



## H.Res. 1451 – Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission Establishment Resolution

---

### FLOOR SITUATION

H.Res. 1451 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 James McGovern (D-MA) on September 17, 2008. The resolution was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, but was never considered.

H.Res. 1451 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on September 23, 2008.

---

### SUMMARY

H.Res. 1451 establishes the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission in the House of Representatives. The Commission will promote and advocate for internationally recognized human rights in a nonpartisan manner. H.Res. 1451 authorizes such sums as may be necessary for activities of the Commission and directs it to use staff and resources of the Foreign Affairs Committee for its activities.

The bill states that any Member may join the Commission. The Commission will be co-chaired by a Member appointed by the Speaker of the House and a Member appointed by the Minority Leader. The Commission will also have an Executive Committee comprised of eight Members of Congress, equally divided between Members of the majority and minority parties.

H.Res. 1451 states that the Commission will have no legislative jurisdiction or authority.

---

### BACKGROUND

The late Honorable Tom Lantos served as a Member of Congress from 1981 until his passing on February 11, 2008. Representative Lantos represented the 12<sup>th</sup> Congressional District of California, comprised of San Mateo County and southwest San Francisco. Lantos was born in 1928 in Budapest, Hungary. Lantos, a member of the Hungarian resistance during World War II, is the only Holocaust survivor to have served in the United States Congress.

Congressman Lantos was a former Chairman of the Committee on Foreign Affairs. Lantos was a champion of human rights issues throughout his service in Congress. He additionally was a co-chair of the Congressional Human Rights Caucus, along with Rep. Frank Wolf (R-VA). Most recently, Rep. Lantos was involved with advocating for resolution to the genocide in the Darfur region of Sudan. President George W. Bush awarded Tom Lantos the Medal of Freedom posthumously in June 2008 and stated, "We miss his vigorous defense of human rights and his powerful witness for the cause of human freedom."

---

### COST

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) has not produced a cost estimate for H.Res. 1451 as of September 21, 2008.

---

### STAFF CONTACT

For questions or further information contact Adam Hepburn at 6-2302.