

CONGRESSWOMAN CAROLYN B. MALONEY

An Update on Hellenic Issues in the 109th Congress



Congress of the United States
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, D.C.

Dear Neighbor:

I would like to update you about the recent developments in U.S. relations with Greece and Cyprus, two important allies of the United States in a critical region.

As you may know, I am a co-chair of the Congressional Caucus on Hellenic Issues, which currently has 132 members. In 1996, Representative Michael Bilirakis (R-FL) and I founded the Caucus to foster and improve relations between the United States and Greece. The Caucus focuses on key diplomatic, military, and human rights issues in a critical part of the world by promoting legislation, sending letters, arranging briefings, and disseminating information to interested parties. Some of the topics important to the Caucus include U.S. aid to Greece and Cyprus, the illegal occupation of Cyprus, U.S. relations with the Former Yugoslav Republic of Macedonia (FYROM), and developments in the Aegean.

An important member of NATO, Greece historically has been a valuable ally, and has been critical to U.S. efforts to fight the war on terrorism. Additionally, the United States must continue its work to help the people of Cyprus achieve a lasting peace settlement that reunifies the island and ends the illegal occupation of Cyprus by Turkish troops.

Cyprus

Turkey invaded Cyprus in 1974, and to this day continues to maintain troops on one-third of the island. Nearly 200,000 Greek Cypriots, who fell victim to a policy of ethnic cleansing, were forcibly evicted from their homes and became refugees in their own country. Despite the hardships caused by the ongoing Turkish occupation, in May 2004, the Republic of Cyprus became a full-fledged member of the European Union. Cyprus has registered remarkable economic growth, and the people living in the Cypriot Government-controlled areas enjoy one of the world's highest standards of living. Sadly, the people living in the occupied area to the north continue to be mired in poverty.

I have introduced H.Res. 322, which expresses the sense of the House of Representatives in support of the European Court of Human Rights for its decisions in the *Loizidou v. Turkey* and *Xenides-Arestis v. Turkey* cases and for admitting similar cases before the Court. When Turkey illegally invaded Cyprus in 1974, Titina Loizidou was denied access to the property in Northern Cyprus that she had inherited from her family. In 1989, she filed an application against Turkey with the European Commission of Human Rights, and in 1996, the European Court of Human Rights ruled that Turkey must pay Loizidou damages totaling \$900,000. In April 2005 the European Court of Human Rights decided that a similar case brought by Myra Xenides-Arestis against Turkey was admissible.

I also have cosponsored H.Res. 603 which calls on Turkey to withdraw its troops from the island as a step toward the peaceful resolution of the conflict. The resolution calls upon Turkey to normalize relations with the Republic of Cyprus and stop hampering strategic cooperation between the EU and NATO. Finally, I have cosponsored H.R. 857, the "American Owned Property In Occupied Cyprus Claims Act," which would provide U.S. citizens with remedies to reclaim their property in occupied Cyprus.

I will continue to work for the passage of each of these bills and urge the U.S. government to call on the Turkish government to withdraw its army, so that the people of Cyprus can decide their own future without outside interference from foreign armies.

Other Important Issues

■ I have introduced H.Res. 521, which expresses the sense of the House of Representatives that the FYROM should cease its distribution of negative and nationalist propaganda and should work with the United Nations and Greece to find a mutually acceptable official name for the FYROM. I also am a cosponsor of H.Con.Res. 306, which encourages the FYROM and Greece to continue negotiations to determine a mutually acceptable official name for the FYROM.

■ I have taken a tough stand against Turkey on the issue of Greek sovereignty in the Aegean by cosponsoring H.Con.Res. 137 which declares the support of Congress for Greece's territorial rights as recognized by international treaties.

continued on back



Official Business

Congresswoman Carolyn B. Maloney
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
Washington, D.C. 20515-3214

PRSRRT:STD
M.C.

Carolyn B. Maloney

■ I am a cosponsor of H.Res. 411, which urges Turkey to comply with all European Union standards and criteria prior to its accession to the European Union.

■ In June 2005, the Hellenic Caucus joined with the Italian American Congressional Delegation to sponsor a ceremony held in the Capitol Rotunda to honor Constantino Brumidi on the 200th anniversary of his birth. From 1868-1879 as a resident of New York City, Brumidi, who was the son of a Greek father and an Italian mother, painted forty-three murals and paintings at St. Stephen's Church which is located in my congressional district. However, he is most famous for his artistic achievements in the U.S. Capitol. "The Apotheosis of George Washington," on the dome in the Rotunda, is one of the highlights of his work there.

The Hellenic Caucus initiated several letters during the first session of the 109th Congress on important issues including:

■ A letter to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice expressing concerns about the formal invitation extended to Mehmet Ali Talat, the so-called president of the self-declared "Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus," and requesting an explanation of the long-term plan of the United States toward Cyprus (December 2005)

■ A letter to Chairman Kolbe and Ranking Member Lowey of the Foreign Operations Appropriations Subcommittee urging them to support the inclusion of language in the FY06 Foreign Operations Appropriations Conference Report regarding funds for Cyprus (October 2005)

■ A letter to Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice expressing deep concern about the legality of travel by U.S. citizens to northern Cyprus and seeking clarification about the U.S. government's position on the matter (July 2005)

■ Letters to President Bush and Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice urging them to play active roles in the UN-sponsored negotiations between Greece and the FYROM, and specifically to address the compromise proposal made by United Nations mediator, Matthew Nimetz (July 2005)

Please do not hesitate to contact my office with your concerns on these or any other issues facing the federal government. For additional information about the work of the Hellenic Caucus, please visit my website at www.house.gov/maloney.

Yours very truly,

Carolyn B. Maloney

CAROLYN B. MALONEY
Member of Congress

P.S. If you would like to receive email updates about news and issues affecting New York and the nation, please fill out the form below or visit my website at www.house.gov/maloney to sign up.



Get news by email! I've started an email newsletter to constituents who would be interested in receiving them. Please complete this form and mail it to my Manhattan office, or log on to www.house.gov/maloney to sign up.

Name Email

Address

Return to Congresswoman Maloney, 1651 Third Avenue, Suite 311, New York, NY 10128

By signing up you are authorizing me to send regular email updates to the email account you provide.

