

106<sup>TH</sup> CONGRESS  
2<sup>D</sup> SESSION

# H. CON. RES. 361

Commending the Republic of Benin.

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IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 22, 2000

Mr. ACKERMAN (for himself, Mr. BURTON of Indiana, and Mr. HALL of Ohio) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

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## CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Commending the Republic of Benin.

Whereas in 1990 the Republic of Benin made a smooth transition from Marxist rule to a constitutional democracy;

Whereas His Excellency President Mathieu Kerekou established an important precedent and demonstrated his commitment to democracy by relinquishing office after the first democratic elections in the Republic of Benin in 1991;

Whereas President Kerekou regained the Office of the Presidency through free, fair, and democratic elections in 1996;

Whereas on March 30, 1999, the Republic of Benin conducted free, fair, and transparent elections for parliament

which resulted in significant gains for opposition political parties demonstrating Benin's political pluralism;

Whereas over the last decade, the Republic of Benin has become the most stable, democratic nation in West Africa and is committed to promoting democracy throughout Africa;

Whereas the government of President Kerekou demonstrated its commitment to reconciliation between the nations of Africa involved in the slave trade and African-Americans by establishing a Conference on Reconciliation held in Cotonou, Republic of Benin, in December 1999;

Whereas the Republic of Benin is a nation that is truly respectful of human rights and political freedoms and is among the nations in the world not to have a single political prisoner;

Whereas the Republic of Benin is a nation where there is a true commitment to individual liberties, including the freedoms of assembly, association, and of religion;

Whereas the Republic of Benin is committed to improving the life of the people of Benin, as well as the lives of all Africans, by encouraging free markets and privatization of state-owned enterprises, investment, and competition among international business, and by creating a stable and secure environment for international businesses to operate; and

Whereas President Clinton has recognized that the Republic of Benin qualifies for the G-7 debt-relief program, due to its effective management of its limited fiscal resources: Now, therefore, be it

- 1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
- 2 *concurring), That the Congress—*

1           (1) commends President Kerekou for his out-  
2 standing leadership and the people of the Republic  
3 of Benin for their commitment to democracy;

4           (2) believes that the United States should en-  
5 hance its efforts to consolidate democracy and free  
6 enterprise in the Republic of Benin;

7           (3) urges the Administration to leverage United  
8 States assistance to the Republic of Benin in order  
9 to mobilize greater foreign direct investment in  
10 Benin; and

11           (4) encourages other nations throughout the de-  
12 veloping world to emulate the Republic of Benin's  
13 example as a bastion of peace, security, free enter-  
14 prise, and religious tolerance.

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