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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; and  WHEREAS, 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; and  WHEREAS, 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; and  WHEREAS, 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; and  WHEREAS, 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 ..."; and  WHEREAS, 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; and  WHEREAS, 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; and  WHEREAS, The population of Nagorno-Karabakh then held free, democratic, and direct  elections for its parliament; and  WHEREAS, 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; and  WHEREAS, 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; and  WHEREAS, 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 further  RESOLVED, 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 further  RESOLVED, 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 further  RESOLVED, 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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