

111TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

S. RES. _____

Expressing sympathy for the people of Poland in the aftermath of the devastating plane crash that killed the country's President, First Lady, and 94 other high ranking government, military, and civic leaders on April 10, 2010.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. JOHANNES, Mr. KERRY, Ms. MIKULSKI, Mr. VOINOVICH, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, and Mr. CARDIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on

RESOLUTION

Expressing sympathy for the people of Poland in the aftermath of the devastating plane crash that killed the country's President, First Lady, and 94 other high ranking government, military, and civic leaders on April 10, 2010.

Whereas the United States and Poland are close allies, with a shared bond of history, friendship, and international cooperation;

Whereas Polish immigrants were among the first Jamestown settlers, and Casimir Pulaski immigrated to the United States to fight in the Revolutionary War;

Whereas more than 9,000,000 Americans of Polish descent now reside in the United States, bringing vitality to major metropolitan areas such as Chicago, Detroit, and New York City;

Whereas Polish-Americans have been leaders in all walks of American life;

Whereas the American people stood in support of the Solidarity movement as it fought against the oppression of the communist government of Poland through peaceful means, eventually leading to Solidarity members being elected to office in open democratic elections held on June 4, 1989, events that helped spark the movement to democracy throughout eastern Europe;

Whereas Poland joined the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) in 1999, joined the European Union in 2004, and has contributed to United States and NATO operations in Iraq and Afghanistan;

Whereas Poland has enjoyed a thriving and prosperous free market democracy since the end of the Cold War;

Whereas the President of Poland Lech Kaczynski and 95 other people, including Poland's First Lady, the deputy foreign minister, dozens of members of Parliament, the chiefs of the army and navy, and the president of the national bank, were tragically killed in a plane crash in western Russia on April 10, 2010;

Whereas President Kaczynski and his colleagues were traveling to Katyn, Russia for a memorial service to mark the 70th anniversary of the Soviet secret police killing of more than 20,000 Polish officers, prisoners, and intellectuals who were captured after the Soviet Union invaded Poland in 1939;

Whereas Anna Walentynowicz, the former dock worker whose firing in 1980 sparked the Solidarity strike that ultimately overthrew the communist government of Poland, was also killed in the crash;

Whereas Ryszard Kaczorowski, who served as Poland's final president in exile before the country's return to democracy, also perished in the crash;

Whereas Chicago suffered the loss of a respected artist when Wojciech Seweryn, whose father was killed in Katyn, died in the crash;

Whereas Mr. Seweryn recently completed a memorial to the victims of Katyn at St. Adalbert Cemetery in Niles, Illinois, which President Kaczynski planned to visit in May;

Whereas President Barack Obama said, the “loss is devastating to Poland, to the United States, and to the world. President Kaczynski was a distinguished statesman who played a key role in the Solidarity movement, and he was widely admired in the United States as a leader dedicated to advancing freedom and human dignity.”;

Whereas Former Solidarity leader and ex-president Lech Walesa said, “Today, we lost part of our intellectual elite in a plane crash. It will take a long time until the wounds of our democracy are healed.”; and

Whereas thousands of Poles gathered in the center of Warsaw and elsewhere around the world on Saturday to mourn those killed in the crash and affirm their continued solidarity with the people of Poland: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

1 (1) expresses its deepest sympathies to the peo-
2 ple of Poland and the families of those who perished
3 for their profound loss;

4 (2) expresses strong and continued solidarity
5 with the people of Poland and Polish-American com-
6 munities in the United States; and

7 (3) expresses unwavering support for the Gov-
8 ernment of Poland as it works to address the loss
9 of many key public officials.