

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 32

WHEREAS, The 50th anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution, an epochal event in the history of the Cold War, is being commemorated in 2006; and

WHEREAS, On October 23, 1956, hundreds of thousands of Hungarians from all walks of life joined university students in a peaceful call for democracy and an end to the brutal and oppressive Soviet-dominated Hungarian communist government; and

WHEREAS, The Hungarian Security Police fired on the protestors, killing hundreds and triggering a bloody fight for freedom and democracy and the first tear in the Iron Curtain; in the wake of that first bloodshed, millions of Hungarians--students, workers, men, women, and children--rose up against impossible odds and risked their lives to take part in the noble fight; and

WHEREAS, The Hungarian Freedom Fighters were able to establish a revolutionary government under Prime Minister Imre Nagy, who released political prisoners, including major church leaders, took steps to establish a multiparty democracy, called for the withdrawal of all Soviet troops from Hungary, announced Hungary's withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact, and requested the assistance of the United Nations in establishing Hungarian neutrality; and

WHEREAS, In retaliation, the Soviet Union launched a massive military counteroffensive on November 4, 1956, sending tens of thousands of additional Soviet troops and unleashing air strikes, artillery bombardments, and coordinated actions involving infantry and some 6,000 tanks; notwithstanding the tremendous military superiority enjoyed by the Soviets, the outnumbered and underequipped Hungarian Army and Hungarian Freedom Fighters succeeded in resisting for several days; and

WHEREAS, Prime Minister Nagy was seized by Soviet security forces, despite assurances of safe passage, when he left the Yugoslav Embassy in Budapest, where he had sought asylum; he was taken to Romania, where he was subsequently tried and executed; thousands of other Hungarians were also tortured, tried, and executed by the post-1956 Hungarian government; and

WHEREAS, More than 200,000 Hungarians fled their country in the aftermath of the uprising, and over 47,000 of them were eventually able to settle in the United States, where they have contributed greatly to the cultural diversity and economic strength of their adopted home; and

WHEREAS, The American Hungarian Federation, founded in 1906, played a key role in the resettlement of Hungarian refugees and in illuminating the abuses of the post-1956 Hungarian government; the members of the federation, many of whom are 1956 Freedom Fighters, continue to work for the advancement of freedom and democracy; and

WHEREAS, The uprising of the Hungarian people in 1956 dramatically confirmed the widespread contempt in which the Hungarians held the Soviet Union, while also demonstrating the strength of popular support in Hungary for democratic principles and the desire of Hungarian citizens to determine their own destiny; and

WHEREAS, At the same time, the revolt pointed up the underlying weakness of the communist system imposed by Soviet authorities in Central and Eastern Europe; by unmasking the true nature of that system, the Hungarian Revolution contributed to the disintegration of communist parties in the West and across the globe; and

WHEREAS, On October 23, 1989, the Republic of Hungary proclaimed its independence, and in 1990 the Hungarian Parliament officially designated October 23 as a Hungarian national holiday, signaling that the legacy of the 1956 revolution continues to inspire Hungarians to this day; and

WHEREAS, The Hungarian government, reflecting the will of the Hungarian people, formally became a member of NATO on March 12, 1999, and on May 1, 2004, Hungary became a full member of the European Union; and

WHEREAS, The Hungarian Revolution, though crushed within two weeks, had long-term consequences, setting the stage for the ultimate collapse of communism throughout Central and Eastern Europe in 1989 and, two years later, in the Soviet Union itself; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 79th Legislature, 3rd Called Session, hereby honor the people of Hungary as they mark the 50th anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That this body recognize the Hungarian Freedom Fighters for their bravery in the face of insurmountable odds, and that it express appreciation to those refugees who brought their talents, skills, and love of freedom to the United States and helped to build a stronger America; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That this body express condolences, both to the people of Hungary for the death of Prime Minister Imre Nagy and to all Hungarians who lost loved ones, either to hostile action during the revolution itself or to execution by Soviet and Hungarian communist authorities during the five years that followed; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That this body congratulate the American Hungarian Federation on its 100th anniversary; and, be it further

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RESOLVED, That this body recognize the friendship that exists between the governments of Hungary and the United States and between the Hungarian and American people.

Janek

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on April 20, 2006.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate