

**EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES WITH RESPECT TO PRO-
MOTING ENERGY SECURITY OF EUROPEAN
ALLIES THROUGH OPENING UP THE SOUTHERN
GAS CORRIDOR**

MARKUP

BEFORE THE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPE, EURASIA, AND
EMERGING THREATS

OF THE

COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

ONE HUNDRED THIRTEENTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

ON

H. Res. 284

SEPTEMBER 19, 2013

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**EXPRESSING THE SENSE OF THE HOUSE OF
REPRESENTATIVES WITH RESPECT TO PRO-
MOTING ENERGY SECURITY OF EUROPEAN
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SOUTHERN GAS CORRIDOR**

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 19, 2013

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
SUBCOMMITTEE ON EUROPE, EURASIA, AND EMERGING THREATS,
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS,
Washington, DC.

The subcommittee met, pursuant to notice, at 2 p.m., in room 2200, Rayburn House Office Building, Hon. Dana Rohrabacher (chairman of the subcommittee) presiding.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. I call this hearing of the Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats to order, pursuant to notice. For the purpose of markup, I call up H. Resolution 284, expressing the sense of the House of Representatives with respect to promoting energy security of European allies through opening up the Southern Gas Corridor, and move its recommendation go to full committee.

Without objection, the bipartisan amendment in the nature of a substitute provided to all members earlier this week will be the base text and is considered as read and open for an amendment at any point.

[The information referred to follows:]

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 284

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives with respect to promoting energy security of European allies through opening up the Southern Gas Corridor.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 27, 2013

Mr. TURNER (for himself, Mr. DAVID SCOTT of Georgia, Mr. SHUSTER, Mr. COHEN, Mr. BRIDENSTINE, Mr. LANCE, Mr. MORAN, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Ms. JACKSON LEE, Ms. GRANGER, Mr. MILLER of Florida, Mr. WILSON of South Carolina, Mr. COTTON, Mr. MARINO, Mr. POE of Texas, Mr. GUTHRIE, Mr. STIVERS, Mrs. BEATTY, Ms. LORETTA SANCHEZ of California, Mr. MEEKS, Ms. BORDALLO, and Ms. MENG) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives with respect to promoting energy security of European allies through opening up the Southern Gas Corridor.

Whereas reducing vulnerabilities of European allies to gas supply disruption and to this end development of multiple sources of gas is a key component of efforts to ensure European energy security;

Whereas diversification of sources of gas and the routes of their delivery will increase competitiveness in the Euro-

pean market and will help stabilize European and global energy prices;

Whereas the Caspian Sea region strategically located at the crossroads of Europe, Asia, and the Middle East holds significant energy resources and proven natural gas reserves of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan are estimated at 735 trillion cubic feet or about 11 percent of the world's reserves;

Whereas oil and gas exports from the Caspian Sea region are projected to more than double over the next 25 years;

Whereas it is the policy of the United States in the countries of the South Caucasus and Central Asia to assist in the development of infrastructure necessary for energy and trade on an East-West axis in order to build strong international relations and commerce between those countries;

Whereas Azerbaijan, Turkey and Georgia have worked collaboratively with the United States, European allies, and other regional partners to jointly develop and promote energy projects in the Caspian Sea region for almost two decades;

Whereas energy exploration in this region is a remarkable example of international cooperation with over 34 companies representing 15 countries, including the United States engaged in these projects;

Whereas successive United States Administrations supported development of energy resources in the Caspian Sea region, including construction of the landmark Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline that are main arteries delivering Caspian energy resources to global markets;

Whereas further energy exploration in the Caspian Sea region and its westward exports will reduce the dependence of United States allies on energy from the volatile Middle East region;

Whereas the priority now becomes the realization of the Southern Gas Corridor to deliver additional volumes of natural gas from the Caspian Sea region to European markets;

Whereas the Republic of Azerbaijan-European Union Joint Declaration of January 13, 2011, established the Republic of Azerbaijan as a substantial contributor to, and enabler of, the Southern Gas Corridor;

