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H. RES. 483

Calling for immediate full consular services to be provided by the United States Consulate in Erbil, the capital of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

DECEMBER 2, 2011

Mr. ROHRBACHER submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Calling for immediate full consular services to be provided by the United States Consulate in Erbil, the capital of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

Whereas the establishment of a fully operational United States Consulate in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq is consistent with current United States policy to normalize bilateral United States-Iraq relations at the diplomatic, commercial, cultural, and educational levels as the United States Armed Forces redeploys from Iraq;

Whereas the United States Department of State opened a consulate in Erbil, the capital of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, in July 2011 which does not offer full consular services;

Whereas the withholding or lack of consular services in Erbil damages United States relations with the people and regional government of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq;

Whereas a fully operational United States Consulate in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq will increase travel between the United States and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq and thus strengthen people-to-people exchanges between both sides;

Whereas presently, United States citizens either living in or visiting the Kurdistan Region of Iraq must travel to the United States Embassy in Baghdad, 200 miles away, to receive full consular services;

Whereas a fully functioning United States Consulate in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq will both be helpful in attracting greater United States business and investment to the region and ensuring that the region continues to serve as a “gateway” to United States business success in other parts of Iraq, as a number of United States Government agencies have advocated;

Whereas a fully functional United States Consulate in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq will demonstrate a United States commitment to maintaining and building upon the success and stability of this prosperous and democratic Iraqi region;

Whereas a fully functional United States Consulate in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq will allow more government and nongovernmental missions between the United States and the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, a mutual interest;

Whereas the Kurds of Iraq have been willing partners with the United States in the democratic transition in Iraq since 2003 and the Kurdistan Region has served as a

model of Iraq's democratization since Operation Iraqi Freedom;

Whereas the United States and the Kurdistan Regional Government (KRG) have been full partners in the battle against terrorism and those who seek to undermine continued progress in a pluralistic, democratic, and federal Iraq;

Whereas a fully operational United States Consulate in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq will play a helpful role in continuing to safeguard Iraq's territorial integrity from external aggression and support United States and Iraqi diplomatic initiatives that seek to prevent outside interference in Iraq's affairs; and

Whereas a fully functional United States Consulate in the Kurdistan Region of Iraq will also foster continued dialogue at a strategic level between the United States and the KRG: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives calls on
- 2 the United States Department of State to provide imme-
- 3 diate full consular services, including issuing visas, from
- 4 the United States Consulate in Erbil, the capital of the
- 5 Kurdistan Region of Iraq.

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