

order to buy property within its district boundaries that can be used for public educational purposes.

□ 1615

This legislation has been approved by the State Department and approved by the House International Relations Committee and I urge its passage.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this bill, and yield myself 1½ minutes.

Mr. Speaker, I would first like to thank the gentlewoman from Florida for all of her efforts. I want to especially single out the hard work of my good friend and colleague from Texas, SILVESTRE REYES, for his steadfast efforts to help the Clint Independent School District improve the quality of education for its students.

Mr. Speaker, this bill seeks to correct a technical error in legislation which the 105th Congress passed. That legislation should have relinquished the Federal Government's reversionary interest in a tract of land that is owned by the Clint Independent School District.

Unfortunately, the wrong coordinates for the land were included in the bill. This bill, H.R. 860, completes the transfer of property rights for the school district so that it can proceed with a planned sale of the land.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all of our colleagues to support H.R. 860.

Mr. Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the author of the bill, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. REYES).

Mr. REYES. Mr. Speaker, I thank my good friend from New York for yielding me time, and my good friend from Florida, the gentlewoman, for her support in this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of H.R. 860, a bill to provide for the conveyance of reversionary interests of the United States in certain lands in my district of El Paso County, Texas to the Clint Independent School District.

The passage of H.R. 860 comes on the heels of an interesting footnote in our history. In 1940, Clint Independent School District received 20 acres of land that the United States Government had obtained from Mexico through the Convention of February 1, 1933.

In the treaty, the two governments agreed to cooperate in the construction and maintenance of the Rio Grande Rectification Project, which ultimately straightened and reinforced 155 miles of river boundary flowing through the increasingly developed El Paso, Texas-Juarez, Chihuahua area.

In addition to helping provide a more stable international boundary, the project also helped occasional flooding in that region. After giving the land to the school district, the Department of State retained reversionary interest in the parcel. In 1957 Federal statutes gave Clint Independent School District

the ability to trade that piece of land for another, which it did, acquiring a separate parcel in which the United States had also retained reversionary interest.

Today, Clint Independent School District still owns that one piece of land. Unfortunately, because the land in question lies outside of Clint's boundaries, district regulations prevent the school district from developing it.

H.R. 860 will allow Clint to sell its land in order to buy property within its own district boundaries. All proceeds from such a sale must and will be used for public educational purposes. This legislation has been approved by the State Department and reported favorably by the House International Relations Committee. Of the nine school districts in El Paso County, Clint is the largest in square mileage, encompassing a diverse area in the fast-growing east El Paso County.

The district itself is one of the most rapidly expanding in Texas, with an estimated student population of 9,000-plus, a figure that is expected to double within the next 5 years.

All together, the district has 12 campuses, three high schools, two middle schools, one junior high school and six elementary schools. This bill will afford Clint the ability to help keep pace with its growth and help the district provide its students a high-quality educational experience.

I would like to thank the chairman and ranking member of the House International Relations Committee, Mr. HYDE of Illinois and Mr. LANTOS of California, as well as my friend from New York and my friend from Florida, for reporting this beneficial piece of legislation out of their committee.

Mr. Speaker, I would also like to thank our leader, Ms. PELOSI, and minority whip, Mr. HOYER for their support and assistance in bringing this bill to the floor.

Mr. Speaker, I encourage all my colleagues to vote "yes" on H.R. 860.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. WAMP). The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 860.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the bill was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

REPORT ON RESOLUTION PROVIDING FOR CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 2389, PLEDGE PROTECTION ACT OF 2005

Mr. GINGREY (during consideration of H.R. 860), from the Committee on

Rules, submitted a privileged report (Rept. No. 109-577) on the resolution (H. Res. 920) providing for consideration of the bill (H.R. 2389) to amend title 28, United States Code, with respect to the jurisdiction of Federal courts over certain cases and controversies involving the Pledge of Allegiance, which was referred to the House Calendar and ordered to be printed.