Whereas at the third meeting of their bilateral Economic Partnership Commission convened in Washington, DC, on April 18, 2012, the United States and the Republic of Azerbaijan reaffirmed the importance of a high-level dialogue on energy security in the Caspian region to discuss issues of mutual interest in the energy sector, including establishment of the Southern Gas Corridor;

Whereas the European Union-United States Energy Council at its fourth meeting in Brussels on December 5, 2012, noted progress on the realization of the Southern Gas Corridor and reaffirmed that it remains a pivotal opportunity to diversify supply and allow new providers to participate in the European Union energy market;

Whereas the off-shore Shah Deniz field in Azerbaijan is one of the world's largest gas-condensate fields, with over 30 trillion cubic feet of recoverable gas and 240 million tons of condensate deposits;

Whereas development of the second phase of the Shah Deniz project, which is a stepping stone in opening the South-

ern Gas Corridor will deliver the first sizeable quantities of alternative gas to European markets from the Caspian Sea region;

Whereas the Trans-Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline (TANAP) project launched by Azerbaijan and Turkey will be a key part of the Southern Gas Corridor linking the gas resources of the Caspian Sea to the European markets;

Whereas the two possible Southern Gas Corridor routes, Nabucco West, which would run from Turkey through Bulgaria, Romania, and Hungary to Austria, and the Trans Adriatic Pipeline, which would run from Turkey through Greece and Albania to Italy, will improve regional energy stability, as well as advance overall regional development and prosperity;

Whereas the Southern Gas Corridor complements other efforts by the European Union to diversify its sources of gas supply;

Whereas realization of the Shah Deniz and these projects will help open up upstream development in the regions beyond Europe's southeastern frontiers;

Whereas these energy projects have stimulated social and economic progress in the region, promoting friendly relations and economic cooperation among regional countries;

Whereas the development of natural gas resources and building of new routes to European markets for energy producers in the South Caucasus and in Central Asia will further provide economic development and consolidate political independence of these countries; and

Whereas apart from establishing direct energy and transport links between Europe and the countries of the Caspian region, these projects ensure Western orientation of these

nations, help promote market-oriented principles and practices, and further contribute to their integration with the European and Euro-Atlantic institutions: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That—

2 (1) the House of Representatives—

3 (A) notes that further energy exploration
4 in the Caspian Sea region will enhance energy
5 security of European allies;

6 (B) affirms that it is in the national inter-
7 est of the United States to support and enhance
8 Europe's energy security by opening up the
9 Southern Gas Corridor; and

10 (C) encourages the Administration to con-
11 tinue to actively engage with the Governments
12 of Azerbaijan, Turkey, Georgia, and other re-
13 gional partners to provide support for new and
14 ongoing projects; and

15 (2) it is the sense of the House of Representa-
16 tives that it is in the national interest of the United
17 States to support and enhance Europe's energy se-
18 curity by working with the Governments of Turkey,
19 Azerbaijan, and Georgia and its partners to make
20 available additional gas and oil supplies to that mar-
21 ket in a cost effective and secure manner.

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE
TO H.RES. 284
OFFERED BY MR. ROHRBACHER OF CALIFORNIA

Strike the preamble and insert the following:

Whereas the sense of the House of Representatives with respect to promoting energy security of European allies through opening up the Southern Gas Corridor;

Whereas reducing vulnerabilities of European allies to gas supply disruption and to this end development of multiple sources of gas is a key component of efforts to ensure European energy security;

Whereas diversification of sources of gas and the routes of their delivery will increase competitiveness in the European market and will help stabilize European and global energy prices;

Whereas the Caspian Sea region strategically located at the crossroads of Europe, Asia, and the Middle East holds significant energy resources and proven natural gas reserves of Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan are estimated at 735 trillion cubic feet or about 11 percent of the world's reserves;

Whereas oil and gas exports from the Caspian Sea region are projected to more than double over the next 25 years;

Whereas it is the policy of the United States in the countries of the South Caucasus and Central Asia to assist in the development of infrastructure necessary for energy and

trade on an East-West axis in order to build strong international relations and commerce between those countries;

Whereas Azerbaijan, Turkey and Georgia have worked collaboratively with the United States, European allies, and other regional partners to jointly develop and promote energy projects in the Caspian Sea region for almost two decades;

