part against the revenues of said District for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998, and for other purposes.

The message also announced, that the Senate insists upon its amendments to the bill (H.R. 2607) "An Act making appropriations for the government of the District of Columbia and other activities chargeable in whole or in part against the revenues of said District for the fiscal year ending September 30, 1998, and for the purposes.", requests a conference with the House on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses thereon, and appoints Mr. STEVENS, Mr. SPECTER, Mr. DOMENICI, Mr. MCCONNELL, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. GREGG, Mr. BENNETT, Mr. CAMPBELL, Mr. FAIRCLOTH, Mrs. HUTCHISON, Mr. COCHRAN, Mr. BYRD, Mr. INOUE, Mr. HOLLINGS, Mr. LEAHY, Mr. BUMPERS, Mr. LAUTENBERG, Mr. HARKIN, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mrs. MURRAY, and Mrs. BOXER, to be the conferees on the part of the Senate.

¶130.32 AFGHANISTAN WOMEN

Mr. ROHRABACHER moved to suspend the rules and agree to the following concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 156); as amended:

Whereas Congress recognizes that the legacy of civil conflict in Afghanistan during the last 17 years has had a devastating effect on the civilian population in that country, killing 2,000,000 people and displacing more than 7,000,000, and has had a particularly negative impact on the rights and security of women and girls;

Whereas the Department of State's Country Reports on Human Practices for 1996 states: "Serious human rights violations continue to occur [. . .] political killings, torture, rape, arbitrary detention, looting, abductions and kidnappings for ransom were committed by armed units, local commanders and rogue individuals.";

Whereas the Afghan combatants are responsible for numerous abhorrent human rights abuses, including the rape, sexual abuse, torture, abduction, and persecution of women and girls;

Whereas drug proliferation has increased in Afghanistan;

Whereas Congress is disturbed by the upsurge of reported human rights abuses in Afghanistan, including extreme restrictions placed on women and girls;

Whereas safe haven has been provided to suspected terrorists and terrorist camps may be allowed to operate in Afghanistan;

Whereas Afghanistan is a sovereign nation and must work to solve its internal disputes; and

Whereas Afghanistan and the United States recognize international human rights conventions, such as the Universal Declaration on Human Rights, which espouse respect for basic human rights of all individuals without regard to race, religion, ethnicity, or gender: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring),

SECTION 1. DECLARATION OF POLICY.

The Congress hereby—

(1) deplors the violations of international humanitarian law in Afghanistan and raises concern over the reported cases of stoning, public executions, and street beatings;

(2) condemns the targeted discrimination against women and girls and expresses deep concern regarding the prohibition of employment and education for women and girls;

(3) urges the Taliban and all other parties in Afghanistan to cease providing safe haven to suspected terrorists or permitting Afghan territory to be used for terrorist training; and

(4) takes note of the continued armed conflict in Afghanistan, affirms the need for

peace negotiations and expresses hope that the Afghan parties will agree to a cease-fire throughout the country.

SEC. 2. SENSE OF THE CONGRESS.

It is the sense of Congress that the President—

(1) should continue to monitor the human rights situation in Afghanistan and should call for adherence by all factions in Afghanistan to international humanitarian law;

(2) should call for an end to the systematic discrimination and harassment of women and girls in Afghanistan;

(3) should encourage efforts to procure a durable peace in Afghanistan and should support the efforts of the United Nations Special Envoy Secretary General Lakhdar Brahimi to assist in brokering a peaceful resolution to years of conflict;

(4) should call upon all countries with influence to use their influence on the contending factions to end the fighting and come to the negotiating table, abide by internationally recognized norms of behavior, cease human rights violations, end provision of safe haven to terrorists and close terrorist training camps, and reverse discriminatory policies against women and girls;

(5) should call upon all nations to cease providing financial assistance, arms, and other kinds of support to the militaries or political organizations of any factions in Afghanistan; and

(6) should support efforts by Afghan individuals to establish a cessation of hostilities and a transitional multiparty government leading to freedom, respect for human rights, and free and fair elections.

