



Legislation Text

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Res. No. 268

Resolution supporting H.R. 2410, the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, which calls upon the United States government to work with Russia and the former republics of the Soviet Union to facilitate payment of unpaid pensions to former Soviet Union émigrés now living in the United States.

By Council Members Fidler, Greenfield, Nelson, Recchia, Brewer, Chin, Gentile, Koslowitz, Lander, Williams and Halloran.

Whereas, In 2006, *The New York Times* reported that there were about 700,000 people living in the United States who were born in Russia and the former republics of the Soviet Union; and

Whereas, Over 250,000 people living in New York City are of Russian ancestry, according to recent statistical data from the U.S. Census Bureau; and

Whereas, The current pension laws of Russia preclude the vast majority of émigrés from receiving pension payments, and remain unchanged despite a decision by the Constitutional Court of the Russian Federation that these laws are unconstitutional and discriminatory; and

Whereas, Furthermore, none of the other former Soviet republics pay pensions to retired workers living in the United States; and

Whereas, For several years, Congressman Jerrold Nadler (D-NY) and the New York City Comptroller's Office have reached out to the Russian Federation and other former republics of the Soviet Union to address the issue of unpaid pensions to retirees that live in New York City and other areas throughout the United States; and

Whereas, On June 10, 2009, the U.S. House of Representatives passed H.R. 2410, the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, which includes a provision by Congressman Nadler that calls upon the United States to work with the nations of the former Soviet Union in order to facilitate payment of pensions to former Soviet Union émigrés now living in the United States; and

Whereas, Section 1128 of H.R. 2410 states that “It is the sense of Congress that the United States should continue working with the states of the former Soviet Union to come to an agreement whereby each state of the former Soviet Union would pay the tens of thousands of beneficiaries who have immigrated to the United States the pensions for which they are eligible and entitled;” and

Whereas, On June 22, 2009, H.R. 2410 was referred to the House Committee on Foreign Relations for consideration, but currently, there is no Senate companion bill; and

Whereas, The withholding of pension payments has been perceived as a socio-economic injustice upon former residents of Russia and the former Soviet Republics currently residing in the City of New York and throughout the United States, many of whom rely heavily on the modest monthly Supplemental Security Income; and

Whereas, The failure of Russia and the other former Soviet republics to pay the pensions is tantamount to a violation of basic human rights, according to the Association of New Immigrants for the State of Israel and Social Justice, a Brooklyn-based organization; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York supports H.R. 2410, the Foreign Relations Authorization Act, which calls upon the United States government to work with Russia and the former republics of the Soviet Union to facilitate payment of unpaid pensions to former Soviet Union émigrés now living in the United States.

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TC