

**H. RES. 544, CONGRATULATING THE PEOPLE
OF THE UNITED MEXICAN STATES ON THEIR
DEMOCRATIC ELECTIONS**

MARKUP
BEFORE THE
**COMMITTEE ON
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS
HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

ONE HUNDRED SIXTH CONGRESS

SECOND SESSION

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**H. RES. 544, CONGRATULATING THE PEOPLE
OF THE UNITED MEXICAN STATES ON THE
SUCCESS OF THEIR DEMOCRATIC ELEC-
TIONS**

TUESDAY, JULY 25, 2000

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,
COMMITTEE ON INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS,
Washington, DC.

The Committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:05 a.m., in room 2172 of the Rayburn Building, Hon. Doug Bereuter, presiding.

Mr. BEREUTER. Before we begin our hearing this morning we will take up one item of legislative business.

We meet it open session, pursuant to notice, to mark up one resolution related to the recent Mexican elections.

The Chair lays the resolution before the Committee. The clerk will report the time of the resolution.

Ms. BLOOMER. H. Res. 544, a Resolution congratulating the people of the United Mexican States on the success of their democratic elections held on July 2, 2000.

Mr. BEREUTER. Without objection, the preamble and operative language of the resolution will be read in that order, for amendment. The clerk will read.

Ms. BLOOMER. Whereas the United States and Mexico—
[The resolution appears in the appendix.]

Mr. BEREUTER. Without objection, the resolution is considered as having been read, its open to amendment at any point.

I recognize the gentleman from California, Mr. Gallegly, Chairman of the Subcommittee on the Western Hemisphere, to introduce the resolution.

Mr. Gallegly.

Mr. GALLEGLY. Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Mr. Chairman, I want to thank you for calling this markup, H. Res. 544, which I, and many of our colleagues introduced, to recognize the success of Mexico's recent national elections.

As the Members of this Committee know, just a few weeks ago Mexico held a general election, which in addition to being hailed as perhaps the most dramatic and historic election in Mexico's modern history, had been deemed by domestic and international electoral monitors as the freest, fairest, and most transparent election in Mexican history. For that fact alone, the Mexican people should be very proud.

The election of Vicente Fox of the PAN party as the new President also marks the first transition of power in 71 years of one-party rule in Mexico's highest office.

In recognition of these accomplishments, this resolution congratulates the Mexican people, government and political parties for their diligent work in bringing about major electoral reforms which led to the success of the July 2 election. Members of Mexican civil society persistently and peacefully pressed for electoral reform by effectively engaging in public discourse to raise public awareness.

The government of Mexico, under the leadership of President Zedillo, instituted several reforms in the areas of electoral oversight and campaign finance, effectively opening the door for a truly competitive multiparty election. The political parties of Mexico used these openings to vigorously participate in the electoral process, which resulted in broader representation and elevated the level of Mexico's democratic institutions.

Last, this resolution congratulates President-elect Vicente Fox on his victory and reaffirms our indispensable and sustained relationship with Mexico.

I urge my colleagues to join me in supporting H. Res. 544, which signifies not only our recognition of their successful elections but also our continued commitment to a more fruitful relationship with our important neighbor to the South.

Mr. Chairman, thank you for the opportunity, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. BEREUTER. I thank you very much, Mr. Gallegly.

The Chair now recognizes distinguished Ranking Minority Member, the gentleman from Connecticut, Mr. Gejdenson, for such comments as he might have.

Mr. GEJDENSON. Thank you Mr. Bereuter. I join my colleagues. This historic change in Mexico, obviously the result of international pressure through the years, to have a real open democracy in Mexico, and the courage and persistence of independent groups, as well as the Mexican people, need to be commended here; but I think all of us have to focus very strongly on the rest of our hemisphere.

In Venezuela, Peru, and Haiti democracy is under siege. In Venezuela we have seen the country with maybe the most consistent democratic institutions having a very difficult time today. Democratic institutions are being restricted, in a process that may actually decrease democratic involvement in that country.

In Peru, the President's desire to remain in power, has basically taken away that country's process, and in many cases avoided their own laws on how the democratic process was supposed to work there, and has clearly taken away the trust of many voters.

In Haiti the ruling party is so interested in solidifying its political power that it's willing to forego international assistance.

So, as we commend Mexico, and recognize the strides that have been made there, in the democratic process, we need to be concerned in three other countries in Latin American, where we see democracy losing ground.

Mr. BEREUTER. Thank you very much, Mr. Gejdenson.

The Chair recognizes himself.

I want to commend, first of all, the distinguished Chairman from California, the Subcommittee Chairman for introducing this resolution.

