

AMENDMENT IN THE NATURE OF A SUBSTITUTE
TO H. RES. 526
OFFERED BY MR. BURTON OF INDIANA

Strike the preamble and insert the following:

Whereas a democratic and stable Republic of Georgia is in the political, security, and economic interests of the United States;

Whereas the security of the Black Sea and South Caucasus region is important for Euro-Atlantic security, transportation, and energy diversification to and from Central Asia;

Whereas Georgia has been a reliable partner and ally in enhancing global peace and stability with its significant contribution to operations in Iraq and Afghanistan;

Whereas the United States-Georgia Charter on Strategic Partnership, signed in January 2009, outlines the importance of the bilateral relationship as well as the intent of both countries to expand democracy and economic programs, enhance defense and security cooperation, further trade and energy cooperation, and build people-to-people cultural exchanges;

Whereas in October 2010, at the meeting of the United States-Georgia Charter on Strategic Partnership, Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton stated, “the United States will not waver in its support for Georgia’s sovereignty and territorial integrity”;

Whereas successive United States Administrations have supported Georgia's aspirations to join the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO);

Whereas it was declared by the Heads of State and Government participating in the 2008 NATO Summit in Bucharest, and reaffirmed in 2009 at the Summit in Strasbourg and Kehl and in 2010 at the Summit in Lisbon, that Georgia is a NATO aspirant country, and will become a member of NATO;

Whereas the North Atlantic Council Foreign Ministers, meeting on December 7, 2011, applauded the significant operational support provided to NATO by aspirant partners Georgia, the former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia, Montenegro and Bosnia and Herzegovina;

Whereas the August 2008, military conflict between Russia and Georgia resulted in civilian and military casualties, the violation of Georgia's sovereignty and territorial integrity, and increased the number of internally displaced persons there;

Whereas large numbers of the Georgian population remain forcefully displaced from the Abkhazia and South Ossetia regions of Georgia as a result of the August 2008 military conflict as well as the earlier conflicts in the 1990s;

Whereas since 1993, the territorial integrity of Georgia has been reaffirmed by the international community in 36 United Nations Security Council resolutions;

Whereas the August 12, 2008, ceasefire agreement negotiated by the European Union Presidency and agreed to by the Presidents of Georgia and the Russian Federation, provides that all Russian troops shall be withdrawn to pre-conflict positions;

Whereas the Russian Federation opposed consensus on the extension of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Mission to Georgia, vetoed the extension of the United Nations Observer Mission in Georgia (UNOMIG) and blocked the work of the European Union Monitoring Mission (EUMM) in the occupied Georgian regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia;

Whereas the United States supports Georgia's independence, sovereignty, and territorial integrity within the internationally recognized borders of Georgia;

Whereas Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton stated in Tbilisi on July 5, 2010, that, "We continue to call for Russia to abide by the August 2008 ceasefire commitment. . .including ending the occupation and withdrawing Russian troops from South Ossetia and Abkhazia to their pre-conflict positions";

Whereas the White House released a Fact Sheet on July 24, 2010, calling for "Russia to end its occupation of the Georgian territories of Abkhazia and South Ossetia. . ." and for "a return of international observers to the two occupied regions of Georgia";

Whereas Vice President Joseph Biden stated in Tbilisi in July 2009 that the United States "will not recognize Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent states";

Whereas Human Rights Watch concluded in its 2011 World Report that "Russia continued to exercise effective control over South Ossetia and Abkhazia, preventing international observers' access and vetoing international missions working there";

Whereas Human Rights Watch concluded in its 2011 World Report that "Russia continued to occupy Georgia's

breakaway regions of South Ossetia and Abkhazia and strengthened its military presence in the region by establishing a military base and placing an advanced surface-to-air missile system in Abkhazia”;

Whereas the Senate of the 112th United States Congress adopted a resolution in July 2011 affirming the United States’ support for the sovereignty, independence, and territorial integrity of the country of Georgia and calling upon Russia to remove its occupying forces from Abkhazia and South Ossetia;

Whereas the United States Helsinki Commission called Russia to cease its continuing, illegal occupation of the South Ossetia and Abkhazia regions of Georgia and allow those who fled their homes during the 2008 war to go back without preconditions;

Whereas the Russian Federation therefore remains in violation of August 12, 2008, ceasefire agreement;

