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|  | =======LC02637=======**STATE OF RHODE ISLAND****IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY****JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2012****\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_****H O U S E R E S O L U T I O N****SUPPORTING THE NAGORNO-KARABAKH REPUBLIC'S EFFORTS TO DEVELOP AS A** **FREE AND INDEPENDENT NATION****Introduced By:** Representatives Fox, Mattiello, Corvese, McNamara, and Bennett **Date Introduced:** May 17, 2012 **Referred To:** House read and passed WHEREAS, The Region of Artsakh, also known as Mountainous Karabagh, is located in the Transcaucasus and has historically been Armenian territory, populated by an overwhelming majority of Armenians; andWHEREAS, In 1923, the communist dictatorship of Joseph Stalin, in violation of the national, territorial, and human rights of the Armenian people, annexed part of the region of Artsakh which was composed of a 95 percent Armenian population, and joined it with the region of Soviet Azerbaijan; andWHEREAS, For decades, Armenians in Nagorno-Karabakh, having arbitrarily been severed from Armenia and forced under Soviet Azerbaijani administration, peacefully demonstrated for national independence and individual freedom and against Soviet Azerbaijani repression and discrimination; and WHEREAS, In the years immediately preceding the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic’s declaration of independence, these peaceful demonstrations were met with acts of violent repression by Soviet Azerbaijani forces who refused to allow the reestablishment of the people of Nagorno-Karabakh’s national independence; andWHEREAS, During the repressive and violent events leading to the birth of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic, ethnic Armenians were killed in Sumgait (February, 1988), Kirovabad (November, 1988), and Baku (January, 1990), by Soviet Azerbaijani forces. Over 350,000 Armenians were forcibly deported from Azerbaijan; andWHEREAS, In July of 1988, within months of the Sumgait tragedy, the United States Senate unanimously passed Amendment 2690 to the Fiscal Year 1989 Foreign Operations Appropriations bill (H.R. 4782), concerning the Karabakh conflict and calling on the Soviet government to "respect the legitimate aspirations of the Armenian people ..." and noted that "dozens of Armenians have been killed and hundreds injured during the recent unrests ..."; andWHEREAS, The Armenians of Nagorno-Karabakh would not be deterred and would not allow their dream of national independence, and their inherent desire for individual freedom, to be destroyed by violence and repression; andWHEREAS, On December 10th of 1991, despite continued violence against the people of Nagorno-Karabakh, a popular referendum proclaiming the republic took place in Nagorno-Karabakh during the process of the Soviet Union disintegration; and WHEREAS, Under the watchful eye of more than 50 international observers and in full compliance with international standards for free and fair elections, more than 80 percent of the eligible voters in Nagorno-Karabakh cast a ballot. Ninety-eight percent of those casting ballots overwhelmingly chose national independence and individual freedom, thereby choosing the path of democracy after decades of communist control; andWHEREAS, The population of Nagorno-Karabakh then held free, democratic, and direct elections for its parliament; andWHEREAS, On January 6th of 1992, the first-ever freely elected Parliament of Nagorno-Karabakh adopted a Declaration of Independence of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic; and WHEREAS, From the earliest days of its formation, the Republic’s freely elected governmental bodies have continuously striven to build an open and democratic society through free and transparent elections, affirmed by international observers; andWHEREAS, Since signing a cease-fire agreement with Azerbaijan in 1994, after three years of armed conflict, the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic registered significant progress in post-war humanitarian and economic development; andWHEREAS, Despite the 1994 cease-fire agreement, the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic’s security and sovereignty continue to be threatened by regional tension and hostile acts; now, therefore be it RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations hereby encourages the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic’s continuing efforts to develop as a free and independent nation in order to guarantee its citizens those rights inherent in a free and independent society; and be it furtherRESOLVED, That this House hereby supports the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic’s continued constructive involvement with the international community and its efforts to reach a lasting solution to the existing regional problems, and to establish peace and stability in the strategically important region of South Caucasus; and be it furtherRESOLVED, That this House hereby respectfully urges the President and Congress of the United States of America to recognize the independence of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic and to encourage nations neighboring the Republic to foster and maintain peaceful relations with the people of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic. We furthermore urge our country’s leaders to continue promoting humanitarian and economic rehabilitation of the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic and to fully support its continuing development of a free and democratic society, with all the social, economic, and political advantages that such a free and democratic society brings to its citizens; and be it further RESOLVED, That this House hereby memorializes the United States of America to support strengthening and solidifying our country’s relationship with the Nagorno-Karabakh Republic and its citizens, both culturally and economically, to insure the continued survival of this nation’s burgeoning growth of freedom and democracy; and be it furtherRESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and he hereby is authorized and directed to transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the President of the United States and to Rhode Island’s Congressional Delegation.=======LC02637======= |
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