

# SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 4

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By: **Senator Mooney**

Introduced and read first time: February 27, 2008

Assigned to: Rules

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## SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A Senate Joint Resolution concerning

2 **Freedom for Cuba (Viva Cuba Libre)**

3 FOR the purpose of expressing certain support for the Cuban people and democratic  
4 and economic transition in Cuba; calling on the United States and other  
5 democratic nations to assist the Cuban people; resolving that the Cuban Regime  
6 should abide by the Cuban Democracy Act passed by the United States  
7 Congress; resolving that the President of the United States and the United  
8 States Congress should maintain current U.S. economic and foreign policy  
9 toward Cuba under certain circumstances; expressing certain support for the  
10 “Compact with the People of Cuba”; and generally relating to Cuba.

11 WHEREAS, Since 1959, when Fidel Castro became the dictator of Cuba, Mr.  
12 Castro has appointed himself Prime Minister, President of the Council of State,  
13 President of the Council of Ministers, and First Secretary of the Communist Party of  
14 Cuba; and

15 WHEREAS, Fidel Castro will remain head of the Communist Party of Cuba;  
16 and

17 WHEREAS, Regardless of whether Cuba’s dictator is Fulgencio Batista, Fidel  
18 Castro, or Raul Castro, the goal of U.S. policy towards Cuba, and the focus of the  
19 international community toward Cuba, must remain the unconditional release of all  
20 political prisoners, the respect and recognition of fundamental human rights, and a  
21 transition to political freedom and democracy for the Cuban people; and

22 WHEREAS, When, on February 19, 2008, Fidel Castro announced his decision  
23 not to seek another term as Cuba’s Commander-in-Chief or President, he noted that  
24 his decision was not a farewell and that his “only wish is to fight as a soldier in the  
25 battle of ideas”; and

26 WHEREAS, While Fidel Castro’s resignation presents an opportunity for a  
27 democratic transition, indications suggest that the regime may seek to implement a  
28 succession plan that offers no quarter for such a transition; and



1 WHEREAS, The regime could instead attempt to maintain Cuba's totalitarian  
2 government with only a few minor cosmetic changes to create the appearance of a real  
3 change; and

4 WHEREAS, Observers have doubted Raul Castro's commitment to political  
5 reforms beyond minor structural adjustments to bolster Cuba's economy; and

6 WHEREAS, Fidel Castro's resignation changes the face of Cuba's dictator, but  
7 does not change the dictatorship; and

8 WHEREAS, Cuba has an opportunity to consolidate an authoritarian  
9 succession, or to try to lead its people toward a free, just, and prosperous state; now,  
10 therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That this State  
12 stands in solidarity with the Cuban people and believes that now is the time for the  
13 Cuban people to be given the opportunity to choose how they will be governed and who  
14 will do the governing; and be it further

15 RESOLVED, That this State remains ready to assist the Cuban people and calls  
16 on the United States and other democratic nations to do the same; and be it further

17 RESOLVED, That the Cuban Regime should abide by the Cuban Democracy Act  
18 passed by the United States Congress; and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That the President of the United States and the United States  
20 Congress should not change current U.S. economic or foreign policy toward Cuba until  
21 the Cuban government begins to demonstrate a resolve to reintegrate Cuba into the  
22 democratic mainstream of the Americas by:

23 (a) releasing all political prisoners;

24 (b) respecting the fundamental rights of the Cuban people set forth in the  
25 Universal Declaration of Human Rights;

26 (c) allowing free and fair multiparty elections that meet international  
27 standards;

28 (d) allowing the freedom of assembly;

29 (e) allowing the freedom of association; and

30 (f) allowing the freedom of the press; and be it further

31 RESOLVED, That the members of the Maryland General Assembly stand with  
32 President George W. Bush on the "Compact with the People of Cuba," in which the  
33 United States offered to help Cuba's transition to democracy by:

1 (a) providing emergency food, water, fuel, and medical equipment to Cuba  
2 and helping ensure their rapid distribution;

3 (b) helping to maintain electrical power;

4 (c) helping to rebuild Cuba's economy;

5 (d) respecting "the right of the Cuban people to be secure in their own  
6 homes"; and

7 (e) encouraging "assistance from other countries, associations, and private  
8 companies"; and be it further

9 RESOLVED, That the members of the Maryland General Assembly pledge their  
10 hands of friendship and support in building a democratic government and a free  
11 economy in Cuba; and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of  
13 Legislative Services to President George W. Bush, the White House, Washington, D.C.  
14 20500; and to the Maryland Congressional Delegation: Senators Barbara A. Mikulski  
15 and Benjamin L. Cardin, Senate Office Building, Washington, D.C. 20510; and  
16 Representatives Wayne T. Gilchrest, C. A. Dutch Ruppersberger, III, John P.  
17 Sarbanes, Albert R. Wynn, Steny Hamilton Hoyer, Roscoe G. Bartlett, Jr., Elijah E.  
18 Cummings, and Christopher Van Hollen, Jr., House Office Building, Washington, D.C.  
19 20515.