The SPEAKER pro tempore, Mr. LAZIO, recognized Mr. ROHRABACHER and Mr. LUTHER, each for 20 minutes.

After debate,

The question being put, *viva voce*,

Will the House suspend the rules and agree to said concurrent resolution, as amended?

The SPEAKER pro tempore, Mr. LAZIO, announced that two-thirds of the Members present had voted in the affirmative.

So, two-thirds of the Members present having voted in favor thereof, the rules were suspended and said concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider the vote whereby the rules were suspended and said concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to was, by unanimous consent, laid on the table.

Ordered, That the Clerk request the concurrence of the Senate in said concurrent resolution.

¶130.33 ERISA AMENDMENTS

Mr. FAWELL moved to suspend the rules and agree to the following amendment of the Senate to the bill (H.R. 1377) to amend title I of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 to encourage retirement income savings:

Strike out all after the enacting clause and insert:

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Savings Are Vital to Everyone's Retirement Act of 1997".

SEC. 2. FINDINGS AND PURPOSE.

(a) FINDINGS.—The Congress finds as follows:

(1) The impending retirement of the baby boom generation will severely strain our al-

ready overburdened entitlement system, necessitating increased reliance on pension and other personal savings.

(2) Studies have found that less than a third of Americans have even tried to calculate how much they will need to have saved by retirement, and that less than 20 percent are very confident they will have enough money to live comfortably throughout their retirement.

(3) A leading obstacle to expanding retirement savings is the simple fact that far too many Americans—particularly the young—are either unaware of, or without the knowledge and resources necessary to take advantage of, the extensive benefits offered by our retirement savings system.

(b) PURPOSE.—It is the purpose of this Act—

(1) to advance the public's knowledge and understanding of retirement savings and its critical importance to the future well-being of American workers and their families;

(2) to provide for a periodic, bipartisan national retirement savings summit in conjunction with the White House to elevate the issue of savings to national prominence; and

(3) to initiate the development of a broad-based, public education program to encourage and enhance individual commitment to a personal retirement savings strategy.

SEC. 3. OUTREACH BY THE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Part 5 of subtitle B of title I of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (29 U.S.C. 1131 et seq.) is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“OUTREACH TO PROMOTE RETIREMENT INCOME SAVINGS

“SEC. 516. (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall maintain an ongoing program of outreach to the public designed to effectively promote retirement income savings by the public.

“(b) METHODS.—The Secretary shall carry out the requirements of subsection (a) by means which shall ensure effective communication to the public, including publication of public service announcements, public meetings, creation of educational materials, and establishment of a site on the Internet.

“(c) INFORMATION TO BE MADE AVAILABLE.—The information to be made available by the Secretary as part of the program of outreach required under subsection (a) shall include the following:

“(1) a description of the vehicles currently available to individuals and employers for creating and maintaining retirement income savings, specifically including information explaining to employers, in simple terms, the characteristics and operation of the different retirement savings vehicles, including the steps to establish each such vehicle, and

“(2) information regarding matters relevant to establishing retirement income savings, such as—

“(A) the forms of retirement income savings,

“(B) the concept of compound interest,

“(C) the importance of commencing savings early in life,

“(D) savings principles,

“(E) the importance of prudence and diversification in investing,

“(F) the importance of the timing of investments, and

“(G) the impact on retirement savings of life's uncertainties, such as living beyond one's life expectancy.

“(d) ESTABLISHMENT OF SITE ON THE INTERNET.—The Secretary shall establish a permanent site on the Internet concerning retirement income savings. The site shall contain at least the following information:

“(1) a means for individuals to calculate their estimated retirement savings needs,

based on their retirement income goal as a percentage of their preretirement income;

“(2) a description in simple terms of the common types of retirement income savings arrangements available to both individuals and employers (specifically including small employers), including information on the amount of money that can be placed into a given vehicle, the tax treatment of the money, the amount of accumulation possible through different typical investment options and interest rate projections, and a directory of resources of more descriptive information;

“(3) materials explaining to employers in simple terms, the characteristics and operation of the different retirement savings arrangements for their workers and what the basic legal requirements are under this Act and the Internal Revenue Code of 1986, including the steps to establish each such arrangement;

“(4) copies of all educational materials developed by the Department of Labor, and by other Federal agencies in consultation with such Department, to promote retirement income savings by workers and employers; and

“(5) links to other sites maintained on the Internet by governmental agencies and nonprofit organizations that provide additional detail on retirement income savings arrangements and related topics on savings or investing.

