

Nemat Abilov

Committee on Veterans, Military and International Affairs, and
Culture and the Arts

February 12, 2014 at 8:30 a.m.

HR9

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As a member of both the Council of Europe and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Azerbaijan is in a unique position to bridge divides and promote greater understanding. Home to a vibrant and centuries-old Jewish community, Azerbaijan has developed strong relations with Israel. Azerbaijan's leadership in promoting tolerance and intercultural dialogue is widely recognized and highly valued by world leaders.

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Azerbaijan and the United States enjoy shared values and interests. Both nations are at the forefront in promoting regional security, economic and energy development, diversity and inclusiveness. Under President Ilham Aliyev's leadership, Azerbaijan has emerged as America's reliable regional partner at one of the world's most unique and critical crossroads.

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Azerbaijan is an active participant of international anti-terror efforts. Azerbaijan and the United States work together to counter nuclear proliferation and narcotics trafficking, and to promote security in the wider Caspian region and beyond. In addition, Azerbaijan's military partnered directly with Oklahoma's National Guard as part of the National Guard State Partnership Program.

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Therefore, I kindly ask you to join the other states and urge the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia – Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

Anar Ahmadov
Azerbaijan American Friendship Association

Committee on Veterans, Military and International Affairs, and
Culture and the Arts

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Ismayil Ahmadov
President
AACA

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Irada Akhoundova
President
Azerbaijan Center

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Kenan Aliyev
Senior Reservoir Geologist
eni petroleum

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Gara Amirov
Sr. Graphic Designer
Helix Design and Production

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Khalid Gozal
Drilling Engineer, BP America Inc.

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Rafiq Gurbanzade
An Azerbaijani community member

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Therefore, I kindly ask you to join the other states and urge the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia – Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

Namig Khochberov
Board Member
Alliance of Turkic Petroleum Professionals / ATPP

Committee on Veterans, Military and International Affairs, and
Culture and the Arts

February 12, 2014 at 8:30 a.m.

HR9

On May 28, 1918, independent Azerbaijan emerged as the first parliamentary republic in the Muslim world. It was crushed in 1920 by the Bolshevik invasion, yet during its short existence the country became the symbol of the Azerbaijani identity and the nation's aspirations. US President Barack Obama recognized this unique legacy, describing Azerbaijan as "an example for the international community as a first democratic and secular republic in the Muslim world."

As a member of both the Council of Europe and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Azerbaijan is in a unique position to bridge divides and promote greater understanding. Home to a vibrant and centuries-old Jewish community, Azerbaijan has developed strong relations with Israel. Azerbaijan's leadership in promoting tolerance and intercultural dialogue is widely recognized and highly valued by world leaders.

US Secretary of State John Kerry praised Azerbaijan's "commitment to fighting anti-Semitism and a commitment to diversity and pluralism." According to Secretary Kerry, "Azerbaijan is a wonderful statement about the ability of different religions, different sects to come together and live together and to find a way forward."

Azerbaijan and the United States enjoy shared values and interests. Both nations are at the forefront in promoting regional security, economic and energy development, diversity and inclusiveness. Under President Ilham Aliyev's leadership, Azerbaijan has emerged as America's reliable regional partner at one of the world's most unique and critical crossroads.

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As a key component in NATO's Northern Distribution Network, Azerbaijan provides a secure route for 40 percent of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force's (ISAF) multi-modal transit into Afghanistan. Working closely with the US

Transportation Command and the US Air Mobility Command, Azerbaijan has aided important over-flight clearance, medical evacuation flights as well as landing and refueling operations for US and NATO efforts supporting the ISAF.

The roots of US-Azerbaijan joint operations run deep; over the years the Azerbaijani military also assisted in American-led efforts in Iraq and in the Balkans.

Azerbaijan is an active participant of international anti-terror efforts. Azerbaijan and the United States work together to counter nuclear proliferation and narcotics trafficking, and to promote security in the wider Caspian region and beyond. In addition, Azerbaijan's military partnered directly with Oklahoma's National Guard as part of the National Guard State Partnership Program.

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Therefore, I kindly ask you to join the other states and urge the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia – Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

Jeyhun Mammadov
Drilling Engineer / BP America

Committee on Veterans, Military and International Affairs, and
Culture and the Arts

February 12, 2014 at 8:30 a.m.

HR9

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Therefore, I kindly ask you to join the other states and urge the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia – Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

Kemal Oksuz
President
Assembly of the Friends of Azerbaijan / AFAZ

Committee on Veterans, Military and International Affairs, and
Culture and the Arts

February 12, 2014 at 8:30 a.m.

HR9

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Therefore, I kindly ask you to join the other states and urge the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia – Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

Roxanne Kamalu

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 10, 2014 9:22 AM
To: vmitestimony
Cc: konul_mamedova@hotmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HR9 on Feb 12, 2014 08:30AM

HR9

Submitted on: 2/10/2014

Testimony for VMI on Feb 12, 2014 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Konul Mamedova	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Thank you very much for your recognition

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Roxanne Kamalu

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 10, 2014 9:57 AM
To: vmitestimony
Cc: parvinaaliyeva@yahoo.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HR9 on Feb 12, 2014 08:30AM*

HR9

Submitted on: 2/10/2014

Testimony for VMI on Feb 12, 2014 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Parvina	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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**Written Statement of
Arpine Mar Philian**

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS, MILITARY, &
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, &
CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

February 12, 2014, 8:30AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 312

IN OPPOSITION TO:

H.R. NO. 9 Urging the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

To: Chair Takai, Vice Chair Ito, and Members of the Committee
Re: **Testimony in Opposition to H.R. NO. 9**

Dear Honorable Chair, Vice-Chair, and Committee Members:

I am in **strong opposition** to **H.R. NO. 9**. Thank you for this opportunity to comment on this flawed and unjust resolution. I am a senior citizen that has served the public here for over thirty years as a school teacher. Being ethnically Armenian myself, I know Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh's history only too well. Over the many years of my life, I have witnessed the brutality and aggression by Azerbaijan towards the Armenians in not only the Republic of Nagorno-Karabakh (NKR), but those peacefully living in Azerbaijan. I unfortunately know too many who were forced into becoming refugees after Azerbaijan's mass slaughters of the Armenian people between 1988 and 1993, many of whom were orphans. I do not write to dispute politics, but to express my sincere concern at the many misrepresentations within this resolution.

The truth is that the United States, The United Nations, and the Minsk Group have continuously (and continue to) attempt to negotiate a peaceful settlement to this conflict. Azerbaijan, however, is the one party to this conflict that has continuously rejected settlement or constructive negotiation that any international body or the United States has facilitated.

NKR is an autonomous, independent republic. This dispute arose only after the arbitrary and indiscriminate border drawing by the Soviet Union that forced NKR under Soviet Azeri control. Independent watch dogs and human rights agencies have evaluated NKR as having one of the most free and just elections in the world. The people of NKR are of mainly Armenian ancestry – they are (to very little exception) Armenians who speak the Armenian language and have deep roots in the Armenian culture. The current population of NKR has risen to approximately 153,000 inhabitants, 97% of which are ethnically Armenian. The main religion practiced in NKR is Christianity.

Our Hawai'i state legislature is not the right venue for this very flawed and inaccurate resolution. In fact, understanding and learning about the Hawaiian culture in all my time on the Islands has been a wonderful experience for me. This resolution is NOT PONO.

This resolution continues to make reference to Azerbaijan's rapidly growing economy as an asset to the United States. In reality, Azerbaijan remains one of the most corrupt and despotic countries in the world. According to independent reports by international human rights watchdogs including Transparency International, despite its massive oil resources, "Azerbaijan is plagued by endemic corruption that prevents ordinary Azerbaijanis from sharing in their country's natural wealth and is a significant barrier to Azerbaijan's development." Do we really want to support a factually incorrect resolution that favors a despotic, corrupt nation? I find this very fact unsettling, and do not see how this resolution or others creating a partnership between Azerbaijan and Hawai'i can benefit Hawai'i and its people. This resolution can do no good for Hawai'i, and frankly I am disappointed that it has been so carelessly introduced.

This resolution should be disregarded if not for the factual misrepresentations and narrow cherry-picking of disputed fact, but on just the purpose that it connects Hawai'i to a despotic regime that we share little commonality with - from whom we can expect to receive little to no help. Where is the connection that justifies this flawed resolution?

I ask that you please oppose this resolution. Our legislature is no place to dispute foreign conflicts of this sort. Supporting a resolution like this will destabilize the Caucasus region and will place hurdles in the way of peace within the region. I ask that you please oppose this poorly written, historically inaccurate, and unjust resolution.

Thank you,

Arpine Mar Philian
arpinemar@gmail.com
Waikiki

Roxanne Kamalu

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 10, 2014 8:10 AM
To: vmitestimony
Cc: wctanaka@gmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HR9 on Feb 12, 2014 08:30AM*

HR9

Submitted on: 2/10/2014

Testimony for VMI on Feb 12, 2014 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Wayne	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments:

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Written Statement of
Dawn Morais Webster

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS, MILITARY, &
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, &
CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

February 12, 2014, 8:30AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 312

IN OPPOSITION TO:

H.R. NO. 9 Urging the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

To: Chair Takai, Vice Chair Ito, and Members of the Committee
Re: **Testimony in Opposition to H.R. NO. 9**

Aloha Honorable Chair, Vice-Chair, and Committee Members:

I write to voice my **strong opposition** to **H.R. NO. 9**.

I have become somewhat familiar with Armenia's troubled history of dispossession and oppression through Ani Martirosian Menon, the very bright young Armenian woman my son recently married. That family connection has made me sensitive to the inappropriateness of this rather strange resolution and the likelihood that it will be used to strengthen a false representation of historical facts about the relationship between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

It is my understanding that the United States, the European Union, the United Nations, the Minsk Group, and other international bodies including Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh themselves have been attempting to negotiate a settlement to the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. Azerbaijan has continuously rejected any settlement or negotiation. Yet this resolution falsely casts Azerbaijan in the role of mediator and facilitator of a settlement.

It is worth noting that since 1998, the United States has been rendering official assistance to Nagorno-Karabakh to help overcome the consequences of the devastating aggression by Azerbaijan.

This resolution also refers to Azerbaijan's partnership and cooperation with the United States to fight against international terrorism. This flies in the face of the fact that during the Karabakh war, between 1993 and 1994, Azerbaijan used its connections with Islamic terrorist networks to hire thousands of Afghan mujahideens and other Islamic mercenaries linked to various international terrorist organizations to fight against Armenia and Karabakh.