Whereas energy exploration in this region is a remarkable example of international cooperation with over 34 companies representing 15 countries, including the United States engaged in these projects;

Whereas successive United States Administrations supported development of energy resources in the Caspian Sea region, including construction of the landmark Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline and Baku-Tbilisi-Erzurum gas pipeline that are main arteries delivering Caspian energy resources to global markets;

Whereas further energy exploration in the Caspian Sea region and its westward exports will reduce the dependence of United States allies on energy from the volatile Middle East region;

Whereas the priority now becomes the realization of the Southern Gas Corridor to deliver additional volumes of natural gas from the Caspian Sea region to European markets;

Whereas the Republic of Azerbaijan-European Union Joint Declaration of January 13, 2011, established the Republic of Azerbaijan as a substantial contributor to, and enabler of, the Southern Gas Corridor;

Whereas at the third meeting of their bilateral Economic Partnership Commission convened in Washington, DC,

on April 18, 2012, the United States and the Republic of Azerbaijan reaffirmed the importance of a high-level dialogue on energy security in the Caspian region to discuss issues of mutual interest in the energy sector, including establishment of the Southern Gas Corridor;

Whereas the European Union-United States Energy Council at its fourth meeting in Brussels on December 5, 2012, noted progress on the realization of the Southern Gas Corridor and reaffirmed that it remains a pivotal opportunity to diversify supply and allow new providers to participate in the European Union energy market;

Whereas the off-shore Shah Deniz field in Azerbaijan is one of the world's largest gas-condensate fields, with over 30 trillion cubic feet of recoverable gas and 240 million tons of condensate deposits;

Whereas development of the second phase of the Shah Deniz project, which is a stepping stone in opening the Southern Gas Corridor will deliver the first sizeable quantities of alternative gas to European markets from the Caspian Sea region;

Whereas the Trans-Anatolian Natural Gas Pipeline (TANAP) project launched by Azerbaijan and Turkey will be a key part of the Southern Gas Corridor linking the gas resources of the Caspian Sea to the European markets;

Whereas on June 28, 2013, the Shah Deniz consortium took another major step toward opening of the Southern Gas Corridor by selecting the Trans Adriatic Pipeline (TAP) to deliver Caspian Sea natural gas from Azerbaijan to Europe through Georgia, Turkey, Greece, Albania, and Italy;

Whereas the Southern Gas Corridor will improve Europe's energy diversification and security, as well as advance overall regional development and prosperity;

Whereas the establishment of the Southern Gas Corridor lays the foundation for increased natural gas development and further pipeline infrastructure to bring additional energy resources to Europe;

Whereas the Southern Gas Corridor complements other efforts by the European Union to diversify its sources of gas supply;

Whereas realization of the Shah Deniz and these projects will help open up upstream development in the regions beyond Europe's southeastern frontiers;

Whereas these energy projects have stimulated social and economic progress in the region, promoting friendly relations and economic cooperation among regional countries;

Whereas the development of natural gas resources and building of new routes to European markets for energy producers in the South Caucasus and in Central Asia will further provide economic development and consolidate political independence of these countries; and

Whereas apart from establishing direct energy and transport links between Europe and the countries of the Caspian region, these projects ensure Western orientation of these nations, help promote market-oriented principles and practices, and further contribute to their integration with the European and Euro-Atlantic institutions: Now, therefore, be it

Strike all after the resolving clause and insert the following:

That—

- 1 (1) the House of Representatives—
- 2 (A) notes that further energy exploration
- 3 in the Caspian Sea region will enhance energy
- 4 security of European allies;
- 5 (B) affirms that it is in the national inter-
- 6 est of the United States to support and enhance
- 7 Europe’s energy security by opening up the
- 8 Southern Gas Corridor; and
- 9 (C) encourages the Administration to con-
- 10 tinue to actively engage with the Governments
- 11 of Azerbaijan, Turkey, Georgia, and other re-
- 12 gional partners to provide support for new and
- 13 ongoing projects; and
- 14 (2) it is the sense of the House of Representa-
- 15 tives that it is in the national interest of the United
- 16 States to support and enhance Europe’s energy se-
- 17 curity by working with the Governments of Turkey,
- 18 Azerbaijan, and Georgia and its partners to make
- 19 available additional gas and oil supplies to that mar-
- 20 ket in a cost effective and secure manner.