CONGRATULATING ISRAEL'S MAGEN DAVID ADOM SOCIETY

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 435) congratulating Israel's Magen David Adom Society for achieving full membership in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read as follows:

H. CON. RES. 435

Whereas international humanitarian law is, quintessentially, about principle, establishing standards of conduct that can not be breached under any circumstance, or for any calculation of political efficacy or utility;

Whereas the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement is a worldwide institution in which all national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies have equal status, whose mission is to prevent and alleviate human suffering wherever it may be found, without discrimination;

Whereas the Magen David Adom (Red Shield of David) Society is the national humanitarian society in the State of Israel and has performed heroically, aiding all in need of assistance, on a purely humanitarian basis, without bias, even those responsible for acts of horrific violence against Israeli civilians;

Whereas since 1949 the Magen David Adom Society has been refused admission into the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Federation and has been relegated to observer status without a vote because it has used the Red Shield of David, the only such national organization denied membership in the Movement;

Whereas the red cross symbol was intended as the visible expression of the neutral status enjoyed by the medical services of the armed forces and the protection thus conferred, and there is not, and has never been, any implicit religious connection in the cross;

Whereas since its establishment in 1930, the Magen David Adom Society, because it does not use either a red cross or a red crescent, has been prevented from full membership in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Federation;

Whereas Israel acceded to the Geneva Conventions in 1951 with a reservation specifying their intent to continue to use the Magen David Adom;

Whereas international consultations among nations and national Red Cross Societies ensued until 1999, when the International Committee of the Red Cross formally called for adoption of a protocol to the Geneva Conventions creating a third neutral symbol; allowing the use of either the Red Cross, the Red Crescent, or the third neutral symbol; and allowing for the third neutral symbol to be used in combination with other national Red Cross Society symbols—including the Magen David Adom;

Whereas a diplomatic conference to adopt this proposal into the Geneva Conventions

was scheduled for October 2000, but was prevented by the outbreak of the second Palestinian intifada;

Whereas the United States and the American Red Cross have worked ceaselessly to resolve the issue of the third neutral symbol and achieve full membership in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Federation for the Magen David Adom Society;

Whereas Congress has insisted that funds made available to the headquarters of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement be contingent on a certification by the Secretary of State confirming that the Magen David Adom Society is a full participant in the activities of the International Committee of the Red Cross;

Whereas the American Red Cross has stood alone among all the national humanitarian aid societies, and has withheld over \$45,000,000 in dues to the International Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies to protest the exclusion of the Magen David Adom;

Whereas the Government of Switzerland, the depositary state for the Geneva Conventions, convened a Diplomatic Conference of the states parties to the Geneva Conventions in December 2005 for the purpose of adopting a Protocol Additional to the Geneva Conventions of 12 August 1949, and relating to the Adoption of an Additional Distinctive Emblem (the "Geneva Protocol III") and rightly resisted efforts to block the broad international consensus in favor of resolving the third neutral symbol question;

Whereas the efforts by the United States and the American Red Cross at the Diplomatic Conference in December 2005 were critical to achieving both an overwhelming positive vote in favor of adopting the Geneva Protocol III, as well as an extremely important memorandum of understanding between the Magen David Adom and the Palestinian Red Crescent Society;

Whereas sustaining international support for the adoption of the third neutral symbol against efforts to divert the conference into unrelated political matters required extraordinary diplomatic efforts by the United States and the American Red Cross;

Whereas the Geneva Protocol III adopted in Geneva in December 2005 established the new third neutral symbol, the "red crystal" that can be used in conjunction with the Red Shield of David and cleared the way for Israel's full participation in the international movement;

Whereas in June 2006 the states parties to the Geneva Conventions, the national Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, the Federation of the Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, and the International Committee of the Red Cross met in Geneva to adopt rules implementing the Geneva Protocol III; and

Whereas following the June 2006 meeting in Geneva, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Federation accepted the Magen David Adom Society as a full member: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That—