<http://www.un.org/documents/ga/docs/50/plenary/a50-390add1.htm>

This resolution makes reference to Azerbaijan's rapidly growing economy as an asset to the United States. In reality, Transparency International notes that despite its massive oil resources, "Azerbaijan is plagued by endemic corruption that prevents ordinary Azerbaijanis from sharing in their country's natural wealth and is a significant barrier to Azerbaijan's development."

This resolution mentions the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway project initiated by Azerbaijan as contributing to the prosperity of Azerbaijan and the United States' regional allies. In reality, both the United States and the European Union have refused to fund the project. In fact, in 2005 and 2006, the US Congress adopted the "South Caucasus Integration and Open Railroads Act" that prohibited United States' assistance to the BTK railroad because "the proposed railroad specifically bypasses Armenia and serves to isolate Armenia from East-West commercial corridors."

It is hard to see how a resolution that distorts history and contemporary reality in so many ways serves Hawaii's interests. Given the islands' own history of dispossession and occupation and the ongoing struggle for sovereignty by Native Hawaiians, the resolution is at the very least ill-advised and certainly at odds with Hawaii's culture of aloha.

Please do not proceed with this resolution. At best, it will do nothing to help achieve lasting peace and security in the region. At worst, it can, and will be used to rewrite history and deepen old wrongs.

Thank you.

Dawn Morais Webster Ph.D.
1, Keahole Place #3501
Honolulu
Hawaii 96825.
dmoraiswebster@gmail.com

Testimony for VMI on Feb 12, 2014 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

Dear Chair Takai,

I am opposed to HR 9 for the following reasons:

The State Department of the United States has been working for many years to resolve the Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict. Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and her team were diligently working to resolve this conflict for many years. Please note that as far back as 2001, Secretary of State Colin Powell held meetings at the Little White House, Key West with the Presidents of Azerbaijan and Armenia in an attempt to resolve this conflict.

I am concerned that this resolution reflects only one side of the situation, utilizing only selective factual data and displaying a manipulation of the facts related to this matter. Many of the points made in HR 9 do not reflect a broader contextual view of the points of disagreement between the parties.

President Aliyev has claimed publicly numerous times that the Republic of Armenia, in its entirety, not just Nagorno-Karabakh, belongs to Azerbaijan. There are Armenian historic sites within the Republic of Armenia that are thousands of years old.

President Aliyev negotiated with Hungary to expedite an Azeri soldier serving a 30 years to life sentence for entering the room of an Armenian soldier at a NATO training seminar and decapitating him while he was sleeping. Upon arriving in Azerbaijan, President Aliyev immediately pardoned him, honored him and provided him with housing and other amenities.

These actions by the President of Azerbaijan have made it harder for our State Department to bring the parties together for a resolution of the conflict.

Respectfully submitted,

George Casen

Roxanne Kamalu

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 10, 2014 8:35 AM
To: vmitestimony
Cc: dejamarie@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HR9 on Feb 12, 2014 08:30AM

HR9

Submitted on: 2/10/2014

Testimony for VMI on Feb 12, 2014 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Deja	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: I am concerned that in adopting this resolution, the legislature is hastily taking a side in an international conflict and aligning with Azerbaijan. Human Rights Watch and the United Nations reports that Azerbaijan has continued and worsening problems with censorship of media, speech; detention of journalists, human rights defenders, activists, and other political prisoners; forced evictions, religious oppression, and other major human rights violations.

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Written Statement of
Stephen Majzun

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS, MILITARY, &
INTERNATIONAL AFFIARS, &
CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

February 12, 2014, 8:30AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 312

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To: Chair Takai, Vice Chair Ito, and Members of the Committee
Re: **Testimony in Opposition to H.R. NO. 9**

Aloha Honorable Chair, Vice-Chair, and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit the following comments reflecting my **strong opposition** to **H.R. NO. 9**.

This resolution is inherently flawed. It begins with an arbitrary statement of purpose, and continues to misrepresent the truth.

This resolution's purpose is to urge the administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. In fact, the United States, the European Union, The United Nation, the Minsk Group, and other international bodies including Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh themselves are continuously attempting to negotiate a settlement to this conflict. Azerbaijan, however, is the one party to this conflict that has continuously rejected any settlement or negotiation that any international body or the United States has facilitated.

Moreover, since 1998, the United States has been rendering official assistance to Nagorno-Karabakh to help overcome the consequences of the devastating aggression by Azerbaijan. In House Report 112-494 , the Committee of Appropriations noted

“As this process moves forward, the Committee continues to urge all parties to refrain from threats of violence and to support confidence- building measures that facilitate interaction among the parties, in order to address regional security and people-to-people programs. The Committee expects that funds provided will address ongoing humanitarian needs and the plight of the victims of the conflict, including at least \$5,000,000 for humanitarian and development programs in Nagorno-Karabakh.”

This resolution refers to Azerbaijan's partnership and cooperation with the United States to fight against international terrorism. During the Karabakh war, between 1993 and 1994, Azerbaijan used its connections with Islamic terrorist networks to hire thousands of Afghan mujahideens and other Islamic mercenaries linked to various international terrorist organizations to fight against Armenia and Karabakh.

This resolution continues to make reference to Azerbaijan's rapidly growing economy as an asset to the United States. In reality, Azerbaijan remains one of the most corrupt and despotic countries in the world. According to independent reports by international human rights watchdogs including Transparency International, despite its massive oil resources, "Azerbaijan is plagued by endemic corruption that prevents ordinary Azerbaijanis from sharing in their country's natural wealth and is a significant barrier to Azerbaijan's development." I find this very fact unsettling, and do not see how this resolution or others creating a partnership between Azerbaijan and Hawai'i can benefit Hawai'i and its people in any way.

Similarly, this resolution mentions the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway project initiated by Azerbaijan as contributing to the prosperity of Azerbaijan and the United States' regional allies. In reality, due to the political nature of this project, both the United States and the European Union have refused to fund the project. In fact, in 2005 and 2006, our US Congress adopted the "South Caucasus Integration and Open Railroads Act" that prohibited the United States' assistance to the BTK railroad because "the proposed railroad specifically bypasses Armenia and serves to isolate Armenia from East-West commercial corridors." The act also continues to explain that Azerbaijan's actions serve to undermine and avoid a just solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and potentially destabilize the region.

This resolution is flawed in so many ways that it should be opposed if not because of its misinformation, but for its inherent connection to a despotic regime we share little commonality with. Azerbaijan continues to acquire weapons and continues its threats to Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh to restart the war. Azerbaijan is the main impediment to the region's security, peace, cooperation, and to the settlement to this conflict.

I ask that you please oppose this resolution. The sides should not be busy re-writing history or using politics to gain an advantage, but instead should be focusing on ways to achieve lasting peace and security in the region.

Thank you,

Stephen Majzun
1636 Piikoi St, # 204
Honolulu, HI 96822
smajzun@gmail.com

Samir Novruzov
US Citizen, Member of Azerbaijanian American Cultural Alliance

Committee on Veterans, Military and International Affairs, and
Culture and the Arts

February 12, 2014 at 8:30 a.m.

HR9

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Rashad Ajalov
Subcontracts Engineer
Saipem inc.
Houston, TX 77094

February 12, 2014 at 8.30am

HR9

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Burcu Gozal
Geological Engineer

February 12, 2014 at 8:30 a.m.

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Tarlan Khalilli

Clinical Expert at IRHYTHM Technologies

February 12, 2014 at 8:30 a.m.

HR9

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Hajar Khochberova
Volunteer
Azerbaijani American Cultural Alliance / AACA

Committee on Veterans, Military and International Affairs, and
Culture and the Arts

February 12, 2014 at 8:30 a.m.

HR9

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Anna Velieva

Committee on Veterans, Military and International Affairs, and
Culture and the Arts

February 12, 2014 at 8:30 a.m.

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Written Statement of
Ani Martirosian Menon

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS, MILITARY, &
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, &
CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

February 12, 2014, 8:30AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 312

IN OPPOSITION TO:

H.R. NO. 9 Urging the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

To: Chair Takai, Vice Chair Ito, and Members of the Committee
Re: **Testimony in Opposition to H.R. NO. 9**

Aloha Honorable Chair, Vice-Chair, and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit the following comments reflecting my **strong opposition** to **H.R. NO. 9**.

This resolution is inherently flawed. It begins with an arbitrary statement of purpose, and continues to misrepresent the truth.

This resolution's purpose is to urge the administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. In fact, the United States, the European Union, The United Nation, the Minsk Group, and other international bodies including Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh (NKR) themselves are continuously attempting to negotiate a settlement to this conflict. **Azerbaijan, however, is the one party to this conflict that has continuously rejected any settlement or negotiation that any international body or the United States has facilitated.**

Moreover, since 1998, the United States has been rendering official assistance to NKR to help overcome the consequences of the devastating aggression by Azerbaijan. In House Report 112-494, the Committee of Appropriations noted

“As this process moves forward, the Committee continues to urge all parties to refrain from threats of violence and to support confidence- building measures that facilitate interaction among the parties, in order to address regional security and people-to-people programs. The Committee expects that funds provided will address ongoing humanitarian needs and the plight of the victims of the conflict, including at least \$5,000,000 for humanitarian and development programs in Nagorno-Karabakh.”

This resolution refers to Azerbaijan's partnership and cooperation with the United States to fight against international terrorism. During the Karabakh war, between 1993 and 1994, Azerbaijan used its connections with Islamic terrorist networks to hire thousands of Afghan mujahedeen and other Islamic mercenaries linked to various international terrorist organizations to fight against Armenia and Karabakh.¹

This resolution continues to make reference to Azerbaijan's rapidly growing economy as an asset to the United States. **In reality, Azerbaijan remains one of the most corrupt and despotic countries in the world.** According to independent reports by international human rights watchdogs including Transparency International, despite its massive oil resources, "Azerbaijan is plagued by endemic corruption that prevents ordinary Azerbaijanis from sharing in their country's natural wealth and is a significant barrier to Azerbaijan's development." I find this very fact unsettling, and do not see how this resolution or others creating a partnership between Azerbaijan and Hawai'i can benefit Hawai'i and its people in any way.

Similarly, this resolution mentions the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway project initiated by Azerbaijan as contributing to the prosperity of Azerbaijan and the United States' regional allies. **In reality, due to the political nature of this project, both the United States and the European Union have refused to fund the project.** In fact, in 2005 and 2006, our US Congress adopted the "South Caucasus Integration and Open Railroads Act" that prohibited the United States' assistance to the BTK railroad because "the proposed railroad specifically bypasses Armenia and serves to isolate Armenia from East-West commercial corridors." The act also continues to explain that Azerbaijan's actions serve to undermine and avoid a just solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and potentially destabilize the region.