“(e) COORDINATION.—The Secretary shall coordinate the outreach program under this section with similar efforts undertaken by other public and private entities.”.

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1 of such Act is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 514 the following new items:

“Sec. 515. Delinquent contributions.

“Sec. 516. Outreach to promote retirement income savings.”.

SEC. 4. NATIONAL SUMMIT ON RETIREMENT SAVINGS.

(a) IN GENERAL.—Part 5 of subtitle B of title I of the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974, as amended by section 3 of this Act, is amended by adding at the end the following new section:

“NATIONAL SUMMIT ON RETIREMENT SAVINGS

“SEC. 517. (a) AUTHORITY TO CALL SUMMIT.—Not later than July 15, 1998, the President shall convene a National Summit on Retirement Income Savings at the White House, to be co-hosted by the President and the Speaker and the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives and the Majority Leader and Minority Leader of the Senate. Such a National Summit shall be convened thereafter in 2001 and 2005 on or after September 1 of each year involved. Such a National Summit shall—

“(1) advance the public's knowledge and understanding of retirement savings and its critical importance to the future well-being of American workers and their families;

“(2) facilitate the development of a broad-based, public education program to encourage and enhance individual commitment to a personal retirement savings strategy;

“(3) develop recommendations for additional research, reforms, and actions in the field of private pensions and individual retirement savings; and

“(4) disseminate the report of, and information obtained by, the National Summit and exhibit materials and works of the National Summit.

“(b) PLANNING AND DIRECTION.—The National Summit shall be planned and conducted under the direction of the Secretary, in consultation with, and with the assistance of, the heads of such other Federal departments and agencies as the President may designate. Such assistance may include the assignment of personnel. The Secretary shall, in planning and conducting the Na-

tional Summit, consult with the congressional leaders specified in subsection (e)(2). The Secretary shall also, in carrying out the Secretary's duties under this subsection, consult and coordinate with at least one organization made up of private sector businesses and associations partnered with Government entities to promote long-term financial security in retirement through savings.

“(c) PURPOSE OF NATIONAL SUMMIT.—The purpose of the National Summit shall be—

“(1) to increase the public awareness of the value of personal savings for retirement;

“(2) to advance the public's knowledge and understanding of retirement savings and its critical importance to the future well-being of American workers and their families;

“(3) to facilitate the development of a broad-based, public education program to encourage and enhance individual commitment to a personal retirement savings strategy;

“(4) to identify the problems workers have in setting aside adequate savings for retirement;

“(5) to identify the barriers which employers, especially small employers, face in assisting their workers in accumulating retirement savings;

“(6) to examine the impact and effectiveness of individual employers to promote personal savings for retirement among their workers and to promote participation in company savings options;

“(7) to examine the impact and effectiveness of government programs at the Federal, State, and local levels to educate the public about, and to encourage, retirement income savings;

“(8) to develop such specific and comprehensive recommendations for the legislative and executive branches of the Government and for private sector action as may be appropriate for promoting private pensions and individual retirement savings; and

“(9) to develop recommendations for the coordination of Federal, State, and local retirement income savings initiatives among the Federal, State, and local levels of government and for the coordination of such initiatives.

“(d) SCOPE OF NATIONAL SUMMIT.—The scope of the National Summit shall consist of issues relating to individual and employer-based retirement savings and shall not include issues relating to the old-age, survivors, and disability insurance program under title II of the Social Security Act.

