

Whereas nearly half of adults in the United States have high blood pressure, which is a leading cause and controllable risk factor for stroke;

Whereas the acronym F.A.S.T., which is used to help detect warning signs and symptoms of stroke and respond effectively, stands for face drooping, arm weakness, speech difficulty, and time to call 911;

Whereas, during American Stroke Month in May, and year-round, the Together to End Stroke initiative of the American Stroke Association strives to teach people everywhere that stroke is largely preventable, treatable, and beatable; and

Whereas more research and education is needed to help prevent and treat stroke: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) expresses support for the designation of May 2023 as “American Stroke Month”;

(2) recognizes and reaffirms the commitment of the United States to fighting stroke—

(A) by promoting awareness about the causes, risks, and prevention of stroke;

(B) by supporting research on stroke; and

(C) by improving access to affordable quality care to reduce long term disability and mortality;

(3) commends the efforts of States, territories, and possessions of the United States, localities, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and other entities, and the people of the United States who support American Stroke Month; and

(4) encourages all individuals in the United States to familiarize themselves with the risk factors associated with stroke, recognize the warning signs and symptoms, and on first sign of a stroke, dial 911 immediately, in order to begin to reduce the devastating effects of stroke on the population of the United States.

SENATE RESOLUTION 295—EX-PRESSING SOLIDARITY WITH THE CUBAN PEOPLE IN DEMANDING FREEDOM AND HUMAN RIGHTS, AND COMMENDING THEIR COURAGE IN THE WAKE OF THE JULY 11, 2021, PROTESTS

Mr. SCOTT of Florida (for himself, Mr. BRAUN, and Mr. RUBIO) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 295

Whereas the communist dictatorship in Cuba has been responsible for numerous atrocities including the extrajudicial assassinations of innocent civilians and activists by firing squad and other brutal methods, including the Tugboat Massacre of 1994 and the Brothers to the Rescue Shoot-Down of 1996;

Whereas, in the notorious Black Spring of 2003, the Cuban regime engaged in brutal violence against independent journalists, human rights activists, and others who dared to expose the realities of totalitarian Cuba, which was roundly condemned by international human rights groups;

Whereas human rights activists such as Pedro Luis Boitel, Juan Wilfredo Soto Garcia, leader of the Ladies in White Laura Pollan, Orlando Zapata Tamayo, Wilman Willar Mendoza, Oswaldo Paya, Harold Cepero, Armando Sosa Fortuny, and Yosvany Arostegui Armenteros died under suspicious circumstances, including while in state custody;

Whereas Report No. 83/23 published by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights on June 9, 2023, states that—

(1) “there is serious and sufficient evidence to conclude that [agents of the Cuban regime] participated in the death of Mr. Paya and Mr. Cepero”;

(2) the Cuban regime “is responsible for the violation of the right established in Article I of the American Declaration to the detriment of Oswaldo Paya and Harold Cepero”;

(3) “there was a context of reprisals and human rights violations against human rights defenders and persons who expressed dissent against government policies”;

(4) Harold Cepero and Oswaldo Paya “were subjected to various acts of violence, harassment, threats, attempts on their lives, and finally, a car crash that caused their deaths”;

(5) “this case was framed within the contextual elements of state repression of human rights defenders in Cuba”;

Whereas the report entitled “Cuba 2022 Human Rights Report” published by the Department of State notes that “significant human rights issues [in Cuba] included credible reports of”—

(1) unlawful or arbitrary killings, including extrajudicial killings, by the government;

(2) torture and cruel, inhuman, and degrading treatment of political dissidents, detainees, and prisoners by security forces;

(3) harsh and life-threatening prison conditions;

(4) arbitrary arrests and detentions; political prisoners;

(5) transnational repression against individuals in another country;

(6) serious problems with the independence of the judiciary;

(7) arbitrary or unlawful interference with privacy;

