

112TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 291

Recognizing the religious and historical significance of the festival of Diwali.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

OCTOBER 12, 2011

Mr. MENENDEZ (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, and Mr. WARNER) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

RESOLUTION

Recognizing the religious and historical significance of the festival of Diwali.

Whereas Diwali, a festival of great significance to Indian Americans and South Asian Americans, is celebrated annually by Hindus, Sikhs, and Jains throughout India, the United States, and the world;

Whereas Diwali is a festival of lights, during which celebrants light small oil lamps, place the lamps around the home, and pray for health, knowledge, peace, wealth, and prosperity in the new year;

Whereas the lights symbolize the light of knowledge within the individual that overwhelms the darkness of ignorance, empowering each celebrant to do good deeds and show compassion to others;

Whereas Diwali falls on the last day of the last month in the lunar calendar and is celebrated as a day of thanksgiving for the homecoming of the Lord Rama and worship of Lord Ganesh, the remover of obstacles and bestower of blessings, at the beginning of the new year for many Hindus;

Whereas for Sikhs, Diwali is celebrated as Bandhi Chhor Diwas (The Celebration of Freedom), in honor of the release from prison of the sixth guru, Guru Hargobind; and

Whereas for Jains, Diwali marks the anniversary of the attainment of moksha, or liberation, by Mahavira, the last of the Tirthankaras (the great teachers of Jain dharma), at the end of his life in 527 B.C.: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) recognizes the religious and historical sig-
3 nificance of the festival of Diwali; and

4 (2) in observance of Diwali, the festival of
5 lights, expresses its deepest respect for Indian Amer-
6 icans and South Asian Americans, as well as fellow
7 countrymen and diaspora throughout the world on
8 this significant occasion.

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