“(e) NATIONAL SUMMIT PARTICIPANTS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—To carry out the purposes of the National Summit, the National Summit shall bring together—

“(A) professionals and other individuals working in the fields of employee benefits and retirement savings;

“(B) Members of Congress and officials in the executive branch;

“(C) representatives of State and local governments;

“(D) representatives of private sector institutions, including individual employers, concerned about promoting the issue of retirement savings and facilitating savings among American workers; and

“(E) representatives of the general public.

“(2) STATUTORILY REQUIRED PARTICIPATION.—The participants in the National Summit shall include the following individuals or their designees:

“(A) the Speaker and the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives;

“(B) the Majority Leader and the Minority Leader of the Senate;

“(C) the Chairman and ranking Member of the Committee on Education and the Workforce of the House of Representatives;

“(D) the Chairman and ranking Member of the Committee on Labor and Human Resources of the Senate;

“(E) the Chairman and ranking Member of the Special Committee on Aging of the Senate;

“(F) the Chairman and ranking Member of the Subcommittees on Labor, Health and Human Services, and Education of the Senate and House of Representatives; and

“(G) the parties referred to in subsection (b).

“(3) ADDITIONAL PARTICIPANTS.—

“(A) IN GENERAL.—There shall be not more than 200 additional participants. Of such additional participants—

“(i) one-half shall be appointed by the President, in consultation with the elected leaders of the President’s party in Congress (either the Speaker of the House of Representatives or the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, and either the Majority Leader or the Minority Leader of the Senate; and

“(ii) one-half shall be appointed by the elected leaders of Congress of the party to which the President does not belong (one-half of that allotment to be appointed by either the Speaker of the House of Representatives or the Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, and one-half of that allotment to be appointed by either the Majority Leader or the Minority Leader of the Senate).

“(B) APPOINTMENT REQUIREMENTS.—The additional participants described in subparagraph (A) shall be—

“(i) appointed not later than January 31, 1998;

“(ii) selected without regard to political affiliation or past partisan activity; and

“(iii) representative of the diversity of thought in the fields of employee benefits and retirement income savings.

“(4) PRESIDING OFFICERS.—The National Summit shall be presided over equally by representatives of the executive and legislative branches.

“(f) NATIONAL SUMMIT ADMINISTRATION.—

“(1) ADMINISTRATION.—In administering this section, the Secretary shall—

“(A) request the cooperation and assistance of such other Federal departments and agencies and other parties referred to in subsection (b) as may be appropriate in the carrying out of this section;

“(B) furnish all reasonable assistance to State agencies, area agencies, and other appropriate organizations to enable them to organize and conduct conferences in conjunction with the National Summit;

“(C) make available for public comment a proposed agenda for the National Summit that reflects to the greatest extent possible the purposes for the National Summit set out in this section;

“(D) prepare and make available background materials for the use of participants in the National Summit that the Secretary considers necessary; and

“(E) appoint and fix the pay of such additional personnel as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this section without regard to provisions of title 5, United States Code, governing appointments in the competitive service, and without regard to chapter 51 and subchapter III of chapter 53 of such title relating to classification and General Schedule pay rates.

“(2) DUTIES.—The Secretary shall, in carrying out the responsibilities and functions of the Secretary under this section, and as part of the National Summit, ensure that—

“(A) the National Summit shall be conducted in a manner that ensures broad participation of Federal, State, and local agencies and private organizations, professionals, and others involved in retirement income savings and provides a strong basis for assistance to be provided under paragraph (1)(B);

“(B) the agenda prepared under paragraph (1)(C) for the National Summit is published in the Federal Register; and

“(C) the personnel appointed under paragraph (1)(E) shall be fairly balanced in terms of points of views represented and shall be appointed without regard to political affiliation or previous partisan activities.

“(3) NONAPPLICATION OF FACa.—The provisions of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.) shall not apply to the National Summit.

“(g) REPORT.—The Secretary shall prepare a report describing the activities of the National Summit and shall submit the report to the President, the Speaker and Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, the Majority and Minority Leaders of the Senate, and the chief executive officers of the States not later than 90 days after the date on which the National Summit is adjourned.

“(h) DEFINITION.—For purposes of this section, the term ‘State’ means a State, the District of Columbia, the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico, the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands, Guam, the Virgin Islands, American Samoa, and any other territory or possession of the United States.

