

Reps. David Law, Bieda, Rocca, Accavitti, Ball, Brandenburg, Cushingberry, Elsenheimer, Emmons, Espinoza, Farrah, Gillard, Gonzales, Gosselin, Green, Hansen, Hopgood, Huizenga, Jones, Kahn, Kooiman, Marleau, Mayes, Meyer, Miller, Mortimer, Nitz, Palmer, Proos, Sak, Shaffer, Stahl, Stakoe, Taub, Tobocman and Vander Veen offered the following resolution:

House Resolution No. 269.

A resolution to memorialize the President of the United States and the United States Congress to make the Republic of Poland eligible for the United States Department of State Visa Waiver Program.

Whereas, The Republic of Poland is a free, democratic, and independent nation. The fall of the Berlin Wall in 1989 paved the way for Poland to break free from Soviet control and pursue its own destiny. In 1999, the United States and the Republic of Poland became formal allies when Poland was granted membership in the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. Since that historic occasion, the Republic of Poland has proven to be an indispensable ally in the global campaign against terrorism. Poland actively participated in Operation Iraqi Freedom and the Iraqi reconstruction mission, shedding blood along with American military personnel; and

Whereas, From the beginning of Poland's new independence, the Polish people have expressed their wishes for close ties with America. On April 15, 1991, the Republic of Poland unilaterally repealed the visa obligation for United States citizens traveling to Poland. The United States has not reciprocated this gesture. Our Department of State's Visa Waiver Program currently allows citizens from 27 countries to travel to the United States for tourism or business for up to 90 days without first obtaining visas for entry. The countries that currently participate in the Visa Waiver Program include Andorra, Australia, Austria, Belgium, Brunei, Denmark, Finland, France, Germany, Iceland, Ireland, Italy, Japan, Liechtenstein, Luxembourg, Monaco, the Netherlands, New Zealand, Norway, Portugal, San Marino, Singapore, Slovenia, Spain, Sweden, Switzerland, and the United Kingdom; and

Whereas, The President of the United States and other high ranking officials have rightly described Poland as "one of our closest friends." After emerging from five decades of foreign domination, the people of Poland have made great strides in building a free and prosperous nation to stand by America's side in the great struggle of our day. It is appropriate that the Republic of Poland be made eligible for the United States Department of State Visa Waiver Program; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we memorialize the President of the United States and the United States Congress to make the Republic of Poland eligible for the United States Department of State Visa Waiver Program; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the members of the Michigan congressional delegation, and the Ambassador of the Republic of Poland to the United States of America.