This resolution is flawed in so many ways that it should be opposed if not because of its misinformation, but for its inherent connection to a despotic regime we share little commonality with. Azerbaijan continues to acquire weapons and continues its threats to Armenia and NKR to restart the war. Azerbaijan is the main impediment to the region's security, peace, cooperation, and to the settlement to this conflict.

I ask that you please oppose this resolution. The sides should not be busy re-writing history or using politics to gain an advantage, but instead should be focusing on ways to achieve lasting peace and security in the region. Should you have any questions, I am available to meet with any interested committee member or legislator.

Thank you,
Ani Martirosian Menon
animartirosian@gmail.com
(808) 429-4490

¹ United Nations' General Assembly dated August 29th in which the Assembly reports a filing of a letter from the Deputy Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Armenia addressed to the Special Rapporteur of the Commission on Human Rights on the question of the use of mercenaries. In it, the Deputy Minister references the Washington Post and many other sources as having reported on Azerbaijan's use of mujahedeen mercenaries in the NKR war.
<http://www.un.org/documents/ga/docs/50/plenary/a50-390add1.htm>

Written Statement of
Jeff Malins

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS, MILITARY, &
INTERNATIONAL AFFIARS, &
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Aloha Honorable Chair, Vice-Chair, and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit the following comments reflecting my **strong opposition** to **H.R. NO. 9**.

The Republic of Azerbaijan is a totalitarian regime with a terrible human rights record and a long history of abuse and subjugation of the Armenian population of the Nagorno-Karabakh region. This bill, in its efforts to advocate a “strategic partnership”, presents an extremely one-sided view of the conflict and an entirely pro-Azerbaijan perspective... *as if* it was drafted by Azerbaijan itself for it’s state-run, generally anti-western, media.

“Political settlement” as expressed by this resolution means nothing more than a complete acquiescence to the Azeri position. Preserving “territorial integrity” is essentially a euphemism for complete expulsion at best, or an even less humane form of elimination at worst, of Armenians in territory claimed by Azerbaijan.

The Nagorno-Karabakh conflict is very complex. To take such a one-sided position without noting the fact that the majority of the (still continuing) aggression in the conflict is perpetrated by Azerbaijan, and that the Armenians in the region are merely seeking peaceful self-determination, would represent a major set-back for a true negotiated settlement that respects the human rights of both sides. While the Azeri ruling elite do not have such respect, the State of Hawaii should.

I ask that you please oppose this resolution.

Thank you,

Jeff Malins

1212 Nuuanu Ave, #2601
Honolulu, HI 96817
jmalins0@gmail.com

Roxanne Kamalu

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 10, 2014 12:33 PM
To: vmitestimony
Cc: jwebster@chaminade.edu
Subject: Submitted testimony for HR9 on Feb 12, 2014 08:30AM

HR9

Submitted on: 2/10/2014

Testimony for VMI on Feb 12, 2014 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
John Webster	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: I have just recently become familiar with some of the complex issues surrounding the subject of this Resolution - HR 9. It is quite likely that most of the members of the Hawaii State House are understandably, equally unaware of many of the issues related to HR 9. With genuine appreciation for the motivation of the House, this is not a resolution that can be taken so lightly and without deep understanding of the actual history of these matters. Respectfully, this is simply not a matter warranting the approval of our state House. I strongly Oppose Hr 9.

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

House Resolution 9
Steven Nordell in favor
2/10/2014, 2:24 PM

Most honorable chairs and committee members,

I believe it is crucial that the United States of America strengthen its efforts to help with the resolution of the Nagorno-Karabakh War and the needless violence that is a result of this dispute between Armenia/Nagorno-Karabakh, and the Azerbaijan. Tensions between these two factions have been evident for over 50 years. In the last 5 years, however, it seems that the possibility of an all-out war breaking out is significantly higher even with the signing of a ceasefire by both sides.

If we do not do as much as we can to help these two factions resolve their differences and stop the ongoing conflict, it may take another 50 years for them to come to an agreement if that at all. The worst of the violence was from 1992-1993 only ending because of the signing off a cease fire in 1994. Although in recent years there have been over 1000 violations of the cease fire. Most of these are unauthorized fire and consequently return fire.

The United Nations have done much in attempting to quell the fighting but unfortunately, for the most part, they have been willfully ignored regardless of the democratically supported resolutions and orders that have been passed.

I believe that now is the time for action from America. To intervene is a sensible, understanding, and diplomatic manor to effectively and efficiently end this conflict. The laying down of arms and benefits of stability and growth to both sides as a result of this will show themselves quite soon thereafter. Please do not ignore this golden opportunity to help these two nations on the way to peace.

Orkhan Imanov
L&D Consultant
BP America Inc.

February 12, 2014 at 8:30 a.m.

HR9

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Therefore, I kindly ask you to join the other states and urge the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia – Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

Narmin Karimova
Unemployed

February 12, 2014 at 8:30 a.m.

HR9

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Roxanne Kamalu

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 10, 2014 2:10 PM
To: vmitestimony
Cc: michaelpetrosian@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HR9 on Feb 12, 2014 08:30AM

HR9

Submitted on: 2/10/2014

Testimony for VMI on Feb 12, 2014 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Michael Petrosian	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: The Azerbaijan govt in 2013 flew Takai and Cabanilla to Baku for an all expenses paid trip. Fast forward a few months and we have HR9 which reads like an Azeri press release riddled with misleading statements and half truths. The Hawaii State Legislature should never introduce resolutions without doing at least some bare minimum research and fact checking. Consider this: The Republic of Nagorno Karabakh is an integral part of historic Armenia that was arbitrarily carved out in 1921 by Joseph Stalin and placed under Soviet Azerbaijani administration, but with autonomous status, as part of the Soviet divideand- conquer strategy in the Caucasus. Nagorno Karabakh has never been part of an independent Azerbaijani state. Declassified Central Intelligence Agency reports confirm that Nagorno Karabakh is historically Armenian and maintained even more autonomy than the rest of Armenia through the centuries. 1 To force Christian Armenians to be ruled by Muslim Azerbaijan would be to sanction Joseph Stalin's policies and ensure continued instability in the region. During seven decades of Soviet Azerbaijani rule, the Armenian population of Nagorno Karabakh was subjected to discriminatory policies aimed at its removal. Even after these efforts to force Armenians from their land, Nagorno Karabakh's pre-war population in 1988 was over 80% Armenian. In the late 1980's, the United States welcomed Nagorno Karabakh's historic challenge to the Soviet system and its leadership in sparking democratic movements in the Baltics and throughout the Soviet empire. Following a peaceful demand by Karabakh's legislative body to reunite the region with Armenia in 1988, Azerbaijan launched an ethnic cleansing campaign against individuals of Armenian descent with pogroms against civilians in several towns, including Sumgait and Baku. On September 2, 1991, the people of Nagorno Karabakh declared independence from the Soviet Union and became the Nagorno Karabakh Republic. On December 10, 1991, Nagorno Karabakh held an independence referendum in which 82% of all voters participated and 99% voted for independence. In response, Azerbaijan launched an all-out war against the Nagorno Karabakh Republic, targeting civilians and recruiting Islamic extremist mujahideen from Afghanistan and Chechnya to join the Azerbaijani army against Christian Armenians. 2) Nagorno Karabakh's pivotal role in ending the Soviet threat to America The people of Nagorno Karabakh, in 1988, despite great risks, were the first to rise up against the Soviet Union, to right the wrongs imposed by Josef Stalin, and to demand their right to live under a government of their own choosing - the very same right that we cherish as Americans. Nagorno Karabakh played a vital role in sparking the democracy movement, bringing about an end to the Soviet threat to America and to decades of dictatorial rule over millions in the USSR and its satellite states. 3) Nagorno Karabakh's commitment to peace Nagorno Karabakh has repeatedly demonstrated its commitment to a peaceful, compromise resolution of the Nagorno

Karabakh conflict. Nagorno Karabakh is a major contributor to efforts of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe to reach an equitable and lasting peace. Unlike Azerbaijan, the Nagorno Karabakh Republic Opposing the OSCE's repeated calls to pull back snipers, although both Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh support the call. 4) Azerbaijan's threat to regional stability Azerbaijan's position - unchanged for more than 15 years - is to force Nagorno Karabakh under Stalin's sanctioned Azerbaijani administration, although Nagorno Karabakh has never been part of an independent Azerbaijan. The Azerbaijani government seeks to pressure the U.S. and the international community to ratify Joseph Stalin's divide-and conquer gerrymandering by returning to a failed system of foreign rule over free peoples. In pursuit of this policy, Azerbaijan has taken reckless steps that have contributed to instability in a region of strategic and economic importance to the United States - including:

- Threatening to commit terrorist acts and shoot down any civilian aircraft flying to Karabakh.
- Repeatedly threatening to renew aggression, with President Ilham Aliyev stating on numerous occasions that "only the first stage of the war is over."
- Pardoning and promoting an axe-murderer in 2012, because he killed an Armenian in his sleep during a NATO Partnership for Peace course in Budapest, which was roundly criticized around the globe including by President Obama.
- Repeatedly rejecting the United States and OSCE Minsk Group's calls to pull back snipers, even though Armenia and Karabakh have agreed to do so.
- Attacking and killing soldiers on the internationally recognized border between Armenia and Azerbaijan on numerous occasions, hundreds of miles away from the Karabakh border, even hours before Secretary of State Hillary Clinton arrived in Armenia in June 2012.
- Exponentially increasing its military budget, which now surpasses Armenia's entire budget.
- Demolishing an over 1,000-year-old sacred Armenian cemetery with thousands of gravestones, which was condemned by the European Parliament in 2006 and documented by the American Association for the Advancement of Science.
- Obstructing the peace process by walking away from their agreements at the 2001 Key West Summit, undermining the hopes for a settlement at the 2006 Rambouillet Summit, and insisting on 9 last minute amendments to the proposed agreement, which sabotaged the Kazan Summit in June 2011. Declassified Central Intelligence Agency reports confirm that:

- Nagorno Karabakh is historically Armenian
- Nagorno Karabakh, throughout the Soviet era, always maintained a legitimate claim to be reunited with Armenia. The U.S. government has consistently taken steps in support of Nagorno Karabakh:

- In July 1988, the U.S. Senate unanimously passed Amendment 2690 to the Foreign Operations bill, which called on the Soviet government to "respect the legitimate aspirations of the Armenian people" petitioning for Karabakh independence.
- The U.S. Senate, in November of 1989, adopted S.J.Res.178, expressing United States support for "the fundamental rights and the aspirations of the people of Nagorno-Karabagh for a peaceful and fair settlement."
- With violence against Armenians continuing, the Senate passed S.Res. 128 in May 1991, which stated, "Soviet and Azerbaijani forces have destroyed Armenian villages and depopulated Armenian areas in and around Nagorno-Karabakh in violation of internationally recognized human rights" and called "for the end to the blockades and other uses of force and intimidation directed against Armenia and Nagorno- Karabakh."
- In 1992, the U.S. passed Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act, which limits assistance to Azerbaijan until it takes steps to "cease all blockades and other offensive uses of force against Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh."
- The U.S. State Department's representative to the OSCE "Minsk Group" regularly visits Nagorno Karabakh, which is an official party to the peace process, and consults with its democratically elected leaders.
- The U.S. Government, over Azerbaijan's protests, has provided direct assistance to Nagorno Karabakh since 1998. Since the end of the Soviet Union, a new generation in Nagorno Karabakh has grown up in freedom, under a democratic government of its own choosing. Forcing free citizens to live under an authoritarian, foreign Azerbaijani regime - now a hereditary monarchy - would undermine years of democratic progress and destabilize the region for generations.