On July 2, 2000, the Mexican people, indeed, seem to have made a clear break with the past. Mexico has secured additional credibility for its democratic institutions and the people there look for a hopeful future.

This is an extraordinary, peaceful transformation.

President-elect Fox is rising, it would appear, to the tremendous task that awaits him with grace and seriousness.

President Zedillo also deserves credit for his statesmanship in what happened before the election. We wish Mexico well in the transition period that will lead that country's first transfer of Presidential power from the PRI to an opposition party.

Our nation has a historic opportunity that we must seize to establish a new positive and cooperative relationship with our neighbor to the South, Mexico.

I urge unanimous support for the resolution.

Are there other Members that wish to be heard on the resolution?

Mr. DELAHUNT. Mr. Chairman?

Mr. BEREUTER. The gentleman from Massachusetts, Mr. Delahunt is recognized.

Mr. DELAHUNT. Just briefly, I want to echo the sentiments that have been expressed by various Members, and congratulate the people of Mexico in this particular recent election. It is certainly a landmark, and a watershed, I believe, not just for Mexico but serves as a standard to be emulated by the rest of Central and Latin America.

I would just note that I heard my friend, and my Ranking Member, Mr. Gejdenson, refer to Haiti, and Peru, and Venezuela. I think it should be noted, however, that in Venezuela there are elections this coming weekend, and all reports are that they will be free, fair, and conducted appropriately.

And, in fact, I think we should note that in Venezuela there have been, in the course of the past year, a series of elections, all of which have been free, not flawed, and fair, and we should welcome that.

I know many are concerned about the rhetoric of the campaign, but I think it's important to note that come September and October in this country I expect the rhetoric to ratchet up somewhat. It will probably be equal to what we have heard in the Venezuelan elections.

So, I just would make that statement, and yield back.

Mr. BEREUTER. Thank you very much, Mr. Delahunt. Are there further Members seeking recognition?

If not, then, without objection, the Chair will be requested to seek consideration of the pending matter on the suspension calendar.

Is there objection?

Hearing none, it is so ordered, without objection.

The Chair is directed to make motions under rule 22 with respect to a conference on this measure, or a Senate counterpart. Further proceedings on this matter are postponed.

We will now recess for just a minute, until the panel for the hearing arrives at the table.

[Whereupon, at 10:15 a.m., the markup was adjourned.]

A P P E N D I X

JULY 25, 2000

106TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 544

Congratulating the people of the United Mexican States on the success of
their democratic elections held on July 2, 2000.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 11, 2000

Mr. GALLEGLY (for himself, Mr. GONZALEZ, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. BALLENGER, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. SMITH of New Jersey, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. ROHRBACHER, Mr. PAYNE, and Mr. BROWN of Ohio) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

RESOLUTION

Congratulating the people of the United Mexican States on
the success of their democratic elections held on July
2, 2000.

Whereas the United States and Mexico have a long history
of close relations and share a wide range of interests;

Whereas the people of the United States and the people of
Mexico have extensive cultural and historical ties that
bind together families and communities across national
boundaries;

Whereas a democratic, peaceful, and prosperous Mexico is of
vital importance to the security of the United States;

Whereas a close relationship between the United States and Mexico, based on mutual respect and understanding, is important to the people of both nations;

Whereas Mexican leaders from across the political spectrum and representatives of civil society recognized the need for political and electoral reform and took important steps to achieve these goals;

Whereas on July 2, 2000, nearly two-thirds of all eligible voters in Mexico participated in the national election;

Whereas both domestic and international election observers declared the July 2nd elections to be the fairest and most transparent in Mexico's history;

Whereas the election of Vincente Fox marks the first transition in power at the presidential level in 71 years from the ruling Institutional Revolutionary Party (PRI), completing Mexico's transition to a total multi-party democratic system;

Whereas Vincente Fox, the winning presidential candidate, and Ernesto Zedillo, the current president, have both pledged themselves to a peaceful and cooperative transition of power; and

Whereas this transparent, fair and democratic election should be broadly commended: Now, therefore be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) congratulates the people and Government of
3 the United Mexican States for the successful comple-
4 tion of the democratic multiparty elections for presi-
5 dent and the legislature;

1 (2) commends all the citizens and political par-
2 ties of Mexico for their participation in the demo-
3 cratic process and their strong support for the
4 strengthening of their democracy;

5 (3) congratulates President-elect Vincente Fox
6 for his election victory and his strong commitment
7 to democracy and a free-market oriented economy;
8 and

9 (4) reaffirms the United States friendship with
10 the United Mexican States and our unequivocal com-
11 mitment to encouraging democracy throughout Latin
12 America.

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