

109<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# H. RES. 967

Recognizing and honoring the 100th anniversary of the Iranian Constitutional Revolution.

---

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 28, 2006

Mr. BLUMENAUER submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

---

## RESOLUTION

Recognizing and honoring the 100th anniversary of the Iranian Constitutional Revolution.

Whereas Iran is home to one of the world's great ancient civilizations;

Whereas, in 1906, Persia had been under the rule of the Qajar Dynasty since 1781;

Whereas the rule of the Qajar Dynasty was corrupt, authoritarian, and weak in the face of competition between the British and Russian Empires for control and influence in Persia;

Whereas, by the turn of the 20th century, the Persian populace sought to counter this corrupt and oppressive authoritarian rule and to secure national sovereignty by codifying a written code of laws;

Whereas by January 1906, diverse sectors of Persian society united to form a protest movement against the foreign manipulation, oppression and corruption that marked the rule of Mozafar al-din Shah;

Whereas, on August 5, 1906 this protest movement forced Mozafar al-Din Shah to issue a decree creating the first representative parliament, the Majlis, in the history of Persia;

Whereas, on December 30, 1906 the parliament ratified and Mozafar al-Din Shah signed Persia's first Constitution;

Whereas the constitution of 1906 limited the power of the Shah and his ministers, gave administrative autonomy to the provinces, granted limited suffrage to adult men, established the groundwork for a new secular legislature, and guaranteed freedom of the press;

Whereas, following an assassination attempt in February 1908, Mohammed Ali Shah, who succeeded Mozafar al-din Shah, began to purge supporters of the constitution despite his pledge to respect the constitution;

Whereas on June 3, 1908, Mohammed Ali Shah invited leaders of the constitutionalist movement to the Imperial Gardens and imprisoned all but one who managed to escape;

Whereas on June 24, 1908, Mohammed Ali Shah ordered the Persian Cossacks Brigade, led by Russian Colonel Liakhov, to bomb the Majlis and arrest all of its deputies;

Whereas this attack unleashed protests and resistance in support of the Majlis and the constitution across Persia, which evolved into a revolutionary movement;

Whereas the constitutional revolutionaries were joined by Howard Baskerville, a Presbyterian missionary from the United States, who was killed in battle on April 19, 1909, and continues to be revered as a martyr by Iranians to this day;

Whereas on July 17, 1909, Mohammed Ali Shah and a number of his supporters fled Tehran under the protection of Russian soldiers, and the Majlis held an emergency session to reenact the constitution, depose Mohammed Ali Shah, and name his son Ahmad Mirza as his successor;

Whereas, at the conclusion of the Iranian Constitutional Revolution, a democratic movement had replaced an authoritarian government with a constitutional monarchy and established a representative body and the rule of law to check the power of the ruling Shah;

Whereas, since the Constitutional Revolution, Iranian politics has often been marked by struggles against authoritarian rulers and foreign interference, as well as tensions between secular and religious law;

Whereas despite this success, for the next 15 years the Majlis met irregularly due to international circumstances, foreign interference and internal power struggle;

Whereas under government of Mohammed Mossadegh, the Iranian political system became increasingly open and the influence of the Majlis grew until American and British intervention in 1953 reestablished the monarchy, severely undermining Iranian constitutional democracy;

Whereas the Constitutional Revolution demonstrates that democratic self-government is not foreign to Iran;

Whereas the cooperation of Iran is an important factor in the successful resolution of many challenges in the Middle

East and Central Asia, including the stabilization of Iraq, progress in Afghanistan, and victory in the war on terror;

Whereas public opinion in the United States respects the people of Iran and their rich culture and history; and

Whereas public opinion in Iran supports better relations with the United States: Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2               (1) recognizes and honors the 100th anniversary of the Iranian Constitutional Revolution;

3               (2) commends the Iranian people for their tradition of constitutional rule and their historical willingness to stand up for freedom and independence;

4               (3) encourages friendship between the people of the United States and the people of Iran on the basis of shared values; and

5               (4) recognizes that a strong understanding of Iranian history is critical to the development of constructive policy towards Iran.

○