



## H.Res. 1438– Commemorating the 50th anniversary of the Azorean Refugee Act of 1958 and celebrating the extensive contributions of Portuguese-American communities to the United States

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### FLOOR SITUATION

H.Res. 1438 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 Devin Nunes (R-CA) on September 15, 2008. The resolution was referred to the Committee on Judiciary, but was never considered.

H.Res. 1438 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on September 22, 2008.

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### SUMMARY

H.Res. 1438 resolves that the House of Representatives:

- Commemorates the 50th anniversary of the Azorean Refugee Act of 1958;
- Celebrates the Azorean Refugee Act of 1958 as worthy and admirable legislation that represented America at its finest, reaching out to people in need; and
- Recognizes the momentous contributions of Portuguese immigrants and their descendants to the United States, who have so greatly enriched our Nation.

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### BACKGROUND

Between September 27, 1957, and October 24, 1958, a series of earthquakes and volcano eruptions destroyed the economic infrastructure of Faial Island, Portugal, which is located in the Azores. Most of the island's 25,000 residents were forced to escape to other islands in the Azores. In 1958, Senator John F. Kennedy introduced the Azorean Refugee Act (P.L. 85-892).

This legislation made 1,500 special immigrant visas available to victims of the disaster in the Azores. The legislation was later extended through 1962 which allowed for more refugees to immigrate to the United States. Between 1960 and 1980, an additional 175,000 immigrated to the U.S. and according to the 2000 U.S. Census there are approximately 1.2 million Portuguese-Americans today. Today, major Portuguese-American communities exist in New England, California, Hawaii, and the New York metropolitan area.

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### STAFF CONTACT

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