6) Nagorno Karabakh's commitment to democracy A de facto independent state, the Nagorno Karabakh Republic is a country of citizens committed to the values of freedom, democracy and respect for human rights. Since declaring independence in 1991, Nagorno Karabakh has successfully conducted five parliamentary and five presidential elections - that have been praised by

international observers as free, fair and transparent. In the last parliamentary elections held in May 2010, an independent American-Dutch monitoring delegation sponsored by the Public International Law and Policy Group (PILPG) found the elections to be “free, fair and transparent” and noted that there are “strong indications that Nagorno Karabakh continues to make strong progress in establishing and sustaining a healthy and sustainable democracy.” The PILPG monitoring group for the Karabakh

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 10, 2014 2:16 PM
To: vmitestimony
Cc: michaelpetrosian@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HR13 on Feb 12, 2014 08:30AM

HR13

Submitted on: 2/10/2014

Testimony for VMI on Feb 12, 2014 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Michael Petrosian	Individual	Oppose	No

Comments: Other than an expenses paid caviar diplomacy trip paid by the Azerbaijan govt, has any research or fact finding been done by sponsors of this resolution? There is an overwhelming amount of documentation and testimony including reports by our own CIA refuting the statements made in HR13 regarding the Nagorno conflict. Our State Legislature can do better than this.

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From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 10, 2014 3:10 PM
To: vmitestimony
Cc: emin.hajiyev@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HR9 on Feb 12, 2014 08:30AM

HR9

Submitted on: 2/10/2014

Testimony for VMI on Feb 12, 2014 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Emin Hajiyev	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Thank you !!!

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Roxanne Kamalu

From: lhajibayova@icloud.com
Sent: Sunday, February 09, 2014 9:42 PM
To: Rep. Ken Ito
Subject: Support HR9 and HR13

Lala Hajibayova
2640 Dole St. Apt. E256
Honolulu, HI 96822-2334

February 10, 2014

Ken Ito

Dear Representative Ito:

I join Azeri-Americans, members of Azerbaijani-American Council (AAC), to call for a bipartisan support to Resolutions 9 and 13 recently introduced in the Hawaii House of Representatives. HR 9 urges the U.S. government to strengthen efforts in facilitating a peaceful settlement of the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. HR 13 commemorates the 22nd anniversary of the Khojaly Massacre, the first largest atrocity against civilians in Europe since World War II.

In 1991-94, the post-Soviet Eurasian nations of Armenia and Azerbaijan fought a war over the Azerbaijani territory of Nagorno-Karabakh. The conflict took nearly 30,000 lives and resulted in the Armenian military occupation of the fifth of Azerbaijan and the expulsion of close to 800,000 Azerbaijani civilians from their homes. The UN Security Council resolutions 822, 853, 874, 884, which called for immediate and unconditional withdrawal of the Armenian forces and the return of Azerbaijani refugees, remain unfulfilled by Armenia. The ongoing occupation and the plight of Azerbaijani refugees are serious obstacles to peace in the South Caucasus thereby directly affecting U.S. interests in that region.

Disturbing images of ethnic cleansing committed 22 years ago by Armenian forces with support of Russia's 366th infantry regiment in the town of Khojaly continue to roil the memory of Azerbaijani people. 613 civilians, including 106 women and 63 children, were tortured, killed and mutilated with extreme brutality by the Armenian forces in what Human Rights Watch described as the largest massacre of the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. As the U.S. mediates a peaceful settlement of this conflict, recognition and remembrance of the horrific tragedy in Khojaly is an important step towards healing and reconciliation between the Armenian and Azerbaijani people.

For the past two decades since its independence, Azerbaijan has been a strategic ally of the United States in the vital region between Russia and Iran. In response to the 9/11 attacks, Azerbaijan has immediately opened its airspace and airports in support of the U.S.-led operations in Afghanistan. In addition, Azerbaijanis took part alongside our troops in both Iraq and Afghanistan missions, and the country remains a key U.S. partner in ensuring the global energy security.

Please, support HR 9 and 13 for the sake of advancing humanity, peace and justice.

Sincerely,

Lala Hajibayova

Chair and Committee,

I write in support of House Resolution 9 to find peaceful accords in the Armenian-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabach conflict.

After two decades of fighting, displacement and death of women and children, and arrested economic development on both sides of the conflict, it is necessary for the United States of America to help find peace accords.

The United Nations Security Council has declared the need for Armenian forces to withdraw from occupied territories in the Republic of Azerbaijan. The Organization of Islamic Cooperation and the Non Aligned Movement have recognized that peace between these two nations should take place with the maintenance of the integrity of sovereignty and territory of Azerbaijan.

The nation of Azerbaijan has worked diligently with the United States in the fight against terrorism, drug and human trafficking, and the proliferation of weapons of mass destruction. Azerbaijan also plays an important role in the United States interests in gas lines, distribution routes and other important issues in the region.

Finally, despite setbacks brought about by conflict with Armenia, Azerbaijan leaders have been successful in rebuilding their national economy, becoming an important trade partner in the South Caucasus region. In other words Azerbaijan is an example of the success democracy and self-determination have on economic development.

It is for these reasons I support HR 9. The people of Azerbaijan need the help of the United States to settle remaining political and military disputes with Armenia. They need to enjoy freedom and the pursuit of happiness as we Americans enjoy every day of our life. The

United States should interview in much needed dialogue so that Azerbaijan and Armenia can co- exist in peace and god-willing with future partnerships, beyond military dispute and further suffering by the people with their borders.

Thank you very much for your time and the opportunity to testify before you today.

Windor Kant

SAFIYE EMBEL
STUDENT
TURKIC AMERICAN ALLIANCE

Committee on Veterans, Military and International Affairs, and
Culture and the Arts

February 12, 2014 at 8:30 a.m.

HR9

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Nijat Ahmadov
Drilling Engineer
BP America Inc.

Committee on Veterans, Military and International Affairs, and
Culture and the Arts

February 12, 2014 at 8:30 a.m.

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Nargiz Ahmadova

Committee on Veterans, Military and International Affairs, and
Culture and the Arts

February 12, 2014 at 8:30 a.m.

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Therefore, I kindly ask you to join the other states and urge the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia – Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

Written Statement of
Zubin Adrian Menon

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS, MILITARY, &
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, &
CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

February 12, 2014, 8:30AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 312

IN OPPOSITION TO:

H.R. NO. 9 Urging the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

To: Chair Takai, Vice Chair Ito, and Members of the Committee
Re: **Testimony in Opposition to H.R. NO. 9**

Aloha Honorable Chair, Vice-Chair, and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit comments in **strong opposition** to **H.R. NO. 9**.

I have become very familiar with Armenia's troubled history of dispossession and oppression through my Armenian American wife, Ani Martirosian Menon, and through my own studies as a history major at the University of British Columbia. This has made me sensitive to the inappropriateness of this rather strange resolution and the likelihood that it will be used to strengthen a false representation of historical facts about the relationship between Azerbaijan and Armenia.

It is my understanding that the United States, the European Union, the United Nations, the Minsk Group, and other international bodies including Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh themselves have been attempting to negotiate a settlement to the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. **Azerbaijan has continuously rejected any settlement or negotiation.** Yet this resolution falsely casts Azerbaijan in the role of mediator and facilitator of a settlement.

It is worth noting that since 1998, the United States has been rendering official assistance to Nagorno-Karabakh to help overcome the consequences of the devastating aggression by Azerbaijan.

This resolution also refers to Azerbaijan's partnership and cooperation with the United States to oppose international terrorism. This flies in the face of the fact that during the Karabakh war, between 1993 and 1994, **Azerbaijan used its connections with Islamic terrorist networks to hire thousands of Afghan mujahideens and other Islamic mercenaries** linked to various international terrorist organizations to fight against Armenia and Karabakh.

<http://www.un.org/documents/ga/docs/50/plenary/a50-390add1.htm>

This resolution makes reference to Azerbaijan's rapidly growing economy as an asset to the United States. In reality, Transparency International notes that despite its massive oil resources, "Azerbaijan is plagued by endemic corruption that prevents ordinary Azerbaijanis from sharing in their country's natural wealth and is a significant barrier to Azerbaijan's development." **I do not see how forming ties with such an economy can benefit Hawai'i or its people in any way.**

This resolution mentions the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway project initiated by Azerbaijan as contributing to the prosperity of Azerbaijan and the United States' regional allies. **In reality, both the United States and the European Union have refused to fund this project.** In fact, in 2005 and 2006, the US Congress introduced the "South Caucasus Integration and Open Railroads Act" that prohibited United States' assistance to the BTK railroad because "the proposed railroad specifically bypasses Armenia and serves to isolate Armenia from East-West commercial corridors."

As an avid student of history, it is hard to see how a resolution that distorts history and contemporary reality in so many ways serves Hawai'i's interests. Given the islands' own history of dispossession and occupation and the ongoing struggle for sovereignty by Native Hawaiians, the resolution is at the very least ill-advised and certainly at odds with Hawai'i's culture of aloha.

Please do not proceed with this resolution. At best, it will do nothing to help achieve lasting peace and security in the region. At worst, it can, and will be used to rewrite history and deepen old wrongs.

Thank you.