(1) Congress—

(A) commends the Magen David Adom Society for its long and distinguished record of providing humanitarian assistance to all those in need of aid, even those responsible for heinous atrocities against Israeli civilians;

(B) congratulates the Magen David Adom Society, and the Government and the people of the State of Israel, for securing full membership in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Federation, 57 years past due;

(C) thanks the President, the Secretary of State, and United States diplomatic representatives for their tireless pursuit and maintenance of the international support

that culminated in the Magen David Adom Society's recent acceptance as a full member in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Federation;

(D) thanks the American Red Cross for its unwavering and unyielding insistence within the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement that the humanitarian principle of universality could not be reconciled with continued exclusion of the Magen David Adom Society; and

(E) thanks the Government of Switzerland and officials of the International Committee of the Red Cross for helping to prepare the necessary groundwork and carrying to completion the adoption of the Geneva Protocol III by the states parties to the Geneva Conventions and the rules for its implementation; and

(2) Congress commends the President for—

(A) submitting the Geneva Protocol III to the Senate for its advice and consent; and

(B) pending approval by the Senate, preparing for congressional consideration and enactment of legislation necessary to carry into effect the Geneva Protocol III.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) and the gentleman from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from Florida.

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the resolution under consideration.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from Florida?

There was no objection.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of House Concurrent Resolution 435, congratulating Israel's Magen David Adom Society for achieving full membership in the International Red Cross and the Red Crescent Movement.

On June 22, the Society was recognized by the International Committee of the Red Cross and admitted as a full member into the International Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

The Society's attaining full membership in the International Red Cross and the Red Crescent Movement is a significant achievement, as it marks an end to Israel's almost 60-year-old isolation from the international human rights assistance community.

Since 1949, the Society has been refused admission into the International Red Cross and the Red Crescent Movement simply due to the fact that they used the Red Shield of David as its symbol. For years, the Society has worked closely with the International Red Cross bringing emergency relief to victims of hurricanes, earthquakes, and floods around the globe.

It has brought its medical services and cutting-edge technology to provide assistance to disasters, such as Katrina in the U.S. Gulf Coast, tsunami relief

in southeast Asia, and the flooding in Romania. This resolution commends the Magen David Adom Society for its distinguished record of humanitarian service and congratulates this organization for achieving full membership in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

The resolution before us thanks the President and the Secretary of State for their tireless efforts toward this goal, and for submitting to the Senate the third additional protocol for the Geneva Convention.

The resolution also expresses appreciation to the American Red Cross for its insistence that the goals of the International Red Cross and the Red Crescent Movement could not be credibly accomplished if Magen David Adom was excluded.

Lastly, this measure thanks the Government of Switzerland and the International Committee of the Red Cross for paving the way for Israel's full inclusion into the international humanitarian assistance community.

I would like to extend my personal congratulations to the Magen David Adom for the remarkable job that it has done for years in saving the lives around the globe and for this landmark achievement.

I want to give a personal congratulations to my ranking member on the Middle East and Central Asia Subcommittee, Mr. ACKERMAN, who is the author and the chief sponsor of this resolution. This is a subject with which he has been intimately involved in a number of years, and it is thanks in large part to his participation in this effort that we have finally brought this organization on board. Congratulations.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of this resolution, and yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to thank the chairman and ranking member for their assistance in getting this resolution through the committee, and especially note the hard work and determination of my colleague, the chairperson of the subcommittee, Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN of Florida. Their support is deeply appreciated.

Mr. Speaker, there are very, very few issues that are really just black and white, where there are good guys and there are bad guys. This struggle, the 60-year effort to win membership for Israel's humanitarian society, the Magen David Adom, Israel's Blue Shield of David, into the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement, has been such an enterprise.

Like all of my colleagues speaking in support of this resolution, I am honored to have been part of that struggle, and am deeply gratified by the clear, indeed overwhelming victory MDA won last month in Geneva. It is a triumph where humanitarian principles over-ranked politics and bigotry.

