

R034-0304

10 A RESOLUTION CONCERNING ENDING THE EMBARGO ON TRADE WITH CUBA

- 20 **WHEREAS:** The Helms-Burton Act, passed in 1996, put into law all existing sanctions against Cuba,
30 including the original embargo imposed by President John F. Kennedy in 1962; and,
- 40 **WHEREAS:** Under the embargo, U.S. companies are forbidden to trade with Cuba and foreign
50 subsidiaries of American companies are barred from engaging in new commerce with
60 Cuba; and,
- 70 **WHEREAS:** According to the Cuba Policy Foundation, “U.S. farmers have been losing up to \$1.24
80 billion a year in potential sales to Cuba because of the embargo”; and,
- 90 **WHEREAS:** The strengthening of the embargo with the Helms-Burton Act prompted Cuban
100 authorities to respond with harsh legislation which has been used to condemn prisoners of
110 conscience; and,
- 120 **WHEREAS:** According to the UN Population Fund, “The decades-long economic embargo has
130 exacerbated the situation and contributed to a further deterioration of the quality of life of
140 the Cuban population” and UNICEF is “unequivocal about the negative impact of the
150 embargo”; and,
- 160 **WHEREAS:** Sanctions reinforce the leaders control (as the distributor of scarce resources) and gives
170 them the ability to externalize responsibility for societal suffering; and,
- 180 **WHEREAS:** Sanctions have been least successful at promoting the fall of regimes or the overthrow of
190 dictators, in part because of the elites who could engineer a coup are well insulated from
200 the hardship that sanctions create; and,
- 210 **WHEREAS:** Stigmatizing states – even those hostile to U.S. interests such as Cuba – reduces
220 Washington’s ability to engage them when it is conducive to U.S. interests to do so and
230 undercuts international support for U.S. efforts to confront these states; and,
- 240 **WHEREAS:** States that engage in freer trade will find it exceedingly difficult to suppress other aspects
250 such as an even freer exchange of ideas; and,
- 260 **WHEREAS:** Former President Jimmy Carter stated in a speech on U.S.–Cuban relations “the U.S.
270 policy objective of a peaceful transition to a stable, democratic form of government and
280 respect for human rights in Cuba has gone unmet. After four decades, the U.S. embargo
290 has failed to produce meaningful political and economic reform in Cuba.”
- 300 **THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED:** That the Maryland Student Legislature urges the United States
310 Congress to repeal the Helms-Burton Act and end the embargo on trade with Cuba
320 insofar as to permit the trade of non-military related products with Cuba.
- 330 **MANDATES:** President George W. Bush
340 Secretary of State Colin Powell
350 Senator Richard G. Lugar, Chairman of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee
360 Congressman Henry Hyde, Chairman of the House Committee on International Relations

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