

118TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 1198

Commemorating the 105th anniversary of diplomatic relations between Poland
and the United States.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

MAY 6, 2024

Ms. KAPTUR (for herself, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. KEATING, and Mr. TURNER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Commemorating the 105th anniversary of diplomatic
relations between Poland and the United States.

Whereas the United States and Poland have shared a consequential history, encompassing a fundamental commitment to democratic principles, freedom, the rule of law, and human rights;

Whereas shared values have formed the bedrock of the enduring friendship between the United States and Poland, and an unwavering commitment to the North Atlantic military alliance and the broader transatlantic relationship has contributed to security in Europe and across the globe;

Whereas the United States-Poland friendship predates the founding of the United States itself, with Polish generals

Tadeusz Kościuszko and Casimir Pulaski bravely fighting for the independence and freedom of both nations during the United States Revolutionary War;

Whereas, during World War I, prominent Polish figures such as Ignacy Jan Paderewski and Henryk Sienkiewicz traveled to the United States to promote the idea of an independent Poland;

Whereas many people in the United States of Polish descent came to Europe to fight for a sovereign Poland, with the most famous example being the Blue Army of General Józef Haller, consisting of over 20,000 Americans of Polish descent, largely inspired by Paderewski;

Whereas, in a historic moment, President Woodrow Wilson delivered a compelling speech to Congress on January 22, 1917, passionately advocating for Poland's independence as a justified war aim;

Whereas the pivotal role played by President Woodrow Wilson and Ignacy Paderewski in advocating for Poland's independence was instrumental in securing recognition of Polish sovereignty following World War I;

Whereas, on January 8, 1918, President Wilson announced his famous "Fourteen Points", with point 13 explicitly stating: "An independent Polish state should be erected which should include the territories inhabited by indisputably Polish populations, which should be assured a free and secure access to the sea, and whose political and economic independence and territorial integrity should be guaranteed by international covenant";

Whereas Poland's embrace of democratic values dates back to the 1700s, culminating in the historic adoption of Eu-

rope's first constitution in 1791, embodying the principles of liberty and constitutional monarchy;

Whereas Poland became the first European nation to strive toward ensuring liberty for all its citizens when Tadeusz Kosciuszko, upon his return from the American Revolution, issued the Proclamation of Połaniec on May 7, 1794, which provided for personal freedoms to Polish serfs and reduced compulsory serfdom, among other liberties and rights;

Whereas, in the wake of Poland's remarkable constitutional achievement, the nation would face tragic annihilation in history, including the third partition of Poland in 1795, that resulted in Poland being erased from the map of Europe for 123 years and its territory divided among the empires of adjoining nations Russia, Prussia, and the Hapsburg Empire;

Whereas, despite centuries of adversity, Poland's resilient spirit endured, as evidenced by the November Uprising of 1830 and the January Uprising of 1863, where countless Poles laid down their lives to preserve the dream of Polish sovereignty;

Whereas, during this period of foreign domination, Poland persevered in safeguarding its national identity through initiatives such as the "organic work" ideology, which recognized the importance of modernizing Polish society to ensure the survival of Polish nationhood;

Whereas, on November 11, 1918, the Regency Council of Poland appointed Józef Piłsudski as Commander in Chief of Poland, marking the formation of the Second Republic of Poland and a triumphant return to independence;

Whereas the brave Polish resistance fighters and soldiers valiantly fought against tyranny on all fronts during World War II, only to find their liberation from Nazi oppression followed by domination by the Soviet Union;

Whereas, on September 18, 1944, as part of the allied FRANTIC-7 mission, though the Royal Air Force, 12 United States citizens, including 2d Lt. Clyda Arrants, 1st Lt. Joseph Vigna, 1st Lt. Robert Peters, 1st Lt. Francis Akins, 2d Lt. Forrest Shaw, Flight Officer Ely Berenson, 2d Lt. Myron Merrill, Technical Sgt. Frank De Cillis, Staff Sgt. Paul Haney, Staff Sgt. George MacPhee, Staff Sgt. Walter Shimshock, and 1st Lt. Paul Hibbard, were killed in the skies over Poland during operations to supply Polish resistance units during the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising;

Whereas Poland's indomitable spirit was exemplified by the Solidarity movement, led by Lech Wałęsa, which played a pivotal role in defeating Communism and ultimately led to the fall of the Soviet Empire, ushering in a new era of liberty for millions across Europe;

Whereas Poland joined the community of democracies by acceding to the NATO alliance in 1999 and the European Union in 2004, further cementing its commitment to democratic principles;

Whereas Poland's ongoing steadfast relationship with the United States is demonstrated by the Illinois-Poland National Guard Partnership, a program of the United States European Command State Partnership Program, through which nations share in military excellence and in friendship;

Whereas, in March of 2023, the United States Army established the United States Army Garrison in Poland, representing an undying commitment to the NATO alliance and to the defense of global democracy;

Whereas the contributions of up to 10,000,000 Polish Americans to the United States have been invaluable, with many serving in political leadership, defending liberty in the Armed Forces, driving innovation in factories, and leading in creative and economic spheres; and

Whereas the United States and Poland have been resolute in their joint commitment to support Ukraine as it defends against Russia's war of aggression: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) commemorates the 105th anniversary of the
3 establishment of diplomatic relations between Poland
4 and the United States, recognizing the historic
5 events and courageous individuals that led to the re-
6 constitution of Poland's sovereignty;

7 (2) honors the unwavering determination and
8 sacrifices of the Polish people, who never wavered in
9 their pursuit of independence and liberty during 123
10 years of foreign partitions and 43 years of Soviet oc-
11 cupation; and

12 (3) reaffirms the enduring bonds between Po-
13 land and the United States, forged by a shared love
14 of freedom, an unquenchable thirst for liberty, a mu-
15 tual commitment to the rule of law, and a steadfast

- 1 partnership in advancing security and democracy
- 2 worldwide.

