

112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 472

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States should initiate negotiations to enter into a free trade agreement with Egypt.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 18, 2011

Mr. DREIER (for himself and Mr. MEEKS) submitted the following resolution;
which was referred to the Committee on Ways and Means

RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States should initiate negotiations to enter into a free trade agreement with Egypt.

Whereas the Arab Spring has swept through Northern Africa and the Middle East, creating the greatest opportunity in more than a generation for true democratic development in the region;

Whereas the resulting upheaval also creates enormous potential for instability, violence, and power vacuums that could be exploited by anti-democratic or extremist forces;

Whereas a key factor that drove protestors into the streets was a lack of economic opportunity;

Whereas demonstrations by the Egyptian people brought to an end the nearly 30-year authoritarian rule of Hosni Mubarak on February 11, 2011;

Whereas a referendum held the following month to amend the constitution and limit the power of the presidency passed by 77 percent;

Whereas plans for subsequent parliamentary elections have been delayed on multiple occasions;

Whereas frustration at the pace of reform has led thousands of Egyptians to return to the streets;

Whereas jobs and living standards remain the primary concern for most Egyptians;

Whereas polling shows that 80 percent of Egyptians believe that the revolution will improve their economic situation within one year;

Whereas the inherent instability of transitional periods makes economic growth and rising living standards difficult to achieve in the short term;

Whereas if the economic aspirations of the Egyptian people are not realized, the potential for anti-democratic or extremist forces to exploit the current instability will only be magnified;

Whereas strong, sustained economic growth and development would provide the necessary resources for Egypt to build democratic institutions and solidify public support for democratic governance, as well as ensure strong labor, environmental, and human rights protections;

Whereas engagement with Egypt through trade negotiations would encourage greater reform and build its capacity to modernize and liberalize its economy, as well as provide

maximum leverage to facilitate the implementation of strong labor, environmental, and human rights protections;

Whereas a vibrant, stable, and prosperous democracy in the Arab world's most populous state is in the interest of the United States and would fuel both economic and democratic development throughout the region;

Whereas Egypt is already an important trading partner for the United States, accounting for over \$9,000,000,000 in two-way trade in 2010 and representing the fourth largest destination for United States corn and wheat exports;

Whereas a key United States–Egypt trade initiative, the Qualifying Industrial Zones, is already a success, with 507 companies operating in the zones, shipping \$1,000,000,000 of Egypt's \$2,200,000,000 in annual exports to the United States last year, employing 200,000 men and women, and representing the single largest cooperative economic project between Israel and Arab world; and

Whereas Egypt is a member of the World Trade Organization: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved*, That it is the sense of the House of Rep-
- 2 resentatives that the United States should initiate negotia-
- 3 tions to enter into a free trade agreement with Egypt.

○