

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 21

Unofficial Copy
P5

1998 Regular Session
8lr2598

By: **Delegate Hutchins**

Introduced and read first time: February 18, 1998

Assigned to: Rules and Executive Nominations

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A House Joint Resolution concerning

2 **U.S. Government Sanctions on Cuba - Food and Medicines**

3 FOR the purpose of urging the Congress of the United States to pass pending federal
4 legislation to allow the sale of food and medicines to Cuba.

5 WHEREAS, The United States government continues a decades-old trade
6 embargo on the Cuban nation that serves to aggravate the economic and health
7 problems of the Cuban people, especially the poorest and most vulnerable among
8 them; and

9 WHEREAS, At the close of his visit in January 1998 to the Church and the
10 people of Cuba, Pope John Paul II urged that the Cuban people should not be denied
11 contacts with other peoples that are necessary for economic, social, and cultural
12 development, "especially when the imposed isolation strikes the population
13 indiscriminately, making it ever more difficult for the weakest to enjoy the bare
14 essentials of decent living, things such as food, health, and education"; and

15 WHEREAS, It is the earnest hope of the people of Maryland that the genuinely
16 historic papal visit to Cuba in January 1998 might also mark a new phase in the
17 relations between Cuba and the United States, a new chance to contemplate the
18 issues which continue to divide us, and a portentous opportunity to pursue initiatives
19 designed to promote the prospect of reconciliation between us; and

20 WHEREAS, While Cuba continues to fall far short of the measure of a truly
21 just society, it is an undeniable fact that important changes did occur in Cuba in
22 anticipation of and during the papal visit, changes which signal a greater opening
23 within the society and an increased respect for basic human rights; and

24 WHEREAS, Officials of the United States government have affirmed a
25 readiness to modify aspects of the embargo, to take some practical steps designed to
26 test whether the hopes rekindled by the papal visit might lead to real improvements
27 in relations between our two countries; now, therefore, be it

28 **RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND,** That the
29 President of the United States is respectfully urged to rescind the onerous ban on
30 direct flights to Cuba, which unnecessarily delay the reunification of families and the
31 delivery of critically needed medicines and other aid; and be it further

1 RESOLVED, That the Congress of the United States is respectfully urged to
2 enact currently pending legislation which recognizes that only a very small part of the
3 nutritional and health needs of the Cuban people can be met by periodic infusions of
4 humanitarian aid from private donors and from other countries, and which,
5 therefore, seeks to end U.S. restrictions on the sale of food and medicines to Cuba; and
6 be it further

7 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of
8 Legislative Services to the President of the United States; the Presiding Officers of
9 each branch of the United States Congress; and the Maryland Congressional
10 Delegation: Senators Paul S. Sarbanes and Barbara A. Mikulski, Senate Office
11 Building, Washington, D.C. 20510; and Representatives Wayne T. Gilchrest, Robert L.
12 Ehrlich, Jr., Benjamin L. Cardin, Albert R. Wynn, Steny Hamilton Hoyer, Roscoe G.
13 Bartlett, Elijah E. Cummings, and Constance A. Morella, House Office Building,
14 Washington, D.C. 20515.