Mr. ROHRBACHER. I now recognize myself to speak on this measure.

House Resolution 284, introduced by Congressman Turner, is a timely piece of legislation which supports Azerbaijani, the European Union efforts to promote the development of energy reserves in the Caspian region and transportation lines to the West. This will help further Europe's energy security and the development of economic ties that will add stability to the region.

This tremendous energy project will be an economic building factor that will benefit a wide swath of global population. Some see it as a balance to be used against Russia's influence, and that is a very negative way to look at it. It instead should be looked at as an uplifting project, not hostile to anyone or any country. Making oil and gas more accessible, more efficiently transported, and available to more people is a positive thing. That is why I am supporting this legislation and would not do so if the Southern Gas Corridor project was aimed at hurting any one country, especially Russia.

This subcommittee has been investigating the issue of resource competition in Central Asia in the Caucasus. The United States should be supportive of our friends and allies who are developing the energy resources and building infrastructure which creates stability and lifts people out of poverty.

I would especially like to highlight the significant role Azerbaijan is playing to develop the Southern Gas Corridor. Azerbaijan is an ally of the United States in a very tough part of the world. After having been to Baku, it is my sincere hope that the economic and security cooperation between our two Nations will continue to grow. Azerbaijan has come a long way since their independence from the Soviet Union, and we will continue to be their friend as they keep on the path of development of a vibrant economy and development of democratic institutions that are good for the people and good for the economy.

The bipartisan amendment in the nature of substitute, which the ranking member and I have agreed to, includes an update to reflect the final selection of the trans-Adriatic pipeline route to carry natural gas from Caspian Sea to the markets in Europe.

Members will have 5 days to submit their statements for the record.

I now recognize my ranking member for his comments on this resolution. Mr. Keating.

Mr. KEATING. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. And I thank you for working with me to include language to narrow the scope of today's resolution and promote energy-diversification initiatives, such as the development of the Southern Gas Corridor.

Although our focus today rests on the Southern Gas Corridor, I support the promotion and development of energy-diversification projects worldwide, including in Armenia and Turkmenistan. Such projects have the added benefit of increasing regional cooperation. Further, it might be cliché to say that energy security is a national security issue, but the fact remains that access to secure, reliable, affordable, and sustainable energy is essential to America's future prosperity, to defending our way of life, and to maintaining our global leadership.

In recent years the United States has made tremendous strides in energy security using new technologies to diversify our energy mix and reduce our dependence on foreign sources. While I personally would like to see greater emphasis made on renewable types of energy sources, the progress we have made thus far has strengthened America's political and economic standing around the world.

It is in America's interest to help other countries strengthen their own energy security, not just our partners and allies, but countries around the world. Overdependence on a single source of energy places a country at great risk in the event of conflict or natural disaster. In cases where one country depends almost exclusively on another for its energy, it also increases vulnerability to threats and coercion.

Energy diversity dramatically reduces the risk of regional conflict and instability. It also promotes competition and innovation, which in turn reduce the cost of energy and increase its availability, which in turn helps alleviate poverty in developing countries and spur global economic growth.

Innovation and new technologies have had a significant effect on world energy markets by increasing the number of energy-producing countries; however, equally significant advancements in energy-delivery mechanisms are needed to enable energy producers to export their energy to countries where energy is scarce. By helping countries transform themselves from energy producers into energy providers, we can significantly enhance global energy security.

For decades, many European relied much too heavily on one source of natural gas. Development of the Southern Corridor project would change that reality by bringing vast reserves of natural gas from the Caspian to an eager European market. The United States can and should support this initiative by working with Turkey, Georgia, Azerbaijan, and the European Union and its member states to further develop this important gas corridor.

Mr. Chairman, American support for the Southern Corridor project is not a zero-sum game intended to privilege one energy producer over another, nor should it be viewed as part of a global chess match. It is in the U.S. interests that our European partners and allies have access to a diversity of secure, reliable sources of energy. By helping to strengthen Europe's energy security, we strengthen the transatlantic partnership.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. ROHRBACHER. Thank you, Mr. Keating.