(8) serious restrictions on freedom of expression and media, including violence or threats of violence against journalists, censorship, unjustified arrests or prosecutions of journalists, and enforcement or threat to enforce criminal libel laws to limit expression;

(9) serious restrictions on internet freedom; substantial interference with the right of peaceful assembly and freedom of association, including overly restrictive laws on the organization, funding, or operation of non-governmental and civil society organizations;

(10) severe restrictions on religious freedom;

(11) restrictions on freedom of movement and residence within the country and on the right to leave the country;

(12) inability of citizens to change their government peacefully through free and fair elections; serious and unreasonable restrictions on political participation;

(13) serious government corruption; lack of investigation of and accountability for gender-based violence, including femicide; and

(14) trafficking in persons, including forced labor; and outlawing of independent trade unions;

Whereas 2023 Trafficking in Persons Report published by the Department of State lists Cuba as a Tier 3 country, the lowest possible rating, stating that—

(1) “there was a government policy or pattern to profit from labor export programs with strong indications of forced labor, particularly in the foreign medical missions’ program”;

(2) the regime “continued to deploy Cuban workers to foreign countries using deceptive and coercive tactics” and “failed to address trafficking crimes despite an increasing number of allegations from credible NGOs, former participants, and foreign governments of Cuban officials’ involvement in abuses”;

Whereas, in January 2019, Secretary General of the Organization of American States

Luis Almagro stated that “the Cuban dictatorship has failed in access to rights and equity, its productive system has failed, its financial management has failed, its management of the economy has failed and the only way to melt away its social deficiencies is to push its people into exile; it is a system that is incapable of giving dignified and honest work to its people, that is unable to open its youth to enterprise, unable to generate a competitive productive system and unable to achieve solutions for the simplest financial issues”;

Whereas the Asociación Sindical Independiente de Cuba (commonly known as “Independent Trade Union Association of Cuba” or “ASIC”) has filed complaints with the International Labour Organization condemning violations of fundamental labor rights, such as freedom of assembly, and repression of labor activist Ivan Hernandez Carrillo, and, in response, the International Labour Organization provided recommendations on March 24, 2021, to address the violations, which Hernandez Carrillo continues to endure in the wake of the July 11, 2021, protests;

Whereas the 2023 reports entitled “Freedom on the Net” and “Freedom in the World” published by Freedom House summarized that—

(1) “Cuba’s one-party communist state outlaws political pluralism, bans independent media, suppresses dissent, and severely restricts basic civil liberties”;

(2) the government “continues to dominate the economy despite recent reforms that permit some private-sector activity”;

(3) “the regime’s undemocratic character has not changed despite a generational transition in political leadership between 2018 and 2021 that included the introduction of a new constitution”;

Whereas the United States has long supported the Cuban people through policies that limit hard currency to the oppressive Cuban regime while—

(1) providing democracy-building support to civil society activists;

(2) broadcasting outside information to pierce the propaganda of the Cuban regime; and

(3) permitting virtually unlimited donations of food, medicines, and other necessities through—

(A) Acts of Congress such as—

(i) the Radio Broadcasting to Cuba Act (22 U.S.C. 1465 et seq.);

(ii) the Television Broadcasting to Cuba Act (22 U.S.C. 1465aa et seq.);

(iii) the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992 (22 U.S.C. 6001 et seq.);

(iv) the Cuban Liberty and Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996 (22 U.S.C. 6021 et seq.); and

(v) the Trade Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000 (22 U.S.C. 7201 et seq.); and

(B) executive orders and regulations;

Whereas numerous activists in Cuba such as members of the Patriotic Union of Cuba, the San Isidro Movement, the Christian Liberation Movement, ASIC, the Ladies in White, the Orlando Zapata Tamayo National Resistance Front, religious organizations, exile groups, and others are demanding freedom for the Cuban people;

Whereas Jose Daniel Ferrer Garcia, independent journalist and leader of the Patriotic Union of Cuba, has been held in solitary confinement since August 14, 2021, and held incommunicado since March 17, 2023, with his health condition unknown, which was condemned by Amnesty International on June 6, 2023;

