STATE OF OKLAHOMA

2nd Session of the 54th Legislature (2014)

SENATE
RESOLUTION 68 By: Ivester

AS INTRODUCED

A Resolution commemorating the 11th anniversary of Oklahoma's partnership with the Republic of Azerbaijan; supporting the strategic partnership between the United States and the Republic of Azerbaijan; calling on the U.S. Government to further strengthen this bilateral relationship in the areas of politics, economics, trade, energy, culture, defense and security; and directing distribution.

WHEREAS, the Republic of Azerbaijan, the largest country in the Caucasus region, is located in a strategically important South Caucasus region, bordering Iran, Russia and other key nations in Central Asia; and

WHEREAS, the Azerbaijan Democratic Republic was established in 1918 and was the first modern parliamentary republic in the Muslim world; and

WHEREAS, Azerbaijan extended suffrage to women in 1918, making it the first Muslim nation to grant women equal political rights with men; and

WHEREAS, the United States and the Republic of Azerbaijan established diplomatic relations on February 28, 1992; and

WHEREAS, in August 1997, U.S. President William J. Clinton reaffirmed U.S. support for the independence, sovereignty, territorial integrity, and democratic development of Azerbaijan; and

WHEREAS, over the past 21 years, the U.S. and Azerbaijan have strengthened their partnership through bilateral cooperation in the political, security, economic and commercial spheres; and

WHEREAS, Azerbaijan has strengthened its sovereignty and political independence becoming an important strategic partner for the U.S. in the region and in global affairs; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. developed multi-faceted cooperation with Azerbaijan, ranging from the fight against international terrorism, drug trafficking and human trafficking to nonproliferation of weapons of mass destruction; and

WHEREAS, the State of Oklahoma recognizes the outstanding achievement of the State Partnership Program (SPP) with the Republic of Azerbaijan, under which the Oklahoma National Guard maintains a relationship with Azerbaijan's Armed Forces; and

WHEREAS, the Oklahoma National Guard and the State of Oklahoma have conducted over 190 separate exchanges over the last decade; and

WHEREAS, the Republic of Azerbaijan has been a reliable partner and supports U.S. and NATO operations in Afghanistan, as it previously did in Iraq and Kosovo, and is a key part of the Northern Distribution Network, with more than 40 percent of supplies bound to

Afghanistan crossing Azerbaijan air space and ground transportation networks; and

WHEREAS, the Republic of Azerbaijan is a key player in the Eurasian energy market and a reliable partner for global and European energy security; and

WHEREAS, the Republic of Azerbaijan is exporting approximately one million barrels of oil per day via the Baku-Tbilisi-Ceyhan oil pipeline and its increasing gas output contributes to the diversification of oil and gas supplies to our allies; and

WHEREAS, the U.S. supports Azerbaijan's goal of establishing a Southern Corridor for natural gas exports to Europe - a crucial link that will solidify Azerbaijan's ties to the Euro-Atlantic community; and

WHEREAS, the Republic of Azerbaijan is a role model of intercultural dialogue, where various ethnic and religious communities have peacefully coexisted for centuries; and

WHEREAS, Azerbaijan is home to a large Jewish community that has resided in Azerbaijan for over 2,500 years in dignity and peace; and

WHEREAS, Azerbaijan is one of the few secular countries in the world with a predominantly Muslim population that maintains close, friendly ties with Israel; and

WHEREAS, closer cooperation with Azerbaijan would contribute to furthering reforms in the country and promote peace and security in the region.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE 2ND SESSION OF THE 54TH OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE:

THAT the Oklahoma State Senate commemorates the 11th anniversary of Oklahoma's partnership with the Republic of Azerbaijan.

THAT the Oklahoma State Senate supports the strategic partnership between the United States and the Republic of Azerbaijan.

THAT the Oklahoma State Senate calls on the U.S. Government to further strengthen this bilateral relationship in the areas of politics, economics, trade, energy, culture, defense and security.

THAT a copy of this resolution be distributed to His Excellency Elin Suleymanov, the Ambassador of the Republic of Azerbaijan to the United States of America, and the Oklahoma Military Department.

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