And I now recognize Judge Poe.

Mr. POE. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

I would like to offer my support for H. Res. 284. The bill recognizes the importance of European energy security. Supporting the Southern Gas Corridor is one way to do that. The Southern Gas Corridor reduces the EU's dependence on Russia by allowing access to resources from the Caspian and Central Asian regions.

Supporting a non-Russian and non-Iranian pipeline to move natural gas from the Caspian region and Central Asia to Europe should be a priority. EU member states rely on natural gas. Natural gas comprised nearly 25 percent of the EU's primary energy consumption in 2011, that number expected to grow about 30 per-

cent by 2030. Far too long European customers have been held hostage by the Russians. Mr. Chairman, I was in the Ukraine when the Russians cut off the gas in the winter, and they cut it off for political reasons, and I can tell you it was cold in the Ukraine without that energy, and all because of political reasons. So competition would promote security for individual nations, but also for the region. Southern Gas Corridor would allow Europe to be less reliant on Russia.

Just like the Caspian region, the U.S. has huge natural gas reserves. In April, I had a hearing on expanding exports of U.S. natural gas. U.S. companies want to export LNG to our friends and allies abroad. Unfortunately, the Department of Energy has been more of a hindrance than a help. Currently, in order to export natural gas, a person, or a company, has to get both a FERC and a DOE permit. FERC is approving the permits at a reasonable rate; DOE is not. These companies are at a standstill, so I am working on legislation to change that. Under my bill, if a company has both a FERC permit and a contract to export LNG, then DOE will have 60 days to either approve or deny them a permit. If DOE does not reach a decision in those 60 days, the company will get the permit to export.

Just like our friends in Europe, we don't have time to wait around on government. In that same spirit, I would urge my colleagues to support H. Res. 284.

I yield back.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you very much, Your Honor.

And I now recognize Congressman Stockman from Texas.

Mr. STOCKMAN. Thanks.

Mr. Chairman, I ask that you put my name also on the bill. But in direction to my colleague, Mr. Poe, on the gas, if you do that, please add my name to the bill because it is important, especially to my district. We are anxiously awaiting on the DOE also.

I just got back from Azerbaijan, and this is a nation which has really turned around quite significantly. It is a nation which the GDP, since the new leader has taken over and gone to free economics, has developed very rapidly, and this is good not just for Europe, but it is also good for the region and for competition. And I just—excited that you are—Mr. Chairman, that you have introduced it.

And I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. Thank you very much.

And would you—do you have a statement?

Mr. MARINO. No, sir.

Mr. ROHRABACHER. All right. Well, you got here just in time.

So no other members, I see, are seeking to speak on this resolution. So are there any amendments to this resolution?

All right. Hearing no amendments, the question occurs on the motion to report H. Res. 284 favorably, as amended. All in favor, say "aye."

All opposed?

I don't hear any. In the opinion of the Chair, the ayes have it. The motion is approved. The bill is reported favorably.

Okay. That is it. Is there anyone—no other requests? That is it.

Want to thank the members and the staff for all their assistance. And let us move forward now with full committee. And, as I say, I think that when we are facilitating this—a transportation, we are making energy more accessible throughout the world, wherever that is. That is a positive thing. It uplifts people. We are talking about the creating the existence of wealth. And the existence of wealth is a very positive thing, especially for people who are trying to uplift their conditions in so many parts of the world, especially now Central Asia, which is the focus of this committee.

So with that said, the subcommittee now stands adjourned.
[Whereupon, at 2:15 p.m., the subcommittee was adjourned.]

APPENDIX

MATERIAL SUBMITTED FOR THE RECORD

SUBCOMMITTEE MARKUP NOTICE
COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20515-6128

Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats
Dana Rohrabacher (R-CA), Chairman

September 12, 2013

TO: MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

You are respectfully requested to attend an OPEN meeting of the Subcommittee on Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats in Room 2200 of the Rayburn House Office Building (and available on the Committee website at www.foreignaffairs.house.gov):

DATE: Thursday, September 19, 2013

TIME: 2:00 p.m.

