

Senator Jelinek offered the following concurrent resolution:

Senate Concurrent Resolution No. 40.

A concurrent resolution to memorialize Congress to enact pending legislation to grant permanent lawful resident status to Ibrahim Parlak.

Whereas, Ibrahim Parlak was born in Turkey in 1962. A Kurd, Ibrahim Parlak was tortured and imprisoned for his involvement in Kurdish human rights efforts in his homeland as a young man. Fearing for his life, he fled Turkey and arrived in the United States in 1991, settling in Chicago for a short time before moving to southwestern Michigan in 1992, where he has lived as a model immigrant. As a small business owner and dedicated father, this gentleman has built a life in Harbart, Michigan, that has been exemplary; and

Whereas, Granted political asylum in 1992, Ibrahim Parlak began the naturalization process as soon as he was eligible to do so, applying for citizenship in 1998. At each stage of this process, he was fully honest with immigration officials, admitting that he had to leave Turkey with false documents and revealing all his actions with Kurdish groups; and

Whereas, Mr. Parlak's naturalization application was denied in November 2001, shortly after the terror attacks of 9/11. Apparently, Mr. Parlak's association, during his years in Turkey, with certain people affiliated with a Kurdish organization now considered to be a terrorist group was noted by the Immigration and Naturalization Service. Mr. Parlak had been entirely forthcoming with all his activities in his application for political asylum when he arrived in the United States. In spite of this, federal officials commenced deportation proceedings, and in 2004, Ibrahim Parlak was imprisoned, without bail, for 10 months before a federal district court judge ruled his detention unconstitutional; and

Whereas, Mr. Parlak's efforts to clear his name and restart his effort to fulfill his dream of becoming an American citizen have drawn the strong support of many people in southwestern Michigan. His reputation in the food service industry, his impeccable standing in the community, his devotion to his American-born daughter, and his personal integrity are well-known by all who have interacted with him over the years. The hundreds of statements and signatures in support of Mr. Parlak reflect the widespread respect and admiration he has generated since arriving in this country; and

Whereas, Through the efforts of Congressman Upton and Senator Levin, private bills (H.R.976/S.403) are pending in Congress to grant relief to Ibrahim Parlak and allow him to pursue citizenship and to continue to contribute to a stronger Michigan and America; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring), That we memorialize Congress to enact pending legislation to grant permanent lawful resident status to Ibrahim Parlak and to allow him to work to become an American citizen; 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, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.