It is a triumph for the State of Israel and the Jewish people. It is a triumph for patient, cooperative, multilateral diplomacy and especially American leadership. The victory of MDA really illustrates how important American leadership is, and what this Nation can accomplish with determination, tenacity, and a commitment to holding and protecting the moral high ground in international debate.

There never was a good argument against MDA. And with that fact came the moral strength and clarity. And with that strength and clarity came this hard-won victory.

As Dr. Martin Luther King liked to say, the arc of the universe is long, but it bends towards justice. A lot of people earned a share of the success that occurred in Geneva. Many of us in the House wrote letters, spoke directly with the Red Cross officials in Europe and with officials within the administration to let them know that Congress backed them 100 percent.

All we asked in return was, What more we could do to help? Credit is also due to America's diplomats and to America's humanitarians. Secretary Rice's State Department showed again what a force American diplomacy can be in a righteous cause.

And the American Red Cross, the American Red Cross alone in the entire world drew a line in the sand, withholding \$45 million in dues to the Federation of Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies until the MDA won equal treatment. Only the American Red Cross was willing to put its money where its mouth was and to insist that international humanitarian law should not, could not, and now thankfully cannot be used as a tool of discrimination against Israel.

This resolution congratulates Israel on the Magen David Adom Society, which is facing a terrible trial right now, with terrorist rockets falling both in northern and southern Israel. Our thoughts and prayers are with them both. The Magen David Adom stands for everything Hezbollah and Hamas reject, the independence of Israel as a sovereign Jewish state, equal treatment and protection for all people, regardless of their faith, and the belief that there are standards of behavior beyond the realm of political convenience, and above all, the value of life over death.

Mr. Speaker, in the business of international politics and diplomacy, clear-cut triumphs are few and far between. I am thrilled to be able to celebrate with you today what a bipartisan, bicameral, cross-branch, multinational, public-private effort can do.

□ 1630

But what we are here to celebrate principally is a high moral triumph. I want to thank all of those who helped bring us to this great day and to the Magen David Adom, I say yasher koach, and congratulations on this well-deserved and long-overdue victory.

I urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I yield 2¼ minutes to the gentlewoman from Nevada (Ms. BERKLEY) and thank her for her leadership in this effort as well.

Ms. BERKLEY. Thank you very much, coming from you, who truly was a leader in this issue. I appreciate the recognition and do not deserve it.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in strong support of the resolution and ask for its immediate passage. Since its establishment in 1930, Magen David Adom, or MDA, has been denied membership in the International Committee of the Red Cross for refusing to replace its red Star of David emblem with one of the approved symbols.

For nearly 60 years, the International Red Cross refused to admit MDA unless it adopted the red cross or the red crescent as its symbol. This past December, a third additional emblem, the red diamond, was finally established. It is about time.

Since 1949, the Magen David Adom Society was the only national organization denied full membership in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent movement. It was denied full membership simply because it used a red star instead of a red cross or a red crescent.

It should not have taken 60 years for an honest discussion of MDA membership in the Red Cross, free from religious intolerance or bigotry. During that time, the American Red Cross stood alone as the only member of the International Red Cross to protest the exclusion of the MDA.

In those 60 years, in spite of the official slight, MDA has performed heroically, aiding those in need and providing humanitarian assistance. It has done this without regard for race or religion. It did this to help alleviate pain and suffering throughout the world, even among Israel's enemies.

In April of this year, MDA was in Romania assisting the local population after the disastrous flooding of the Danube. After Hurricane Katrina, MDA collected donations, clothing and equipment in Israel to help meet the needs of the hundreds of thousands of homeless.

Last month, the state party to the Geneva convention adopted the neutral red diamond symbol of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement finally accepted MDA as a full member. May I say it's about time.