MARKUP OF: H. Res. 284, Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives with respect to promoting energy security of European allies through opening up the Southern Gas Corridor.

By Direction of the Chairman

The Committee on Foreign Affairs seeks to make its facilities accessible to persons with disabilities. If you are in need of special accommodations, please call 202/225-5021 at least four business days in advance of the event, whenever practicable. Questions with regard to special accommodations in general (including availability of Committee materials in alternative formats and assistive listening devices) may be directed to the Committee.



COMMITTEE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS
MINUTES OF SUBCOMMITTEE MARKUP

MINUTES OF SUBCOMMITTEE ON Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats MARKUP

Day Thursday Date 9/19/13 Room 2200 RHOB

Starting Time 2:03 pm Ending Time 2:15 pm

Recesses n/a (to) (to) (to) (to) (to) (to)

Presiding Member(s)

Chairman Dana Rohrabacher

Check all of the following that apply:

Open Session

Executive (closed) Session

Televised

Electronically Recorded (taped)

Stenographic Record

BILLS FOR MARKUP: (Include bill number(s) and title(s) of legislation.)

HR 284 Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives with respect to promoting energy security of European allies through opening up the Southern Gas Corridor.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

Rep. Dana Rohrabacher, Rep. Steve Stockman, Rep. George Holding, Rep. William Keating, Rep. Ted Poe, Rep. Gregory Meeks, and Rep. Tom Marino.

NON-COMMITTEE MEMBERS PRESENT:

None

STATEMENTS FOR THE RECORD: (List any statements submitted for the record.)

Rep. Gregory Meeks

ACTIONS TAKEN DURING THE MARKUP: (Attach copies of legislation and amendments.)

Voice vote to pass an Amendment in the Nature of a Substitute to HR 284.


RECORDED VOTES TAKEN (FOR MARKUP): (Attach final vote tally sheet listing each member.)

Subject	Yeas	Nays	Present	Not Voting
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TIME SCHEDULED TO RECONVENE _____

or

TIME ADJOURNED 2:15 pm


Subcommittee Staff Director

9/19/13 Europe, Eurasia, and Emerging Threats Subcommittee Markup Summary

The Chair called up the following measure for consideration by the Subcommittee. By unanimous consent, an amendment in the nature of a substitute (previously provided to Members of the Subcommittee) was considered as base text:

1. H. Res. 284 (Turner), “Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives with respect to promoting energy security of European allies through opening up the Southern Gas Corridor.”

- a. As amended by Rohrabacher (amendment in the nature of a substitute)

The measure and amendment were adopted by voice vote, and were referred favorably to the Full Committee by unanimous consent.

The Subcommittee adjourned.



Statement for the Record regarding H. Res. 284

Submitted by the Honorable Gregory W. Meeks

September 19, 2013

I am pleased to join Chairman Rohrabacher and Congressman Turner to support House Resolution 284, recognizing the promotion of energy security for our European allies through the opening of the Southern Gas Corridor. This Resolution recognizes the importance of European energy security to U.S. national interests. Once completed, the Southern Gas Corridor, through the Trans-Adriatic Pipelines, will carry much needed gas from the South Caucasus region and Central Asia across Azerbaijan, Georgia, Turkey, Greece, and Albania to Italy to the rest of Europe. Azerbaijan, a key U.S. ally and trading partner, has closely collaborated with European nations and the United States to ensure that the pipeline will be a reliable source of energy regardless of political crises or social unrest.

Diversifying Europe's energy supply will reduce vulnerabilities to European energy routes, ensuring that Europe will not be left out in the cold. Currently, much of Europe is reliant on a single source of energy from one or a limited number of suppliers. Mitigating threats to the security and stability of our most important allies and strategic partners in the world, including NATO member countries, is a high priority for the United States. The Southern Gas Corridor will not only bolster U.S. national interests abroad, but will provide much needed

competition for energy resources and supply routes within the wider global marketplace. The opening of the Southern Gas Corridor establishes a significant milestone towards meeting global energy demands. This Resolution is a key step in that direction, and I am pleased to show my full support.