Whereas artists Maykel Osorbo Castillo Perez and Luis Manuel Otero Alcantara of the San Isidro Movement, who participated

in the Grammy-winning “Patria y Vida” and were sentenced to 9 and 5 years, respectively, have been unjustly imprisoned for 2 years, and Otero Alcantara has engaged in hunger strikes to protest his abhorrent treatment;

Whereas the Cuban regime has employed so-called “Committees for the Defense of the Revolution” to force neighbors to spy and turn against each other, which has spread distrust and fear among the Cuban people and caused an environment that is deleterious to a strong social fabric and thriving civil society;

Whereas, on July 11, 2021, thousands of courageous protesters gathered throughout Cuba, in every province, to demand “libertad” and human rights and to express opposition to dictatorship in Cuba;

Whereas the Cuban regime reacted to the July 11 protests with violence, arbitrary arrests, often by plain clothes state security operatives, and forced disappearances and by shutting down internet access and calling on supporters of the regime to harass protesters, and prosecuted as many as 790 Cubans for peacefully calling for freedom in the protests;

Whereas Cubalex reported that the Cuban regime prosecuted 55 children in the wake of the July 11 protests, imposing prison sentences as long as 23 years, while dozens of children reportedly remain in prison to this day; and

Whereas, since Fidel Castro illegitimately and violently seized power, hundreds of thousands of Cuban nationals have fled Communist oppression: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) calls for the release of all political prisoners and for the end of acts of repression, arbitrary imprisonments, torture, and other human rights abuses against the Cuban people;

(2) honors the courageous Cuban people for daring to stand up to the Cuban regime and demanding respect for fundamental freedoms, such as freedom of expression and assembly;

(3) recognizes the brave prodemocracy and human rights activists, including independent journalists, artists, labor leaders, and religious leaders, who have been persecuted throughout decades of Communist tyranny;

(A) urges other democracies, regional, and multilateral organizations to affirm that—

(i) violence against the unarmed people of Cuba will not be tolerated; and

(ii) human rights abusers will be held accountable for their crimes;

(4) calls on the European Union—

(A) to reconsider the failed Political Dialogue and Cooperation Agreement; and

(B) to place freedom and human rights at the center of the policy toward Cuba;

(5) expresses solidarity with the long-suffering Cuban people in their demands for a genuine democratic transition; and

(6) calls on the international community to stand with the people struggling for freedom in Cuba by condemning repression and expressing unequivocal support for the rights to self-governance, human rights, and basic liberties for the Cuban people.

SENATE RESOLUTION 296—DESIGNATING JULY 2023 AS “PLASTIC POLLUTION ACTION MONTH”

Mr. MERKLEY submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

Whereas plastic pollution represents a global threat that will require individual and collective action, both nationally and internationally, to address;

Whereas 450,000,000 tons of plastic is produced each year, a number that is projected to triple by 2050;

Whereas, in the United States—

(1) the rate of plastic waste recycling decreased in 2021 to between 4 and 6 percent; and

(2) less than 3 percent of plastic waste is recycled into a similar quality product;

Whereas a recent study from the Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development found that, in 2022, the United States—

(1) mismanaged 4 percent of plastic waste;

(2) landfilled 73 percent of plastic waste;

(3) incinerated 19 percent of plastic waste; and

(4) recycled 4 percent of plastic waste;

Whereas single-use plastics account for at least 40 percent of the plastic produced every year;

Whereas over 12,000,000 tons of plastic waste enter the ocean every year from land-based sources alone;

Whereas if no action is taken, the flow of plastics into the ocean is expected to triple by 2040;

Whereas recent studies estimate that there are 171,000,000,000,000 pieces of plastic in the oceans of the world;

Whereas of the 171,000,000,000,000 pieces of plastic in the ocean, 1 percent floats, 5 percent washes up on beaches, and 94 percent sinks to the bottom;