I join my colleagues in congratulating MDA on its admittance to the Red Cross. While this should have happened 60 years ago, we are glad that MDA has been given the recognition that it has always deserved.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2½ minutes to the distinguished gentleman from New York (Mr. ENGEL), who has been one of the paramount leaders in this fight.

Mr. ENGEL. I thank my friend from New York. All of us in New York that are distinguished gentlemen think that

everybody else is a distinguished gentleman. So I thank the distinguished gentleman from New York, and I commend him and my good friend from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) for this very important and very, very timely resolution.

For many, many years, everyone you have heard speak, Mr. Speaker, has played an important part in finally getting Magen David Adom recognized. One of the problems that we have seen in international bodies is that Israel has been systematically excluded and vilified by majorities that have nothing to do with what's right and nothing to do with reality, but just simply trying to ostracize Israel and make it difficult for them, whether it is in the United Nations or anything else. This was the case with the International Society of the Red Cross.

This happened for many, many years, and then the United States Society of the Red Cross really got involved at the behest of many of us. We have been very, very helpful in finally paving the way for this compromise that so many of my colleagues have spoken about. I had the good fortune to be in Geneva when this was agreed to and this was done.

It was very good for me to personally be there to see it, because, again, this has been 10 years or more that many of us in Congress have worked together to try to see this. At the last minute, it nearly got derailed again because Syria was playing its old games, up to its old games, and then tried to make it very, very difficult.

When people are in need, politics should not be involved. It doesn't matter whether it is the Red Cross or Red Crescent or Magen David Adom. Whatever society the people who are helping want to help, politics should not play a role.

Those of us who are New Yorkers and lived through the World Trade Center, we know how important it is to have the first responders there to help us.

It is fair, it is equitable and I commend my colleagues.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield 2 minutes to the very distinguished gentleman from Maryland (Mr. CARDIN) and thank him not just for his leadership but for his life-long commitment.

Mr. CARDIN. Let me thank my friend from New York (Mr. ACKERMAN) for his leadership on many of these issues.

Mr. Speaker, this is an important moment. We have been working now, many have been working now, for almost 60 years to bring this date together. The Magen David Adom Society, like the Red Cross and Red Crescent Society, provides unbiased aid, regardless of whom is in need.

Mr. Speaker, when tragedies occur, it is a welcome sight to see the internationally recognized symbol of help. It has been true in all countries where members have been part of the Red Cross and Red Crescent movement, but Israel was denied that membership.

For reasons unrelated to its society that provided that help, the MDA provided unbiased help to all in need and was entitled to be recognized internationally. It has taken almost 60 years to achieve this moment, and I think it is very appropriate that we, in this body, recognize this moment and the role that the United States has played in making this happen.

But for the leadership of our country in support of the MDA in Israel, we would not be able to celebrate this moment, and victims of disasters would be the losers. I congratulate all involved. I urge my colleagues to support the resolution.

I rise today in strong support as an original co-sponsor of H. Con. Res. 435, which congratulates Israel's Magen David Adom Society for achieving full membership in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Since its founding in 1859, the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement have helped millions of people in need through its dedication to providing impartial and compassionate aid to victims of war, internal violence, and disaster, regardless of political or religious affiliation. For over 140 years, the Movement has been the world's leader in humanitarian aid.

In Israel, the Magen David Adom (MDA) Society has upheld these same goals, providing impartial aid to those in need. As a committed humanitarian organization, MDA has been a model of excellence, embodying the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement's goals of humanity, impartiality, neutrality, independence, voluntary service, unity, and universality.

Unfortunately, the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement has for decades rejected the MDA's full admittance into the Organization because of the MDA's refusal to use the accepted symbols of a cross or crescent.

It has taken decades of discussion to reach a compromise, but one comes to us now in the form of a diamond. The red crystal will soon fly high—a beacon of hope to all who see it.

