

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 4

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By: **Senator Garagiola**

Introduced and read first time: March 1, 2013

Assigned to: Rules

SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A Senate Joint Resolution concerning

2 **Support of the Efforts of the Nagorno–Karabakh Republic to Develop as a**
3 **Free and Independent Nation**

4 FOR the purpose of expressing the support of the General Assembly for the
5 Nagorno–Karabakh Republic; urging the President of the United States and the
6 United States Congress to take certain action regarding the Nagorno–Karabakh
7 Republic; providing that a copy of this resolution be sent by the Department of
8 Legislative Services to certain individuals; and generally relating to support of
9 the efforts of the Nagorno–Karabakh Republic to develop as a free and
10 independent nation.

11 WHEREAS, The region of Artsakh, also known as Mountainous Karabakh, is
12 located in the Transcaucasus region and has historically been Armenian territory,
13 populated by an overwhelming majority of Armenians; and

14 WHEREAS, In 1923, the Communist dictatorship of Joseph Stalin, in violation
15 of the national, territorial, and human rights of the Armenian people, annexed part of
16 the region of Artsakh, which was composed of a 95% Armenian population, and joined
17 it with the region of Soviet Azerbaijan; and

18 WHEREAS, For decades, Armenians in Nagorno–Karabakh, having arbitrarily
19 been severed from Armenia and forced under Soviet Azerbaijani administration,
20 peacefully demonstrated for national independence and individual freedom and
21 against Soviet Azerbaijani repression and discrimination; and

22 WHEREAS, In the years immediately preceding the declaration of
23 independence by the Nagorno–Karabakh Republic, these peaceful demonstrations
24 were met with acts of violent repression by Soviet Azerbaijani forces who refused to
25 allow the reestablishment of the national independence of the people of
26 Nagorno–Karabakh; and



1 WHEREAS, During the repressive and violent events leading to the birth of the
2 Nagorno–Karabakh Republic, ethnic Armenians were killed in Sumgait in February
3 1988, in Kirovabad in November 1988, and in Baku in January 1990 by Soviet
4 Azerbaijani forces and Armenians were forcibly deported by Azerbaijan; and

5 WHEREAS, In July 1988, within months of the Sumgait tragedy, the United
6 States Senate unanimously passed Amendment 2690 to the Fiscal Year 1989 Foreign
7 Operations Appropriations bill (H.R. 4782), concerning the Karabakh conflict and
8 calling on the Soviet government to “respect the legitimate aspirations of the
9 Armenian people ...” and noted that “dozens of Armenians have been killed and
10 hundreds injured during the recent unrests ...”; and

11 WHEREAS, The Armenians of Nagorno–Karabakh would not be deterred and
12 would not allow their dream of national independence, and their inherent desire for
13 individual freedom, to be destroyed by violence and repression; and

14 WHEREAS, On December 10, 1991, despite continued violence against the
15 people of Nagorno–Karabakh, a popular referendum proclaiming the republic took
16 place in Nagorno–Karabakh during the process of the Soviet Union disintegration; and

17 WHEREAS, Under the watchful eye of more than 50 international observers
18 and in full compliance with international standards for free and fair elections, more
19 than 80% of the eligible voters in Nagorno–Karabakh cast a ballot; and

20 WHEREAS, Independence and individual freedom were chosen by an
21 overwhelming 98% of those casting ballots; and

22 WHEREAS, The population of Nagorno–Karabakh then held free, democratic,
23 and direct elections for its parliament; and

24 WHEREAS, On January 6, 1992, the first ever freely elected Parliament of
25 Nagorno–Karabakh adopted a Declaration of Independence of the Nagorno–Karabakh
26 Republic; and

27 WHEREAS, From the earliest days of its formation, the freely elected
28 governmental bodies of the Nagorno–Karabakh Republic have continuously striven to
29 build an open democratic society through free and transparent elections, affirmed by
30 international observers; and

31 WHEREAS, Since signing a cease–fire agreement with Azerbaijan in 1994,
32 after 3 years of armed conflict, the Nagorno–Karabakh Republic registered significant
33 progress in postwar humanitarian and economic development; and

34 WHEREAS, Despite the 1994 cease–fire agreement, the security and
35 sovereignty of the Nagorno–Karabakh Republic continue to be threatened by regional
36 tension and hostile acts; now, therefore, be it

1 RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the
2 General Assembly:

3 (1) encourages the continuing efforts of the Nagorno–Karabakh
4 Republic to develop as a free and independent nation in order to guarantee its citizens
5 those rights inherent in a free and independent society;

6 (2) supports the continued constructive involvement of the
7 Nagorno–Karabakh Republic with the international community and its efforts to reach
8 a lasting solution to the existing regional problems and to establish peace and stability
9 in the strategically important region of South Caucasus;

10 (3) urges the President of the United States and the United States
11 Congress to recognize the independence of the Nagorno–Karabakh Republic and to
12 encourage nations neighboring the Nagorno–Karabakh Republic to foster and
13 maintain peaceful relations with the people of the Nagorno–Karabakh Republic; and

14 (4) urges the President of the United States and the United States
15 Congress to continue promoting humanitarian and economic rehabilitation of the
16 Nagorno–Karabakh Republic and to fully support its continuing development as a free
17 and democratic society, with all the social, economic, and political advantages that a
18 free society brings to its citizens; and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of
20 Legislative Services to President Barack Obama, The White House, 1600
21 Pennsylvania Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20500; and the Maryland
22 Congressional Delegation: Senators Barbara A. Mikulski and Benjamin L. Cardin,
23 Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510; and Representatives Andrew P.
24 Harris, C. A. Dutch Ruppersberger III, John P. Sarbanes, Donna Edwards, Steny
25 Hamilton Hoyer, John Delaney, Elijah E. Cummings, and Christopher Van Hollen, Jr.,
26 House Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20515.