Zubin Adrian Menon, MBA
zmenon@gmail.com
(808) 383-1466

[elvin amiraslanov]
[student in Washington DC]
[Which organization, if applicable]

Committee on Veterans, Military and International Affairs, and
Culture and the Arts

February 12, 2014 at 8:30 a.m.

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[Emil Babayev]
[Student in Washington DC]
[Which organization, if applicable]

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Culture and the Arts

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Roxanne Kamalu

From: kerem.bolukbasi@ge.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 7:37 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Kerem Bolukbasi
314 Newfort Place
Greenville, SC 29607-5985

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

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Therefore, as a member of Azerbaijani-American community, I kindly ask you to join the other states and urge the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia - Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

Sincerely,

Kerem Bolukbasi
2039799815

[isbandiyar hasanov]
[Public administration student in Washington, DC]
[Which organization, if applicable]

Committee on Veterans, Military and International Affairs, and
Culture and the Arts

February 12, 2014 at 8:30 a.m.

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[konul hasanova]
[student in Washington, DC]
[Which organization, if applicable]

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[nigar hasanova]
[Public administration student in Washington, DC]
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Roxanne Kamalu

From: arslan86@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 7:37 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Arslan Ibrahimi
1242A, Milvia Street,
Berkeley, CA 94709-1933

February 11, 2014

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Working closely with the US Transportation Command and the US Air Mobility Command, Azerbaijan has aided important over-flight clearance, medical evacuation flights as well as landing and refueling operations for US and NATO efforts supporting the ISAF.

The roots of US-Azerbaijan joint operations run deep; over the years the Azerbaijani military also assisted in American-led efforts in Iraq and in the Balkans.

Azerbaijan is an active participant of international anti-terror efforts.

Azerbaijan and the United States work together to counter nuclear proliferation and narcotics trafficking, and to promote security in the wider Caspian region and beyond. In addition, Azerbaijan's military partnered directly with Oklahoma's National Guard as part of the National Guard State Partnership Program.

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In June 2010, Azerbaijan signed a \$205 million contract with Virginia-based Orbital Sciences Corporation to design, build and deliver a state of the art communications satellite. Azerbaijan successfully launched the satellite in February 2013.

The State Oil Fund of Azerbaijan has invested approximately \$3 billion in the United States, including in the US Treasury, Federal Home Loan Bank, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac bonds, as well as in US corporate debt and equities. In 2012, the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan (SOCAR) established a representative office in Washington, DC, and announced plans to expand its presence elsewhere in the United States.

With the increasing importance of natural gas, a more abundant and more environmentally friendly hydrocarbon, Azerbaijan is working with partners in the region and beyond, including the United States, to expand direct export routes of Caspian natural gas to European markets. The recently announced Trans-Anatolian (TANAP) and Trans-Adriatic (TAP) natural gas pipelines, which are essential for Europe's Southern Gas Corridor, highlight the strategic importance of Azerbaijan's natural resources, including its major Shah Deniz gas field. These pipelines, along with other Azerbaijani Caspian initiatives, strengthen global energy security and cement Azerbaijan's role as a key partner in Europe's energy future.

Therefore, as a member of Azerbaijani-American community, I kindly ask you to join the other states and urge the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia - Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

Sincerely,

Arslan Ibrahim

Ali Ozatalay
Undergraduate Student
Turkish Cultural Center New Jersey

Committee on Veterans, Military and International Affairs, and
Culture and the Arts

February 12, 2014 at 8:30 a.m.

HR9

On May 28, 1918, independent Azerbaijan emerged as the first parliamentary republic in the Muslim world. It was crushed in 1920 by the Bolshevik invasion, yet during its short existence the country became the symbol of the Azerbaijani identity and the nation's aspirations. US President Barack Obama recognized this unique legacy, describing Azerbaijan as "an example for the international community as a first democratic and secular republic in the Muslim world."

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Azerbaijan and the United States enjoy shared values and interests. Both nations are at the forefront in promoting regional security, economic and energy development, diversity and inclusiveness. Under President Ilham Aliyev's leadership, Azerbaijan has emerged as America's reliable regional partner at one of the world's most unique and critical crossroads.

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Therefore, I kindly ask you to join the other states and urge the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia – Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

Nadir Shafiyev

Committee on Veterans, Military and International Affairs, and
Culture and the Arts

February 12, 2014 at 8:30 a.m.

HR9

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Therefore, I kindly request you and your colleagues to join the other states and urge the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia – Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

Roxanne Kamalu

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 10, 2014 7:35 PM
To: vmitestimony
Cc: ilgar138@yahoo.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HR9 on Feb 12, 2014 08:30AM

HR9

Submitted on: 2/10/2014

Testimony for VMI on Feb 12, 2014 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Ilgar Azizov	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Thank you!

Please note that testimony submitted less than 24 hours prior to the hearing, improperly identified, or directed to the incorrect office, may not be posted online or distributed to the committee prior to the convening of the public hearing.

Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

Roxanne Kamalu

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 6:24 AM
To: vmitestimony
Cc: muzaffer.a.erdogan@gmail.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HR9 on Feb 12, 2014 08:30AM

HR9

Submitted on: 2/11/2014

Testimony for VMI on Feb 12, 2014 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Muzaffer Erdogan	Individual	Support	No

Comments: THANK YOU for your recognition

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Roxanne Kamalu

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Monday, February 10, 2014 8:02 PM
To: vmitestimony
Cc: orxan_mustafa@hotmail.com
Subject: *Submitted testimony for HR9 on Feb 12, 2014 08:30AM*

HR9

Submitted on: 2/10/2014

Testimony for VMI on Feb 12, 2014 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Orkhan Mammadov	Individual	Support	No

Comments:

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Roxanne Kamalu

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 6:54 AM
To: vmitestimony
Cc: murad.azer@yahoo.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HR9 on Feb 12, 2014 08:30AM

HR9

Submitted on: 2/11/2014

Testimony for VMI on Feb 12, 2014 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Azar Muradov	Individual	Support	No

Comments: Thank you for your interest in this subject.

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Roxanne Kamalu

From: mailinglist@capitol.hawaii.gov
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 3:17 AM
To: vmitestimony
Cc: selmoff@icloud.com
Subject: Submitted testimony for HR9 on Feb 12, 2014 08:30AM

HR9

Submitted on: 2/11/2014

Testimony for VMI on Feb 12, 2014 08:30AM in Conference Room 312

Submitted By	Organization	Testifier Position	Present at Hearing
Alexander Selimov	Individual	Support	No

Comments: THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE UNITED STATES SHOULD STRENGTHEN ITS EFFORTS IN FACILITATING A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT TO THE ARMENIA-AZERBAIJAN NAGORNO-KARABAKH CONFLICT. Thank you for considering this measure and hoping it will pass. Sincerely, Alexander

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Do not reply to this email. This inbox is not monitored. For assistance please email webmaster@capitol.hawaii.gov

Turkan Shafiyeva

Committee on Veterans, Military and International Affairs, and
Culture and the Arts

February 12, 2014 at 8:30 a.m.

HR9

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Therefore, I kindly request you and your colleagues to join the other states and urge the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia – Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

Written Statement of
TATYANA CERULLO

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS, MILITARY, &
INTERNATIONAL AFFIARS, &
CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

February 12, 2014, 8:30AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 312

IN OPPOSITION TO:

H.R. NO. 9 Urging the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

To: Chair Takai, Vice Chair Ito, and Members of the Committee
Re: **Testimony in Opposition to H.R. NO. 9**

Aloha Honorable Chair, Vice-Chair, and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit the following comments reflecting my **strong opposition** to **H.R. NO. 9**.

This resolution is inherently flawed. It begins with an arbitrary statement of purpose, and continues to misrepresent the truth.

This resolution's purpose is to urge the administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. In fact, the United States, the European Union, The United Nation, the Minsk Group, and other international bodies including Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh themselves are continuously attempting to negotiate a settlement to this conflict. Azerbaijan, however, is the one party to this conflict that has continuously rejected any settlement or negotiation that any international body or the United States has facilitated.

Moreover, since 1998, the United States has been rendering official assistance to Nagorno-Karabakh to help overcome the consequences of the devastating aggression by Azerbaijan. In House Report 112-494, the Committee of Appropriations noted:

As this process moves forward, the Committee continues to urge all parties to refrain from threats of violence and to support confidence-building measures that facilitate interaction among the parties, in order to address regional security and people-to-people programs. The Committee expects that funds provided will address ongoing

humanitarian needs and the plight of the victims of the conflict, including at least \$5,000,000 for humanitarian and development programs in Nagorno-Karabakh.

This resolution refers to Azerbaijan's partnership and cooperation with the United States to fight against international terrorism. During the Karabakh war, between 1993 and 1994, Azerbaijan used its connections with Islamic terrorist networks to hire thousands of Afghan mujahideens and other Islamic mercenaries linked to various international terrorist organizations to fight against Armenia and Karabakh.

This resolution continues to make reference to Azerbaijan's rapidly growing economy as an asset to the United States. In reality, Azerbaijan remains one of the most corrupt and despotic countries in the world. According to independent reports by international human rights watchdogs including Transparency International, despite its massive oil resources, "Azerbaijan is plagued by endemic corruption that prevents ordinary Azerbaijanis from sharing in their country's natural wealth and is a significant barrier to Azerbaijan's development." I find this very fact unsettling, and do not see how this resolution or others creating a partnership between Azerbaijan and Hawai'i can benefit Hawai'i and its people in any way.

Similarly, this resolution mentions the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway project initiated by Azerbaijan as contributing to the prosperity of Azerbaijan and the United States' regional allies. In reality, due to the political nature of this project, both the United States and the European Union have refused to fund the project. In fact, in 2005 and 2006, our US Congress adopted the "South Caucasus Integration and Open Railroads Act" that prohibited the United States' assistance to the BTK railroad because "the proposed railroad specifically bypasses Armenia and serves to isolate Armenia from East-West commercial corridors." The act also continues to explain that Azerbaijan's actions serve to undermine and avoid a just solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and potentially destabilize the region.

This resolution is flawed in so many ways that it should be opposed if not because of its misinformation, but for its inherent connection to a despotic regime with which we share little commonality. Azerbaijan continues to acquire weapons and continues its threats to Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh to restart the war. Azerbaijan is the main impediment to the region's security, peace, cooperation, and to the settlement to this conflict.

I ask that you please oppose this resolution. The sides should not be busy re-writing history or using politics to gain an advantage, but instead should be focusing on ways to achieve lasting peace and security in the region.

