

Rep. Lemmons II offered the following resolution:

**House Resolution No. 43.**

A resolution to memorialize the United States Congress to fully respect the sovereignty of Venezuela.

Whereas, Venezuelan President Hugo Chavez Frias has won three landslide presidential elections since 1998, including winning over 60 percent of the popular vote in December 2006. These electoral victories signaled the end of a 500-year-old colonial caste system in which an oligarchy of the socially, politically, and economically advantaged exploited the majority population; and

Whereas, President Chavez Frias' proposal to rewrite the nation's constitution was approved by 92 percent of the electorate in 1999. This awe-inspiring political victory was followed by another national election in which pro-Chavez Frias candidates garnered 95 percent of the seats in the Constituent Assembly. President Chavez Frias' overwhelming popularity was demonstrated again in July 2000, when 68 percent of the electorate approved the new constitution; and

Whereas, All democratic countries must abjure any state-sponsored activities to destabilize Venezuela's economy and/or national sovereignty. Further, all public and private American-based entities are conjoined for the sake of international social order and domestic tranquility to vigorously oppose the unconscionable low-intensity war that is being waged against the people and national sovereignty of Venezuela since the inception of the Chavez Frias administration; and

Whereas, The full influence of the United States Congress must be brought to bear to constrain the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank from instituting policies that endanger Venezuelan sovereignty; and

Whereas, The immense popular support for President Chavez Frias gives his legitimately elected government the mandate to implement sweeping economic and social changes. This vast support was validated by The Carter Center, the Organization of American States, and other international organizations that have overseen seven Venezuelan national elections, and have given qualified certification to Venezuela's National Electoral Council, which administers elections; and

Whereas, President Chavez Frias is the embodiment of the hopes, dreams, and aspirations of Venezuela's historically disenfranchised majority, who desperately yearn for equitable land distribution and social and economic justice. Moreover, President Chavez Frias is spearheading governmental efforts to institute free and universal health care and education; and

Whereas, In 2004, the Chavez Frias administration spent more than \$4 billion in social programs. This commitment to social justice has endeared this visionary leader to the traditionally neglected populace. Further, the government operates *Mision Mercal*, a chain of government-run supermarkets that provide high quality food to the general public at half the usual cost. This program is so successful that it is the second largest government-operated business behind the oil industry; and

Whereas, Historically, President Chavez Frias is the rare champion of the people who fearlessly challenges the existing social and economic order to usher in an era of broad-based reforms that are unprecedented in character. Under President Chavez Frias, at least 100,000 landless peasant families have been uplifted to the class of property holders; and

Whereas, President Chavez Frias displays enormous personal integrity by forging mutually beneficial alliances with progressive nations such as Cuba to internationalize the social and economic justice movement. *Mision Barrio Adentro*, the universal health care initiative, is supported by more than 20,000 Cuban medics, involving more than 185 million consultations, and saving 25,000 lives; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we memorialize the United States Congress to fully respect the sovereignty of Venezuela; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, the members of the Michigan congressional delegation, and the Ambassador of the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela in the United States of America.