

H. Res. 383

In the House of Representatives, U.S.,

July 27, 2005.

Whereas the regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq systematically violated the human rights and fundamental freedoms of the Iraqi people;

Whereas on April 9, 2003, United States and coalition forces brought an end to the regime of Saddam Hussein;

Whereas on June 28, 2004, an Iraqi interim government was sworn in after sovereignty was restored;

Whereas in Iraq's January 2005 parliamentary elections, more than 2,000 women ran for office and currently 31 percent of the seats in Iraq's National Assembly are occupied by women;

Whereas women lead the Iraqi ministries of Displacement and Migration, Telecommunications, Municipalities and Public Works, Environment, Science and Technology, and Women's Affairs;

Whereas United States Government-sponsored programs are helping Iraqi women develop in multiple areas from literacy, computer and vocational training, to human rights education and election training;

Whereas through grants funded by the United States Government's Iraqi Women's Democracy Initiative, nongovernmental organizations are providing training in political

leadership, communications, coalition-building skills, voter education, constitution drafting, legal reform, and the legislative process;

Whereas a 275-member Transitional National Assembly, which is charged with the responsibility of drafting a new constitution, was elected to serve as Iraq's national legislature for a transition period;

Whereas Article 12 of Iraq's Transitional Administrative Law states that "[a]ll Iraqis [are] equal in their rights without regard to gender * * * and they are equal before the law";

Whereas Article 12 of the Transitional Administrative Law further states that "[d]iscrimination against an Iraqi citizen on the basis of his gender * * * is prohibited";

Whereas on May 10, 2005, Iraq's National Assembly appointed a 55-member committee, composed of Assembly members, to begin drafting a permanent constitution for Iraq;

Whereas in visits with legislators and officials of the Government of the United States, Iraqi women have raised perceived limitations on their rights in a current draft of the Iraqi constitution;

Whereas the central principles of a true democracy, "liberty and justice for all", "equal justice under law", and "government of the people, by the people and for the people" apply equally to women;

Whereas, in the words of Supreme Court Justice Sandra Day O'Connor: "[s]ociety as a whole benefits immeasurably from a climate in which all persons, regardless of race or gender, may have the opportunity to earn respect, re-

sponsibility, advancement and remuneration based on ability”;

Whereas the House of Representatives recognizes the commitment and dedication of the United States to ensure that the full rights of women are granted in the Iraqi constitution;

Whereas the House of Representatives recognizes the need to affirm the spirit and free the energies of women in Iraq who have spent countless hours, years, and lifetimes working for the basic human right of equal constitutional protection; and

Whereas the House of Representatives recognizes the risks Iraqi women have faced in working for the future of their country and admire their courageous commitment to democracy: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) commends United States and coalition forces in liberating the Iraqi people from the repressive regime of Saddam Hussein and their ongoing efforts in support of the freedom and stability of Iraq;

(2) recognizes the progress achieved by the Iraqi people toward the establishment of a representative democratic government;

(3) recognizes the importance of ensuring women in Iraq have equal rights under the law and in society;

(4) recognizes the commitment and dedication of the Administration to ensuring the full rights of women are granted in the Iraqi constitution;

(5) strongly encourages Iraq's Transitional National Assembly to adopt a constitution that grants women equal rights under the law and to work to protect such rights; and

(6) pledges to support the efforts of Iraqi women to fully participate in a democratic Iraq.

Attest:

Clerk.