Thank you,

Tatyana Cerullo and Robin Van Niekerk
60 N. Beretania St., 209
Honolulu, Hawaii 96817
808-722-6816

Written Statement of
Vivian Jerian

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS, MILITARY, &
INTERNATIONAL AFFIARS, &
CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

February 12, 2014, 8:30AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 312

IN OPPOSITION TO:

H.R. NO. 9 Urging the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

To: Chair Takai, Vice Chair Ito, and Members of the Committee
Re: **Testimony in Opposition to H.R. NO. 9**

Thank you for the opportunity to submit the following comments reflecting my **strong opposition** to **H.R. NO. 9**.

As a concerned citizen of Hawai'i, I don't understand why our legislature is wasting taxpayer money entertaining resolutions that have nothing to do with the Islands or with the Aloha spirit. Given Hawaii's own history of colonization and dispossession, it is particularly galling to see our state legislature being used to rewrite the history of another dispossessed community. This resolution does not sit well with me and I ask that you oppose this resolutions.

A simple point I wish to make is that this resolution is flawed in so many ways that it should be opposed if not because of its misinformation, but for its inherent connection to a despotic regime we share little commonality with here in the Aloha State.

I ask that you please oppose this resolution. The sides should not be busy re-writing history or using politics to gain an advantage, but instead should be focusing on ways to achieve lasting peace and security in the region.

Thank you,

Vivian Jerian

Written Statement of
Arthur Martirosian

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS, MILITARY, &
INTERNATIONAL AFFIARS, &
CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

February 12, 2014, 8:30AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 312

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To: Chair Takai, Vice Chair Ito, and Members of the Committee
Re: **Testimony in Opposition to H.R. NO. 9**

Honorable members of the committee my name is Arthur Martirosian and I am a local business owner who has lived, studied and worked and created jobs in the Waianae coast area and had the fortune to live in Hawaii for past 15 years. I am testifying in regards to House Resolution 9.

In reviewing HR9, I have found this resolution missing facts and being extremely one sided and I ask that it not get passed committee. Where I agree that there must be a peaceful resolution to the Nagorno-Karabagh issue, one must look at both sides in determining who in reality wishes for peace and which side is actually attempting to facilitate a political settlement.

Since the cessation of conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan, Azerbaijan has continuously violated the ceasefire on thousands and thousands of occasions. In that vein, I would like to present just a few examples to make my point clear. As early as Feb. 8, 2014 it was reported by news.am that "Azerbaijan continues violating ceasefire despite the calls of the OSCE Minsk Group Co-Chairs to maintain the Olympic truce." This incident was caused by the Azeri forces firing on the Tavush region, which is primarily a farming village within Armenia. The reason for these provocative actions is an attempt to garner a larger reaction from Armenian and Karabagh units so Azerbaijan can escalate the situation. Furthermore a report released on Jan. 14th showed that in 2013 Azerbaijan had violated the ceasefire and fired into Armenia's Tavush

region 1,600 times, this is not counting other areas Azerbaijan shares borders with Armenia or Nagorno-Karabagh. Soldiers are not the only ones in their sights; Armenpress reported on January 24th 2014 a 16 year old girl was wounded by an Azeri sniper firing towards the Armenian boarder. These are just a few examples of what Azerbaijan's idea of peace is.

I believe US Representative Brad Sherman stated this issue the best, after the death of yet another Armenian soldier in December at the hands of Azeri snipers Rep. Sherman made the following statement which can be found in his archive: (<http://bradsherman.house.gov/2013/12/>)

“Azerbaijan has yet again shown that it is not serious about establishing peaceful relations with Armenia and Karabagh. Despite the request for a ceasefire during the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) Minsk Group negotiations between Armenia and Azerbaijan, Azeri forces have killed an Armenian soldier, Hrant Poghosyan. The shooting was unprovoked and Armenian forces have respected the request for a ceasefire.

“Azerbaijan's actions continue to harm the cause of peace. Last year, Azerbaijan celebrated a murderer, Ramil Safarov, who violently killed an Armenian soldier during a NATO Partnership for Peace exercise. Azerbaijan and its forces must be held accountable for this latest display of violence towards Armenia and lack of respect for the OSCE's settlement negotiations. I will continue to stand by Artsakh and Armenia in their ongoing quest for peace and security.”

After hearing these facts honorable committee members, how legitimate is the claim that Azerbaijan is looking for peace or even a political settlement after countless violation of the ceasefire and the continuous killing and injuries to both soldiers and civilians alike. How can one pass this HR with a clear conscious of what the actual facts are? And most importantly how is Hawaii benefiting at all by passing such a HR?

I once again state my opposition to this HR. May your conscious be your guide.

Roxanne Kamalu

From: istsea@hotmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 7:42 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

NEVZAT CANKAYA
12602 renton ave s
seattle, WA 98178-3711

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

Dear VMI Committee:

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Therefore, as a member of Azerbaijani-American community, I kindly ask you to join the other states and urge the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia - Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

Sincerely,

NEVZAT CANKAYA
2067725096

Roxanne Kamalu

From: ekremsarper@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 7:47 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Ekrem Sarper
3021 Nicosh Circle, #1309
Falls Church, VA 22042-1234

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

Dear VMI Committee:

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Roxanne Kamalu

From: aozusta@cox.net
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 7:52 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Ahmet Ozusta
8618 Cherry Dr.
Fairfax,, VA 22031-2136

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

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Sincerely,

Ahmet Ozusta
703-573-2677

Roxanne Kamalu

From: nmgunal@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 8:02 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Nezih Gunal
5474 E garford St
Long Beach, CA 90815-3008

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

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Sincerely,

Nezih Gunal
562-986-5791

Roxanne Kamalu

From: rustamovi@hotmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 7:57 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Ismail Rustamov
1915 farrell Ave # B
Redondo Beach, CA 90278-1814

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

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Sincerely,

Ismail Rustamov
3104835462

Roxanne Kamalu

From: monir.kazemi@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 7:42 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Monireh Kazemi
3814 King Lane
San Mateo, CA 94403-4540

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

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Sincerely,

Monireh Kazemi

Roxanne Kamalu

From: zair59@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 7:42 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Rafail Rajabzade
30 notus avenue
Staten Island, NY 10312-3123

February 11, 2014

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Sincerely,

Rafail Rajabzade
6462841714

Roxanne Kamalu

From: timursumer@yahoo.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 7:52 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

timur sumer
2443 Margaret Dr.
Fenton, MI 48430-8842

February 11, 2014

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timur sumer
8102408876

Roxanne Kamalu

From: franksolman@yahoo.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 7:47 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Frank Solman
11232 Bertrand ave
Granada Hills, CA 91344-4007

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

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Sincerely,

Frank Solman
4242221112

Roxanne Kamalu

From: bergama51@att.net
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 7:57 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Frank Kurmanay
15
Burlingame, CA 94010-5051

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

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Roxanne Kamalu

From: cetinlaw@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 7:47 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

E Cetin
3941 Amadeus Ct
Las Vegas, NV 89119-5187

February 11, 2014

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Sincerely,

E. Cetin
7026120302

Roxanne Kamalu

From: agshin-taghiyev@uiowa.edu
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 7:42 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Agshin Taghiyev
2043 Timber Lane
Coralville, IA 52241-9721

February 11, 2014

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Agshin Taghiyev
3193399964

Roxanne Kamalu

From: renakoenig@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 7:47 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Rena Koenig
1175 York Ave
New York, NY 10065-7169

February 11, 2014

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Sincerely,

Rena Koenig
6462871284

Roxanne Kamalu

From: bdogan@co.ocean.nj.us
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 7:52 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Betty Dogan
152 nautilus dr
manahawkin, NJ 08050-2450

February 11, 2014

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Betty Dogan
7323337667

Roxanne Kamalu

From: akorgav@netzero.net
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 7:57 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Ibrahim Korgav
14853 Sobey Rd
Saratoga, CA 95070-6235

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Ibrahim Korgav
408-891-2080

Roxanne Kamalu

From: uldouz@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 7:42 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Uldouz Berenjforoush
3914 King Lane
San Mateo, CA 94403

February 11, 2014

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The roots of US-Azerbaijan joint operations run deep; over the years the Azerbaijani military also assisted in American-led efforts in Iraq and in the Balkans.

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In June 2010, Azerbaijan signed a \$205 million contract with Virginia-based Orbital Sciences Corporation to design, build and deliver a state of the art communications satellite. Azerbaijan successfully launched the satellite in February 2013.

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Therefore, as a member of Azerbaijani-American community, I kindly ask you to join the other states and urge the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia - Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

Sincerely,

Uldouz Berenjforoush

Roxanne Kamalu

From: oertan@nc.rr.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 7:57 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

ozay ertan
115 Ambiance Ln
Cary, NC 27518-7000

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

Dear VMI Committee:

On May 28, 1918, independent Azerbaijan emerged as the first parliamentary republic in the Muslim world. It was crushed in 1920 by the Bolshevik invasion, yet during its short existence the country became the symbol of the Azerbaijani identity and the nation's aspirations. US President Barack Obama recognized this unique legacy, describing Azerbaijan as "an example for the international community as a first democratic and secular republic in the Muslim world."

As a member of both the Council of Europe and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Azerbaijan is in a unique position to bridge divides and promote greater understanding. Home to a vibrant and centuries-old Jewish community, Azerbaijan has developed strong relations with Israel.

Azerbaijan's leadership in promoting tolerance and intercultural dialogue is widely recognized and highly valued by world leaders.

US Secretary of State John Kerry praised Azerbaijan's "commitment to fighting anti-Semitism and a commitment to diversity and pluralism."

According to Secretary Kerry, "Azerbaijan is a wonderful statement about the ability of different religions, different sects to come together and live together and to find a way forward."

Azerbaijan and the United States enjoy shared values and interests. Both nations are at the forefront in promoting regional security, economic and energy development, diversity and inclusiveness. Azerbaijan has emerged as America's reliable regional partner at one of the world's most unique and critical crossroads.

In Afghanistan, Azerbaijani servicemen serve shoulder to shoulder with American soldiers and Azerbaijan provides specialized training for Afghani police, border guard officers and civilian and military doctors.

Azerbaijan also stated intention to expand its partnership with Afghanistan's national institutions beyond 2014, highlighting the long-standing friendship between the Afghan and the Azerbaijani people.

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Sincerely,

ozay ertan

Ali Ozatalay
Undergraduate Student
Turkish Cultural Center New Jersey

Committee on Veterans, Military and International Affairs, and
Culture and the Arts

February 12, 2014 at 8:30 a.m.