Since its founding in 1930, the MDA has proven its quality time and again through its rapid response to war areas and to natural disasters such as the earthquakes and tsunami, as well as through its compassionate treatment of civilian victims and injured perpetrators of horrific acts of violence alike. The MDA, like all Red Cross and Red Crescent societies, provides unbiased aid, regardless of who is in need. For this they are at last being recognized through full membership in the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement—a classification they have long since deserved.

The MDA has fought for this designation since 1949, but until now has been perpetually relegated to observer status due solely to its use of the Shield of David as their symbol. The American Red Cross, the U.S. Government, and Congress have never wavered in their pressure for this positive outcome, and I am thrilled that now the MDA will benefit from full membership in the Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement—benefits that will then be passed on to the millions of victims that the Organization helps.

This solidarity on behalf of impartial humanitarian aid is especially commendable given the current climate in the Middle East. In a mo-

ment in history when the region hovers on the brink of war, the internationally-recognized symbols of help and compassion are a welcome sight on all fronts, reminding us all of the dignity of life and the necessity of compromise and compassion. The union of the MDA and the Red Cross and Crescent Movement represents a movement towards cooperation and consideration, and encourages hope in a time when such hope is so desperately needed.

I urge my colleagues to pass this resolution to celebrate a new symbol of hope on the Israeli landscape, and to congratulate the Magen David Adom Society for at last achieving the recognition it has long deserved.

Mr. SHAYS. Mr. Speaker, I am so pleased the day has come that Congress can officially congratulate Israel's Magen David Adom Society for achieving full membership in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement.

Since the Knesset ratified the Magen David Adom Law in 1950, the Society has functioned as Israel's National Red Cross Society. While acting in accordance with the Geneva Convention, Magen David Adom has maintained a national civilian blood bank and has also provided emergency first-aid services and temporary shelter in emergency situations.

As Israel has defended itself against terrorist attacks, the Magen David Adom Society has been there to bravely and heroically provide humanitarian assistance to all those in need. Yet despite its clear and undeniable accordance with the principles of the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Societies, until recently Magen David Adom was refused admission into the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and has been relegated to observer status without a vote because it has used the Red Shield of David. As such, it was the only such national organization denied membership in the Movement.

In 2005, the Government of Switzerland convened a Diplomatic Conference of the states parties to the Geneva Conventions to adopt a Third Additional Protocol allowing for the third neutral symbol to be used in combination with other national Red Cross Society symbols. I am so grateful to the Swiss government for initiating this effort and proud of the United States diplomats who worked tirelessly to achieve an overwhelming positive vote in favor of adopting this protocol.

So I wish to extend my heartfelt congratulations to the Magen David Adom Society for its full membership in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Movement and my appreciation for its distinguished record of providing humanitarian assistance to all those in need of aid.

Mr. HONDA. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the Magen David Adom (MDA) Society for securing full membership in the International Red Cross.

For many years the Magen David Adom Society was denied the right to join the International Red Cross. The Red Cross informed them that they could not use the Star of David, a symbol integral to their identity as the first aid and disaster relief organization of the Jewish State. The International Red Cross informed them that in order to join they would have to abandon their symbol and take on a symbol like the Christian cross or Moslem red crescent.

Standing fast to their principles, they continued to use the Star of David as their symbol as they dedicated themselves to excellence and rose as one of the premier ambulatory organizations in the world. In addition to their extensive record in providing aid to those in need all throughout Israel, they have excelled through their contributions to medical relief efforts throughout the world. The United States owes a great debt to MDA's assistance during the Hurricane Katrina disaster where they used their expertise and state-of-the-art technology to save the lives of countless Americans. Their relief work abroad is extensive, including their recent disaster relief work in Turkey, Sri Lanka, and Romania.