Whereas nearly 1,300 marine species have consumed plastics;

Whereas plastics, and associated chemicals of plastics, are ingested by humans and are associated with well-established human health risks;

Whereas studies have found microplastic particles in human blood, lungs, colons, and placentas;

Whereas studies suggest that humans ingest over 800 microplastics per day;

Whereas taking action to reduce plastic use, collect and clean up litter, and reuse and recycle more plastics will lead to less plastic pollution;

Whereas, every July, people challenge themselves to reduce their plastic footprint through “Plastics Free July”;

Whereas, over the last 40 years, over 17,000,000 volunteers have joined the International Coastal Cleanup to collect more than 350,000,000 pounds of plastic and debris while simultaneously recording their findings to inform research and upstream action;

Whereas switching to reusable items instead of single-use items can prevent waste, save water, and reduce litter; and

Whereas July 2023 is an appropriate month to designate as Plastic Pollution Action Month to recommit to taking action, individually and as a country, to reduce plastic pollution: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) designates July 2023 as “Plastic Pollution Action Month”;

(2) recognizes the dangers to human health and the environment posed by plastic pollution; and

(3) encourages all individuals in the United States to protect, conserve, maintain, and rebuild public health and the environment by responsibly participating in activities to reduce plastic pollution in July 2023 and year-round.

SENATE RESOLUTION 297—HONORING THE LIFE, ACHIEVEMENTS, AND LEGACY OF GLORIA MOLINA, THE FIRST LATINA ELECTED TO THE CALIFORNIA STATE LEGISLATURE, LOS ANGELES CITY COUNCIL, AND LOS ANGELES COUNTY BOARD OF SUPERVISORS

Mr. PADILLA (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 297

Whereas Gloria Molina was born on May 31, 1948, in Montebello, California, to Leonard Molina and Concepción Molina, who immigrated from Casa Grandes, Chihuahua, Mexico;

Whereas Gloria Molina was the oldest of 10 siblings and assisted her parents in raising her siblings;

Whereas Gloria Molina graduated from El Rancho High School in 1966, and attended Rio Hondo Community College, East Los Angeles Community College, and California State University, Los Angeles;

Whereas Gloria Molina’s activism was sparked by the Chicano movement and passion for women’s empowerment;

Whereas Gloria Molina began her advocacy advancing health care and political access for Latinas as President of Comisión Femenil Mexicana National;

Whereas, before being elected to public office, Gloria Molina volunteered for President Carter’s campaign office in California in 1975, and later served as a staffing specialist in the White House Office of Presidential Personnel;

Whereas, in 1979, Gloria Molina served as the Director of Intergovernmental and Congressional Affairs for the region IX office of the United States Department of Health and Human Services;

Whereas Gloria Molina was elected to the California State Assembly from the 56th Assembly District in 1982, where she combined passionate advocacy with formidable political skill to strengthen communities in the 56th Assembly District and statewide, and served until her 1987 election to the Los Angeles City Council;

Whereas Gloria Molina was the first ever Latina elected to, and only the third person of Mexican ancestry to serve on, the Los Angeles City Council in 1987;

Whereas, in 1991, after decades of gerrymandering that excluded Latino representation on the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors, Gloria Molina was elected as the first Latina to serve as a Los Angeles County Supervisor;

Whereas Gloria Molina served honorably for 23 years, representing a district that stretched from Koreatown, Pico-Union, and East Los Angeles, all the way east to Pomona and included much of the San Gabriel Valley;

Whereas Gloria Molina became renowned during her service as a County Supervisor as a fiscal watchdog committed to overseeing good government reforms, maintenance of the county’s public health care system, and quality-of-life issues for the millions of county residents living in unincorporated Los Angeles County;

Whereas, throughout her career, Gloria Molina served on various boards, including the Mexican American Legal Defense and Educational Fund (MALDEF), the Southwest Voter Education and Registration Project, the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO), and the California Community Foundation;