“(i) AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.—

“(1) IN GENERAL.—There is authorized to be appropriated for fiscal years beginning on or after October 1, 1997, such sums as are necessary to carry out this section.

“(2) AUTHORIZATION TO ACCEPT PRIVATE CONTRIBUTIONS.—In order to facilitate the National Summit as a public-private partnership, the Secretary may accept private contributions, in the form of money, supplies, or services, to defray the costs of the National Summit.

“(j) FINANCIAL OBLIGATION FOR FISCAL YEAR 1998.—The financial obligation for the Department of Labor for fiscal year 1998 shall not exceed the lesser of—

“(1) one-half of the costs of the National Summit; or

“(2) \$250,000.

The private sector organization described in subsection (b) and contracted with by the Secretary shall be obligated for the balance of the cost of the National Summit.

“(k) CONTRACTS.—The Secretary may enter into contracts to carry out the Secretary’s responsibilities under this section. The Secretary shall enter into a contract on a sole-source basis to ensure the timely completion of the National Summit in fiscal year 1998.”

(b) CONFORMING AMENDMENT.—The table of contents in section 1 of such Act, as amended by section 3 of this Act, is amended by inserting after the item relating to section 516 the following new item:

“Sec. 517. National Summit on Retirement Savings.”

The SPEAKER pro tempore, Mr. LAZIO, recognized Mr. FAWELL and Mr. PAYNE, each for 20 minutes.

After debate,

The question being put, viva voce,

Will the House suspend the rules and agree to said amendment?

The SPEAKER pro tempore, Mr. LAZIO, announced that two-thirds of the Members present had voted in the affirmative.

So, two-thirds of the Members present having voted in favor thereof, the rules were suspended and said amendment was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider the vote whereby the rules were suspended and said amendment was agreed to was, by unanimous consent, laid on the table.

Ordered, That the Clerk notify the Senate thereof.

¶130.34 FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Mr. Lundregan, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate had passed without amendment a joint resolution of the House of the following title:

H.J. Res. 104. Joint resolution making further continuing appropriations for the fiscal year 1998, and for other purposes.

The message also announced that the Senate had passed a bill of the following title, in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 1502. An Act entitled the “District of Columbia Student Opportunity Scholarship Act of 1997”.

¶130.35 U.S. FIRE ADMINISTRATION AUTHORIZATION

Mr. SENSENBRENNER moved to suspend the rules and pass the bill of the Senate (S. 1231) to authorize appropriations for fiscal years 1998 and 1999 for the United States Fire Administration, and for other purposes.

The SPEAKER pro tempore, Mr. LAZIO, recognized Mr. SENSENBRENNER and Mr. BARCIA, each for 20 minutes.

After debate,

The question being put, viva voce,

Will the House suspend the rules and pass said bill?

The SPEAKER pro tempore, Mr. LAZIO, announced that two-thirds of the Members present had voted in the affirmative.

So, two-thirds of the Members present having voted in favor thereof, the rules were suspended and said bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider the vote whereby the rules were suspended and said bill was passed was, by unanimous consent, laid on the table.

Ordered, That the Clerk notify the Senate thereof.

¶130.36 LAND CONVEYANCE TO STANISLAUS COUNTY, CALIFORNIA

Mr. SENSENBRENNER moved to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 112) to provide for the conveyance of certain property from the United States to Stanislaus County, California.

The SPEAKER pro tempore, Mr. LAZIO, recognized Mr. SENSENBRENNER and Mr. CRAMER, each for 20 minutes.

After debate,

The question being put, viva voce,

Will the House suspend the rules and pass said bill?

The SPEAKER pro tempore, Mr. LAZIO, announced that two-thirds of the Members present had voted in the affirmative.

So, two-thirds of the Members present having voted in favor thereof, the rules were suspended and said bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider the vote whereby the rules were suspended and said bill was passed was, by unanimous consent, laid on the table.

Ordered, That the Clerk request the concurrence of the Senate in said bill.