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Wexler Urges NATO to Give Membership Action Plan (MAP) to Ukraine and Georgia

Wexler, Gallegly, and Schwartz Introduce Resolution Supporting MAP for Ukraine and Georgia

(Washington, DC) Today, Congressman Robert Wexler (D-FL), Chairman of the Subcommittee on Europe and a senior member of the Foreign Relations Committee, along with Europe Subcommittee Ranking Member Congressman Elton Gallegly (R-CA), and Congresswoman Allyson Schwartz (D-PA) introduced a resolution (H. Res. 997) encouraging the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) to enter into a Membership Action Plan (MAP) with Georgia and Ukraine at the Bucharest Summit in April.

H. Res. 997 is the House version of a resolution introduced by Senators Richard Lugar (R-IN) and Joe Biden (D-DE) in support of MAP status for Georgia and Ukraine and recently passed by the Senate Foreign Relations Committee unanimously. Congressman Wexler recently sent a letter to President Bush urging him to support MAP for Ukraine and has been a staunch advocate for the strengthening of the transatlantic alliance through the expansion of NATO and the European Union.

"As the security challenges facing the United States and our European allies continue to grow, NATO must embrace emerging democracies, such as Ukraine and Georgia, that will strengthen this critical transatlantic security institution," Congressman Wexler said. "The leaders of Ukraine and Georgia have clearly expressed their desire to join NATO and have made significant progress towards meeting the requirements of NATO membership. By granting Ukraine and Georgia MAP, NATO can send an unequivocal message globally about the importance of promoting democratic values shared by its members -- while at the same time enhancing Euro-Atlantic security."

"This legislation recognizes the important strides made by Ukraine and Georgia in the areas of human rights, security and rule of law," said Congressman Gallegly. "NATO should build closer ties with these two deserving allies."

In 1999, NATO created MAP status to assist nations interested in potential NATO membership. Upon entering a MAP agreement, NATO engages the interested nation in a comprehensive program that prepares the country for the political, economic, defense, and legal requirements of membership.

Congressman Wexler is Chairman of the Europe Subcommittee and a senior member of the House Committee on Foreign Affairs and the House Judiciary Committee; and he also sits on the Financial Services Committee.

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