HR9

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Therefore, I kindly ask you to join the other states and urge the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia – Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

**HAWAI`I STATE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
COMMITTEE ON VETERANS, MILITARY, & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, & CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

To: Rep. K. Mark Takai, Chair
Rep. Ken Ito, Vice Chair
Members of the Committee

From: Alex Telnov, Ph.D.
Honolulu, Hawaii

Written testimony
submitted on February 10, 2014
for the Committee hearing scheduled for 8:30 am on Wednesday, February 12, 2014

in OPPOSITION to

HR9: “Urging the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh conflict”

Aloha Chair Takai, Vice Chair Ito, and Members of the Committee:

Thank you very much for the opportunity to share with the Committee my personal experiences and observations that prompt my **strong opposition** to HR9. My testimony is supported with quotes from U.S. government sources, leading international NGOs, and unbiased subject-matter experts.

At first glance, HR9 appears to consist of a selection of factual statements and a few fairly non-controversial opinions. However, an analysis readily reveals extensive and highly biased cherry-picking of facts, gross distortions, and outright untruths. To anyone who has any knowledge of the history of Nagorno Karabakh, the nature of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict, and the political process aimed at its peaceful and equitable resolution, the text of HR9 will be immediately recognizable as a boilerplate piece of propaganda produced by the nationalist and revanchist element within the government of Azerbaijan.

Before I proceed to refute the falsehoods and misinformation contained in the text of HR9, I would like to state, for the record, that I consider myself a friend of the people of Azerbaijan, and that my overall opinion of President Ilham Aliyev tends to be more positive than that of a great majority of international observers. On many occasions, I have found myself defending the regime of Heydar and Ilham Aliyev by explaining to my skeptical counterparts the highly complex circumstances, both internal and external, in which they have managed to achieve and maintain the relative peace, stability and (oil-fueled) prosperity of their emerging nation.

Having visited Azerbaijan twice in the last ten years and having had a chance to mingle with representatives of Azerbaijan's political, business and intellectual elites, as well as many common people who represent both the ethnic Azeri majority and several of Azerbaijan's remaining ethnic minorities, I believe it is the wisdom and the art of shrewd political maneuver that President Aliyev learned from his late father, former President Heydar Aliyev – helped, of course, by a lot of oil money – that pulled Azerbaijan in 1994 from the abyss of extreme nationalism, growing religious radicalism, and genocidal war. (As part of their strategy to maintain control over the people of Azerbaijan, the Aliyevs has kept Azerbaijan at the edge of this abyss ever since – we shall discuss this later.)

HOWEVER, as a scientist, I have been trained to care first and foremost about the truth, and never let my personal feelings cloud my professional judgment. The truth is that

- The Aliyev regime, which has ruled Azerbaijan since 1993, is a **hereditary dictatorship** closely modeled after al-Assads' Syria. It is consistently ranked by a wide range of independent international institutions as one of the most corrupt and repressive regimes in the world.
- *Freedom House* has consistently ranked Azerbaijan as “Not Free” and notes a recent further deterioration of freedoms in Azerbaijan¹ – in contrast to the “Partially Free” rankings of Armenia² and the Nagorno Karabakh Republic.³
- In the most recent (2014) *Freedom in the World* rankings,⁴ Azerbaijan is ranked *less free* than Zimbabwe, Rwanda and Burma, on par with Iran and Afghanistan, and only slightly above Somalia, Sudan, Syria and North Korea.
- In 2012, the Organized Crime and Corruption Reporting Project (OCCRP) named Ilham Aliyev, the President of Azerbaijan, as the first ever **Organized Crime and Corruption Person of the Year**.⁵
- *Democracy Index 2012*, compiled by the *Economist Intelligence Unit*, ranks Azerbaijan #139 out of 167 nations covered by the report, which firmly places it in the “Authoritarian Regimes” category. In contrast, Armenia is ranked 25 positions higher and falls in the “Hybrid” category.⁶
- *Reporters without Borders*, in its *World Press Freedom Index 2012*, ranks Azerbaijan near bottom, #162 out of 179 nations covered. In contrast, Armenia is ranked #77, i.e., noticeably above the world average.⁷

¹ <http://freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/Eurasia%20Fact%20Sheet.pdf>

² <http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2013/armenia>

³ <http://www.freedomhouse.org/report/freedom-world/2013/nagorno-karabakh>

⁴ <http://www.freedomhouse.org/sites/default/files/Country%20Status%20and%20Ratings%20By%20Region%2C%201973-2014.xls>

⁵ <https://reportingproject.net/occrp/index.php/en/ccwatch/cc-watch-indepth/1772-occrp-names-aliyev-qperson-of-the-year-q>

⁶ <http://pages.eiu.com/rs/eiu2/images/Democracy-Index-2012.pdf>

⁷ http://en.rsf.org/IMG/CLASSEMENT_2012/CLASSEMENT_ANG.pdf

- As mandated by the *Foreign Agents Registration Act* (FARA), the Counterespionage Section of the U.S. Department of Justice files semiannual reports to Congress on the disclosed amounts spent by agent of foreign governments on political activities in the United States. In 2012, the latest year for which FARA reports are currently available, Azerbaijan spent nearly \$8 million on lobbying federal and state legislators and various other political activities in the United States. Armenia spent zero.⁸

Given these despicable facts, do I still think the United States should engage Azerbaijan's dictatorial regime? Sure. I think the Federal Government of the United States, as permitted by law, should not restrict itself from limited cooperation, on a case-by-case basis, with just about any country, even North Korea, when necessitated by national security, law enforcement, or humanitarian considerations.

But should my beloved Hawai'i, or any other state in our great Union, engage directly with thoroughly unrepresentative and authoritarian foreign governments, such as Azerbaijan's, or their emissaries? Should we, in the State of Hawai'i, pretend that by agreeing to serve as a mouthpiece for Azerbaijan's propaganda machine we would somehow promote our democratic values and the values of Aloha, and make the world a better place?

No, we absolutely should not.

Now, I would like to briefly touch upon the nature and history of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict and point out a few glaring flaws in the arguments presented in HR9.

Brief introduction to the history of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict

The history of Armenians in Nagorno Karabakh (also known as Artsakh) dates back to at least 189 BC, when it became a province of the Kingdom of Armenia. Despite multiple conquest attempts, thanks in large part to its forbidding mountainous terrain and the bravery of its defenders, Nagorno Karabakh has been able to maintain its distinct Armenian identity and a large degree of autonomy from antiquity to modern times.

Here, in the interest of not being suspected in a pro-Armenian bias, I quote from the declassified CIA report, *Unrest in the Caucasus and the Challenge of Nationalism* (1988):⁹

Armenian-Azeri animosities go back hundreds of years and are deeply rooted in religious and ethnic tensions. Armenians are fiercely loyal to their Orthodox church—they adopted Christianity in the fourth century, 700 years before the Russians. The Azeris are predominantly Shi'ite Muslims who immigrated to the region in the 12th century. The two groups have lived in close and uneasy proximity to each other ever since, with both groups claiming the contested Nagorno-Karabakh region. Karabakh through the centuries remained

⁸ <http://www.fara.gov/annualrpts.html>

⁹ http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0000499607.pdf

semiautonomous under the rule of Armenian princes even when the rest of Armenia was under Persian and Turkish tutelage. Armenians also consider the region a cultural center, and it is the native land of many Azerbaijani writers and composers.

...

The Bolshevik takeover left Azerbaijan in control of Karabakh. But the Armenians regarded it as rightfully theirs both because of ethnic composition (overwhelmingly Armenian) and because of its special place in their national history. At first, Moscow awarded Karabakh to the Armenians... In 1923, Stalin shifted Karabakh ... back to Azerbaijan. Nagorno-Karabakh was given the status of an autonomous oblast (AO) within Azerbaijan.

...

the 1920s settlement subordinating Nagorno-Karabakh—Armenia’s cultural and religious center—to the Azerbaijan [Soviet Socialist] Republic has been a continual, albeit long-muted, source of Armenian frustration and concern.

...

During 1923-1979 the number of Armenians in the region fell from 94 percent to 76 percent, and the number of Azeris rose to 23%... Azeris, who have a high birth rate, have moved to Armenian agricultural areas, including Nagorno-Karabakh.

As you can see, there are a lot of parallels between the history of Nagorno Karabakh’s native Armenian population in the 20th century and the history of Native Hawaiians in the 19th century: both have been forced off their land by newcomers, both have experienced a loss of much of their independence.

By late 1980s, at the same time as approximately 110,000 ethnic Armenians constituted a $\frac{3}{4}$ majority in Nagorno Karabakh, approximately 360,000 ethnic Armenians lived in Azerbaijan proper, most of them in and around Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan. By and large, ethnic Armenians in Azerbaijan tended to be better educated and had better jobs than the Azeri majority. As Soviet economy was beginning to falter, ethnic Armenians became a convenient target for Azeri nationalists and underemployed.

In February 1988, Azerbaijan’s ethnic Azeri majority started a systematic campaign of pogroms and ethnic cleansing against its ethnic Armenian minority. The first large-scale anti-Armenian pogroms took place in Sumgait, a suburb of Baku, on February 27-29, 1988. From the 1988 CIA report:

... violence in Sumgait was in fact a pogrom directed by the Azeris against the city’s 16,000 to 20,000 Armenians. According to TASS, 32 people were killed... Dissident Armenian sources, in contrast, reported over 500 dead... gangs of Azeris stormed through the city, hunting down Armenians and their Azeri protectors... If an Armenian was discovered, he was knifed or worse.

My first personal exposure to the Azeri-Armenian conflict came in September 1989, when a refugee from Azerbaijan’s capital Baku, an ethnic Russian woman in her 60s who had lived in Baku all her life and had been a Professor of History at Baku State University, became my high-school history teacher. I had a chance to hear from her the shocking details of anti-

Armenian pogroms in Baku in 1988 and early 1989. She packed her bags and ran from Azerbaijan the day the rioters killed her last Armenian neighbor, a retired doctor who was too old and frail to escape, by throwing her out of her apartment window.

As refugees from Azerbaijan began to flood Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh, Armenians began to reciprocate against their own Azeri minority. By summer 1988, this turned into what the 1988 CIA report rightly called “*the largest, most violent, and most protracted unrest in the Soviet Union since Stalin’s death*”.

