

Honoring Nagorno Karabagh's Democracy Movement

Marking 20 Years of Freedom

Request to Members of Congress:

Please offer public remarks in honor of the 20th anniversary of the 1988 Nagorno Karabagh democracy movement.

Key Points:

After nearly 70 years of foreign tyranny, in 1988, the people of Nagorno Karabagh asserted the right that we cherish as Americans: To live in freedom under a government of our own choosing. Through peaceful means, they sought self-determination and voted for independence in a legal referendum.

The Soviets, in Moscow and Baku, responded with violence and ethnic cleansing, including massacres in Sumgait (1988) and Baku (1990), intended to derail this popular movement. Nearly all the Armenians in Azerbaijan (350,000) were driven from their homes and farms, reinforcing within Nagorno Karabagh the belief that self-defense represented their only hope for survival.

Over the past 20 years, Nagorno Karabagh has built a democratic society, held free elections, developed a free market system, and sought peace in the region.

The Nagorno Karabagh democracy movement inspired peoples throughout the Soviet Union to stand up against Communist tyranny – eventually leading to the end of the threat the Soviet Empire posed to world peace.

Benefits:

Public statements regarding the Nagorno Karabagh democracy movement:

Reaffirm America's belief in democracy and self-determination.

Support Nagorno Karabagh for building a free, democratic society.

Honor a popular movement that helped bring down the Soviet Union.