



Approving the renewal of import restrictions contained in the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003

FLOOR SITUATION

H.J.Res. 93 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 Joseph Crowley (D-NY) on June 5, 2008. The resolution was referred to the House Committee on Ways and Means, but was never considered.

H.J.Res. 93 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on July 23, 2008.

SUMMARY

H.J.Res. 93 resolves that Congress approves the renewal of the import restrictions contained in section 3(a)(1) of the Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003.

BACKGROUND

The Burmese Freedom and Democracy Act of 2003 was signed into law on July 28, 2003. This legislation sought to pressure the Burmese junta to release Nobel Peace Laureate Aung San Suu Kyi, other political prisoners, and to move toward democratization. Section 3(a)(1) of this legislation banned the importation of all Burmese products. Under the Act, the trade sanctions may be lifted if the President certifies to Congress that a series of improved conditions inside Burma have been met. The restrictions on Burmese goods are set to expire on July 26, 2008.

Burma is ruled by a military junta that has committed numerous human rights violations against the Burmese people. According to the State Department, Burma is designated as a Country of Particular Concern (CPC) under the International Religious Freedom Act due to the limits placed on religious freedom and a Tier 3 Country in the Trafficking of Persons Report because of its use of forced labor.

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