In light of the MDA's role as a leader in the field, Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice diligently worked with our allies abroad to allow MDA to join the International Red Cross. Through her work and the efforts of countless others, Israel's medical society has finally been admitted to the International Red Cross when a neutral symbol, the Red Diamond, was accepted as an alternative symbol. Israel is now free to use the Star of David within a diamond as their international insignia as a full-fledged member of the International Red Cross. This alliance between the Magen David Adom Society and the International Committee of the Red Cross is truly a monumental step for all humanitarian efforts and hopefully can serve as a model of international goodwill.

Mr. GENE GREEN of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in support of this resolution and to congratulate Magen David Adom Society for achieving full membership in the International Red Cross.

Magen David Adom (MDA), Israel's first-aid and disaster relief organization, was granted full membership into the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Society on June 21, 2006. The decision, which took place in Geneva, Switzerland at the 29th International Conference of the Red Cross and Red Crescent voted to accept both the Palestinian Red Crescent and Magen David Adom. Both organizations are now full voting members, and received crucial funding to assist in their life-saving work.

Internationally, MDA has served in crisis spots around the world for 50 years alongside Red Cross, bringing emergency relief to victims of hurricanes, floods, and earthquakes. Earlier this year, MDA specialists flew to Romania to assist the local population with the disastrous flooding of the River Danube.

During the Katrina nightmare, MDA started "United Brotherhood" to collect donations, clothing and equipment in Israel to help meet the needs of the 400,000 homeless along the American gulf coast.

The relief effort after Southeast Asian tsunami found MDA running two emergency clinics in Sri Lanka and providing thousands of blood units. At every turn, the MDA has offered their help to nations in need.

Mr. Speaker, I applaud the International Red Cross for granting MDA full membership, and I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting this resolution congratulating the Magen David Adom Society.

Mr. ACKERMAN. Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of our time.

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN. Mr. Speaker, I have no further requests for time, and I am proud to yield back the balance of

my time. It has been a pleasure working with my good friend, Mr. ACKERMAN.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from Florida (Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution, H. Con. Res. 435, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds having voted in favor thereof) the rules were suspended and the concurrent resolution, as amended, was agreed to.

The title of the concurrent resolution was amended so as to read: "Concurrent resolution congratulating Israel's Magen David Adom Society for achieving full membership in the International Red Cross and Red Crescent Federation, and for other purposes."

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

FURTHER MESSAGE FROM THE SENATE

A further message from the Senate by Ms. Curtis, one of its clerks, announced that the Senate has passed a bill of the following title in which the concurrence of the House is requested:

S. 2754. An act to derive human pluripotent stem cell lines using techniques that do not knowingly harm embryos.

FETUS FARMING PROHIBITION ACT OF 2006

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the Senate bill (S. 3504) to amend the Public Health Service Act to prohibit the solicitation or acceptance of tissue from fetuses gestated for research purposes, and for other purposes.

The Clerk read as follows:

S. 3504

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the "Fetus Farming Prohibition Act of 2006".

SEC. 2. PROHIBITION OF THE SOLICITATION OR ACCEPTANCE OF TISSUE FROM FETUSES GESTATED FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES.

Section 498B of the Public Health Service Act (42 U.S.C. 289g-2) is amended—

(1) by redesignating subsections (c) and (d) as subsections (d) and (e), respectively;

(2) by inserting after subsection (b) the following:

"(c) SOLICITATION OR ACCEPTANCE OF TISSUE FROM FETUSES GESTATED FOR RESEARCH PURPOSES.—It shall be unlawful for any person or entity involved or engaged in interstate commerce to—

"(1) solicit or knowingly acquire, receive, or accept a donation of human fetal tissue knowing that a human pregnancy was deliberately initiated to provide such tissue; or

"(2) knowingly acquire, receive, or accept tissue or cells obtained from a human embryo or fetus that was gestated in the uterus of a nonhuman animal.";

(3) in paragraph (1) of subsection (d), as so redesignated, by striking "(a) or (b)" and inserting "(a), (b), or (c)"; and

(4) in paragraph (1) of subsection (e), as so redesignated, by striking "section 498A(f)" and inserting "section 498A(g)".

