



H.Res. 426 - Recognizing 2007 as the Year of the Rights of Internally Displaced Persons in Colombia, and offering support for efforts to ensure that the internally displaced people of Colombia receive the assistance and protection they need to rebuild their lives successfully

H.Res. 426 is being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Jim McGovern (D-MA) on May 22, 2007. The bill was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs and was considered under unanimous consent.

H.Res. 426 is expected to be considered on the floor on July 11, 2007.

Summary

H.Res. 426 resolves that:

- The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, the Colombian Catholic Church, and the Coalition for Human Rights and Internal Displacement should be commended for their initiative to declare the Year of the Rights of the Internally Displaced People in Colombia;
- The Government of Colombia and the international donor community should be encouraged to prioritize discussion of humanitarian assistance and internal displacement with the international donor community, especially within the context of the London-Cartagena Process; and
- The Government of the United States should increase the resources it makes available to provide emergency humanitarian assistance and protection through international and civilian government agencies, and assist Colombia's internally displaced people in rebuilding their lives in a dignified, safe, and sustainable manner.

Background

Colombia has experienced the internal displacement of more than 3,800,000 people over the past 20 years, representing approximately 8 percent of Colombia's population. This number is the highest in the Americas, second only to Sudan worldwide. Women and children also comprise a large majority of those who are displaced. Very few of those

displaced are able to return to their original homes due to ongoing conflict throughout the country, and when it is possible to return, voluntarily, safely and with dignity.

In 1997, the Government of Colombia passed landmark legislation, known as Law 387, to guarantee rights and assistance to its internally displaced population. However, the Constitutional Court of Colombia has handed down multiple decisions recognizing the insufficient nature of the government's efforts to meet the basic needs of internally displaced persons and upheld the importance of implementing law 387 in light of the United Nations Guiding Principles on Internal Displacement.

Cost

This legislation has not been scored by CBO.

Staff Contact

For questions or further information contact Luke Hatzis at (202) 226-2302.