Whereas at the April 15, 2011, meeting in Berlin, Germany, between the Georgia foreign minister and foreign ministers of NATO, Secretary of State Clinton stated, “U.S. support for Georgia’s sovereignty and territorial integrity remains steadfast We share Georgian concerns regarding recent Russian activities that can negatively affect regional stability.”;

Whereas on November 23, 2010, Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili committed before the European Parliament that “Georgia will never use force to restore its territorial integrity and sovereignty”;

Whereas the Government of Georgia has demonstrated its overall commitment to democratic and economic reforms;

Whereas Georgia has initiated positive developments and commitment in the areas of constitutional reforms, strengthening the role of Parliament, institutionalizing judicial independence, and utilizing international election organizations and transparency; and

Whereas OSCE determined that Georgia's May 2010 municipal elections "were marked by clear improvements and efforts by the authorities to address problems occurring during the election process": Now, therefore, be it

Strike all after the resolving clause and insert the following:

That the House of Representatives—

1 (1) supports strengthened United States en-
2 gagements with the Republic of Georgia aimed at
3 helping Georgia enhance its security and to restore
4 its territorial integrity through exclusively peaceful
5 means;

6 (2) supports the implementation of the United
7 States-Georgia Charter on Strategic Partnership,
8 with a mutual desire to strengthen the bilateral rela-
9 tionship across political, economic, trade, energy,
10 cultural, scientific, people-to-people, defense, and se-
11 curity fields;

12 (3) supports Georgia's North Atlantic Treaty
13 Organization (NATO) membership aspirations and
14 to advance further implementation of decisions taken

1 by the allies at the NATO Summits in Bucharest,
2 Strasbourg and Kehl, and Lisbon with regard to
3 Georgia's NATO membership;

4 (4) urges President Barack Obama to lead a
5 diplomatic effort to ensure that the May 2012
6 NATO Summit recognizes the significant progress
7 made by Georgia on its path toward NATO member-
8 ship, provides clear benchmarks for Georgia to meet
9 in order to achieve full membership, including the
10 conditions to reach unanimous agreement for mem-
11 bership within the alliance, and a call on Russia to
12 end the occupation of the Georgian territories of
13 Abkhazia and South Ossetia and to completely with-
14 draw its troops from the internationally recognized
15 borders of Georgia;

16 (5) affirms that it is the policy of the United
17 States to support the sovereignty, independence, and
18 territorial integrity of Georgia and the inviolability
19 of its borders, and to recognize Abkhazia and South
20 Ossetia as regions of Georgia illegally occupied by
21 the Russian Federation and calls on the Russian
22 Federation to end the occupation of those regions
23 and fulfill all terms and conditions of the August 12,
24 2008, ceasefire agreement;

1 (6) calls upon the Russian Federation, Ven-
2 ezuela, Nicaragua, Tuvalu, and Nauru to reverse the
3 recognition of the occupied Georgian regions of
4 Abkhazia and South Ossetia as independent and re-
5 spect the independence, sovereignty, and territorial
6 integrity of Georgia within its internationally recog-
7 nized borders;

8 (7) supports the Government of Georgia's com-
9 mitment to a policy of peaceful, constructive engage-
10 ment and confidence building measures towards the
11 occupied territories and encourages it to continue to
12 uphold economic and human rights, ensure freedom
13 of movement, facilitate people-to-people contacts,
14 and to preserve cultural heritage, language, and eth-
15 nic identity aimed at reconciling divided commu-
16 nities of the Georgian regions of Abkhazia and
17 South Ossetia;

18 (8) urges the Government of Russia and the au-
19 thorities in control in the regions to allow for the
20 full and dignified, secure, and voluntary return of in-
21 ternally displaced persons and international missions
22 access to the regions of Abkhazia and South Ossetia;

23 (9) recognizes progress on government trans-
24 parency and economic reforms and encourages Geor-
25 gia to continue strengthening its democracy by im-

1 plementing reforms that expand media transparency
2 and freedoms, increase government transparency, ac-
3 countability, and responsiveness, promote political
4 competition and democratic electoral processes,
5 strengthen the rule of law and judicial independence,
6 and further implement judicial reforms; and

7 (10) affirms that a peaceful resolution to the
8 conflict is a key priority for the United States in the
9 Caucasus region, and that lasting regional stability
10 can only be achieved through peaceful means and
11 long-term diplomatic and political dialogue between
12 all parties.