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. BARTON) and the gentlewoman from Colorado (Ms. DEGETTE) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I ask that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks on this legislation and to insert extraneous material in the RECORD.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. BARTON of Texas. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I am happy to rise in support of this bill along with my good friend, Congresswoman DEGETTE of Colorado.

I rise today in the strongest possible support of S. 3504, the Fetus Farming Prohibition Act. Every so often, we deal with a subject on this floor that is so ugly that the language almost is unable to qualify and quantify that ugliness. Today is one of those moments. When you know what fetus farming is, words like obnoxious and repugnant seem timid.

As we know, fetus farming is the gruesome idea of creating a human fetus purely for research to harvest its organs. This bill would ban that practice, and we cannot ban it, in my opinion, soon enough. Most scientists today share the belief that human life should not be created just for the purposes of experimentation, or for harvesting the organs of one person to be given to another. The vast majority of scientists in our Nation uphold the ethical and moral principles on which our country forever rests, the inalienable right to life and the inherent value of human life in whatever form it may take. These scientists are working tirelessly with the knowledge that their efforts are to benefit life, benefit humanity, not to benefit one person for profit at the detriment of another person.

Unfortunately, Mr. Speaker, we have seen clear examples in other countries that some scientists see things somewhat differently.

It is towards these scientists that the pending legislation is directed. Rather than waiting for a horror story to appear on the front pages or allowing for the possibility of scientific advancement taking us down a slippery slope, this bill gives a clear signal that fetus farming in all of its forms will not be tolerated in the United States, nor will we allow human fetuses or embryos to be bought and sold for research like cattle.

This legislation will ensure that nobody gains financially when unborn children are exploited for fetal tissue

research. This legislation sends the right message on the importance of human dignity and life at the right time.

Before the Pandora's box of fetus farming is opened and it is too late for us to do something about it, I will urge all of my colleagues on both sides of the aisle to support this bill.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Ms. DEGETTE. I just must say, Mr. Speaker, this has got to be a new record of transmission of a bill from the Senate to the House. I was literally on the Senate floor a few minutes ago when S. 3504 was passed, and I had to run to the House to have it considered.

I think this bill is just fine. I am not sure that there is a pressing problem in this country right now of fetal farming, but I will support it. Like my chairman, Mr. BARTON, I have complete and abhorrent opposition to the idea of people doing fetal farming.

I must say, though, that if people are worried about women becoming pregnant so they can be paid for making fetal tissue available for research, I want to point out that the current law already prohibits the sale of fetal tissue. Section 498(b) of the Public Health Service Act says: "It shall be unlawful for any person to knowingly acquire, receive or otherwise transfer any human fetal issue for valuable consideration."

In addition, a yearly amendment that we do, called Dickey-Wicker, already forbids the creation of a human embryo or embryos for research purposes. So while this bill is completely unnecessary, I guess we will just pass it today and move on.

But here is the real reason this bill has been fast-tracked from the Senate, why there is a second bill that will be fast-tracked from the Senate, and that is because of H.R. 810, the Embryonic Stem Cell Enhancement Act, which has been cosponsored by my friend MIKE CASTLE from Delaware and myself.

This important piece of legislation expands embryonic stem cell research so that the 110 million Americans and their families who suffer from diseases like Alzheimer's, Parkinson's, diabetes, nerve cell damage and on and on, so that the bill would allow embryonic research to be expanded so that those patients can have hope for cures.

Unlike many other kinds of stem cells, adult stem cells and cord blood, embryonic stem cells have shown great promise in being a potential cure for these diseases. That is why a majority of this body passed that legislation on May 24 of 2005.

□ 1645

This is why the Senate is poised to pass that legislation with over 60 votes today.

H.R. 810 will go directly to the President's desk. Sadly, the President has announced his intention to make H.R. 810 the very first veto of his 6-year administration. He has signed over 1,600