

Public Law 99-321  
99th Congress

Joint Resolution

May 23, 1986  
[S.J. Res. 246]

To designate May 25, 1986 as "Hands Across America Day", for the purpose of helping people to help themselves, and commending United Support of Artists for Africa and all participants for their efforts toward combating domestic hunger with a four thousand mile human chain from coast to coast.

Whereas thousands of recruits were rejected during World War II because of physical and mental problems associated with malnutrition;

Whereas our Government committed itself to ending this national problem by successfully devising programs to eliminate malnutrition in America;

Whereas our people became the best-fed, healthiest people in the world;

Whereas a Physicians Task Force on Hunger recently estimated that at least twenty million American citizens now suffer from hunger, and that hunger is increasing rather than declining;

Whereas physicians around the Nation are reporting an increase in nutrition-related health problems among the elderly and children, including diseases which are usually limited to third world countries;

Whereas homelessness is an ever-increasing national problem and more than half the homeless population in the United States is comprised of children and women;

Whereas it has been estimated that there are only enough shelters to house one hundred and eleven thousand men, women, and children on a given night, and there are as many as three million people in need of shelter;

Whereas the General Accounting Office reports that the principal causes of homelessness in America are: unemployment, a lack of resources for deinstitutionalized mental patients, increases in personal crises, cuts in public assistance programs, reduced availability of low-income housing, and alcohol and drug abuse;

Whereas participation by all citizens who are interested in helping to address this enormous problem should be encouraged;

Whereas a private fund-raising effort by United Support of Artists for Africa entitled "Hands Across America" is planned for May 25, 1986;

Whereas millions of participants in this effort who will join hands across this country on that day should be commended for asking all Americans to rededicate themselves to fulfilling the most basic needs of our people in this land of compassion and abundance, by expending every effort to eradicate hunger and homelessness in our Nation: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled, That May 25, 1986, is designated as "Hands Across America Day", and the President is authorized and requested to issue a proclamation calling upon the people of the United States to observe such day with appropriate ceremonies and activities.*

Approved May 23, 1986.

**LEGISLATIVE HISTORY—S.J. Res. 246 (H.J. Res. 462):**

**CONGRESSIONAL RECORD, Vol. 132 (1986):**

- Feb. 6, H.J. Res. 462 considered and passed House.
- Mar. 4, S.J. Res. 246 considered and passed Senate.
- May 15, considered and passed House.