

113TH CONGRESS
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H. RES. 18

Honoring the memory of Poland's President, national leaders, and cultural leaders who were killed in the tragic plane crash at Smolensk, Russia on April 10, 2010.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 4, 2013

Ms. KAPTUR submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Honoring the memory of Poland's President, national leaders, and cultural leaders who were killed in the tragic plane crash at Smolensk, Russia on April 10, 2010.

Whereas Poland's President Lech Kaczyński and 95 other people, including Poland's First Lady, deputy foreign minister, deputy defense minister, dozens of members of Parliament, the chiefs of the army and navy, other chiefs of the Polish armed forces, and the president of the national bank, were killed when the President's airliner, a Tupelov TU-154M, crashed near Smolensk, Russia on April 10, 2010;

Whereas Anna Walentynowicz, the former dock worker whose firing in 1980 sparked the Solidarity strike that ulti-

mately overthrew the communist government of Poland, was also killed in the crash;

Whereas Ryszard Kaczorowski, who served as Poland's final president in exile before the country's return to democracy, also perished in the crash;

Whereas Chicago suffered the loss of a respected artist when Wojciech Seweryn, whose father was killed in Katyn, died in the crash;

Whereas this tragedy occurred as the Polish delegation was on its final approach to land in order to attend an historic ceremony to publically commemorate the 70th anniversary of the Katyn Massacre of 1940;

Whereas, in 1940, the Soviet secret police, the People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs (NKVD), was directed by Joseph Stalin to systematically murder approximately 22,000 Polish military officers, prisoners, and intellectuals;

Whereas, on September 18, 1951, the House of Representatives established the Select Committee to Conduct an Investigation and Study of the Facts, Evidence, and Circumstances of the Katyn Forest Massacre;

Whereas, on December 22, 1952, the Select Committee unanimously concluded in its final report that the Soviet NKVD committed the mass murders of the Polish officers and intellectual leaders in the Katyn Forest, stating, "there has not been a scintilla of proof or even any remote circumstantial evidence presented that could indict any other nation in this international crime";

Whereas the Soviet Union did not admit responsibility for this atrocity until President Mikhail Gorbachev's statement on April 13, 1990;

Whereas the attendance of Prime Minister Vladimir Putin was to be the first time ever that a Russian leader attended the Katyn commemoration;

Whereas more than 9,000,000 Americans of Polish descent now reside in the United States and Polish-Americans have been leaders in all walks of American life;

Whereas the American people stood in support of the Solidarity movement as it fought against the oppression of the communist government of Poland through peaceful means, eventually leading to Solidarity members being elected to office in open democratic elections held on June 4, 1989, events that helped spark the movement to democracy throughout eastern Europe;

Whereas Poland joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1999, joined the European Union in 2004, and has contributed to United States and NATO operations in Iraq and Afghanistan;

Whereas Poland has enjoyed a thriving and prosperous free market democracy since the end of the Cold War; and

Whereas the United States and Poland are close allies, with a shared bond of history, friendship, and international cooperation: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—
- 2 (1) honors the memory of Poland's President,
- 3 national leaders, and cultural leaders who were killed
- 4 in the tragic plane crash at Smolensk, Russia on
- 5 April 10, 2010;

1 (2) expresses its deepest sympathies to the peo-
2 ple of Poland and the families of those who perished
3 in the April 10, 2010, plane crash;

4 (3) expresses strong and continued solidarity
5 with the people of Poland and all persons of Polish
6 descent; and

7 (4) expresses unwavering support for the Gov-
8 ernment of Poland as it works to overcome the loss
9 of many key public officials and as it continues to
10 seek information regarding the plane crash on April
11 10, 2010.

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