In a September 1991 referendum, the people of the Nagorno Karabakh Autonomous Oblast exercised their right of secession and self-determination under Article 72 of the USSR constitution (“*Each Union Republic shall retain the right freely to secede from the USSR*”) and the federal law adopted in 1990 to clarify its applicability to autonomous regions of union republics, such as Nagorno Karabakh. The vote for independence was overwhelming; from the legal standpoint, it was flawless. Thus, the *de facto* independent Nagorno Karabakh Republic (NKR) came into existence.

The Nagorno Karabakh war

Within a few weeks of the Soviet Union’s dissolution on December 25, 1991, the newly independent Republic of Azerbaijan, assisted by Islamic mercenaries from Chechnya and Afghanistan, attempted to occupy Nagorno Karabakh, claim its land, and cleanse it of its population: the 115,000 Karabakh Armenians and 30,000 ethnic Armenian refugees from Azerbaijan. Neighboring Armenia offered military support to NKR starting in Spring 1992, when Azerbaijan’s army surrounded Stepanakert, leaving no way for its residents to escape, started its massive shelling with missiles and artillery, and then deployed against the city its strike jets armed with fougasse and cluster bombs.

The residents of Stepanakert were forced to hide underground for much of 1992. Dozens of civilians were killed every day when they had to step outside to get food and water.

The horrors of the war are evident from this April 13, 1992 report from Nagorno Karabakh by James Carney of the TIME Magazine:¹⁰

Scarcely a single building has escaped damage in Stepanakert, the target of almost daily shelling all winter... The city has been without running water, electricity or telephones for three months; other regions of Karabakh have been without these basic services for much longer... Schools that have not been leveled are closed. The basement of the partially destroyed parliament building serves as the city's maternity ward, where nurses tend newborn babies by candlelight... Most of the 50,000 who remain [in Stepanakert] live underground in crowded, dark basements. They emerge... only when there is a lull in the shelling.

¹⁰ “Carnage in Karabakh”, the TIME Magazine, April 13, 1992.

Azerbaijan's army was stopped by Karabakh's citizen soldiers less than 4 miles from downtown Stepanakert – and then turned back. In spite of repeated offensives by the Azerbaijan army, its great superiority in troops and its widespread use of heavy weaponry against civilian targets, at an immense human and economic cost, with some help from Armenia, the people of Nagorno Karabakh managed to hold the advances of Azerbaijan army, and then hurled it back to a defensible perimeter around NKR.

The fact that the Republic of Azerbaijan was the aggressor in the Nagorno Karabakh war is recognized by the United States in Section 907 of the United States Freedom Support Act, adopted in October 1992:¹¹

RESTRICTION ON ASSISTANCE TO AZERBAIJAN.

United States assistance under this or any other Act (other than assistance under title V of this Act) may not be provided to the Government of Azerbaijan until the President determines, and so reports to the Congress, that the Government of Azerbaijan is taking demonstrable steps to cease all blockades and other offensive uses of force against Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh.

The 1993 U.S. Department of Justice report “*Azerbaijan: The status of Armenians, Russians, Jews and other minorities*” states:¹²

All the major human rights monitors agree that the status of Armenians, those married to or otherwise associated with Armenians, and those who are, or are perceived to be, sympathetic to Armenians, is extremely grave.

As long as the Armenian-Azeri conflict over the fate of Karabakh continues, and possibly long after a settlement is reached, Armenian inhabitants of Azerbaijan will have no guarantees of physical safety.

A ceasefire was signed in May 1994 after 27 months of intense fighting. The 1992-1994 Karabakh war resulted in as many as 35,000 dead and 85,000 wounded.¹³ These statistics are truly horrifying when compared to the population of NK (a mere 145,000 people before the conflict started) and its size (about the same as the Yosemite National Park, with similarly rugged terrain). In total, from the time first blood was shed in 1988, more than 1,000,000 people became refugees in Azerbaijan, Armenia and NK.¹⁴

Misrepresentations in HR9

- The Nagorno Karabakh conflict is **not** a conflict between Armenia and Azerbaijan. It is a conflict between Azerbaijan, the aggressor, and the Nagorno Karabakh Republic.

¹¹ <http://thomas.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/z?c102:S.2532.ENR>:

¹² <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/ins/azerba93.pdf>

¹³ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nagorno-Karabakh_War and references therein; also Exhibit H4.

¹⁴ “Nagorno Karabakh: viewing the conflict from the ground,” International Crisis Group, 2005.

Armenia was dragged into Azerbaijan's war against Nagorno Karabakh against its will, its hand forced by the Responsibility to Protect the citizens of the neighboring Nagorno Karabakh from ethnic cleansing and war crimes at the hands of the overwhelmingly larger and better equipped regular Azerbaijani army and air force.

- By referring to "territorial integrity of Azerbaijan", HR9 implies that Nagorno Karabakh was at some point a part of an independent Azerbaijan. This is not the case. Indeed, the first independent Azerbaijani state, which existed in 1918-1920, exercised no control over the territory of Nagorno Karabakh and itself lacked international recognition. The period from 1923 to 1991, when Nagorno Karabakh was administratively an autonomous region of Soviet Azerbaijan, does not count because Azerbaijan was not an independent country at that time. In 1991, Nagorno Karabakh became an independent country in full compliance with Soviet law as it existed at that time.
- HR9 misinterprets United Nations Security Council resolutions 822, 853, 874, and 884, all passed in 1993. The basic demand made of both sides in the conflict in all four of these resolutions was the immediate cessation of all hostilities and the resolution of all disagreements through peace negotiations. Yet, Azerbaijan refused to negotiate and misused each of the four UN resolutions as an opportunity to regroup its armed forces and launch a new offensive against Nagorno Karabakh.
- The lack of *de jure* recognition of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic by any country (even by Armenia) is not unique in international practice: for example, Taiwan is not recognized by anyone either, which does not negate the fact Taiwan and Nagorno Karabakh have both successfully built up all attributes of an independent state, including vibrant, multiparty democracies and *de facto* recognition by many countries and international organizations. In particular, a large number of congressional reports and foreign-aid bills passed by the U.S. Congress specifically refer to Nagorno Karabakh by name, with no reference to Azerbaijan.
- It is well established in international practice that sovereignty is not a right, but entails responsibilities for states to protect their populations from mass atrocities (namely genocide, crimes against humanity, war crimes and ethnic cleansing) and must be balanced against the rights of nations for self-determination. Indeed, the number of United Nations member states has increased from 55 in 1945 to 193 today thanks the successful exercise of their right for self-determination by well over 100 nations – most recently, by Eritrea, East Timor, Montenegro, Kosovo and South Sudan. By subjecting all ethnic Armenians within all territories under its control to ethnic cleansing, and by subjecting the residents of the city of Stepanakert to indiscriminate months-long bombing and blockade (both of which are undoubtedly war crimes), Azerbaijan has effectively abrogated any claim for Nagorno Karabakh.

Status of peace negotiations

Negotiations aimed at a peaceful and equitable resolution of the Nagorno Karabakh conflict have been stalled since 1994. To me personally, the following key reasons for the stall are obvious:

- Azerbaijan is steadfastly refusing to negotiate with the Nagorno Karabakh and insists on negotiating solely with Armenia. Azerbaijan's position is untenable: The 1994 ceasefire was signed by Azerbaijan and Nagorno Karabakh, with Armenia signing as a third party. Therefore, Azerbaijan, if it genuinely wanted to achieve progress in peace negotiations, should be negotiating directly with the government of Nagorno Karabakh Republic.
- Azerbaijan steadfastly insists on confining any political settlement to the Nagorno Karabakh conflict to the straightjacket of its perceived "territorial integrity" within the boundaries of the Azerbaijani Soviet Socialist Republic, which were arbitrarily drawn by Joseph Stalin in 1923. It is painfully obvious from that any attempt to impose a "solution" that once again subjects Karabakh Armenians to Azeri rule will result in every single Karabakh Armenian being either driven from their ancestral land or killed.

The only political solution that has a chance of working, avoiding a new large-scale war, and ensuring the right of safe return to their place of origin to a significant majority of Azerbaijan's internally displaced persons (but, sadly, to none of the ethnic Armenians who have been driven from Azerbaijan) is as follows:

- Azerbaijan must recognize independence of the Nagorno Karabakh Republic within the boundaries that approximate the boundaries of the pre-war Nagorno Karabakh Autonomous Oblast;
- Additionally, a secure, wide land bridge connecting the Nagorno Karabakh Republic and Armenia must be provided, perhaps through land swaps;
- As the new international border would make population centers of Nagorno Karabakh extremely vulnerable to attack by Azerbaijan's army, its security needs to be guaranteed on exceptionally strong terms by all major regional and global powers.

It is therefore my considerate opinion that HR9, as introduced, is fatally flawed, cannot be salvaged through the amendment process, and should therefore be abandoned.

Thank you very much for opposing HR9.

Roxanne Kamalu

From: ma1697@yahoo.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 8:07 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Tunc Tanin
38 Linnaean Street
Cambridge, MA 02138-1575

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

Dear VMI Committee:

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Sincerely,

Tunc Tanin
7819742137

Roxanne Kamalu

From: ness_tebritz@yahoo.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 8:12 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Naser Alamdari
712 Cramer Ave.
149, KY 40502-1412

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

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Sincerely,

Naser Alamdari
8592520002

Roxanne Kamalu

From: eyildiz@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 8:27 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Emre Yildiz
83 Margie Ave
Cresskill, NJ 07626-1508

February 11, 2014

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Sincerely,

Emre Yildiz
2017248866

Roxanne Kamalu

From: pinar.enis@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 8:32 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Enis PINAR
2122 mass. Avenue, NW, Apt. 601
Washington, DC 20008-2830

February 11, 2014

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Sincerely,

Enis M. I. Pinar
(202) 321-4276

Roxanne Kamalu

From: nerilece@hotmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 8:17 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Serpil Karakaya
900 Blue Ridge Dr.
Annapolis, MD 21409-5208

February 11, 2014

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Serpil Karakaya
443-852-6330

Roxanne Kamalu

From: mirgalam@yahoo.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 8:27 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Nigar Aliyeva
5557 Houston # 276
Houston, TX 77035

February 11, 2014

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Nigar Aliyeva
(713)-721-0414

Roxanne Kamalu

From: muradk77@hotmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 8:32 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

murad kuliyev
33-06 nicholson drive
Fair Lawn, NJ 07410-4150

February 11, 2014

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Sincerely,

murad kuliyev
6462457356

Roxanne Kamalu

From: eldarg@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 8:12 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Eldar Guliyev
2306 Millerton Ln
Katy, TX 77450-6018

February 11, 2014

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Therefore, as a member of Azerbaijani-American community, I kindly ask you to join the other states and urge the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia - Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

Sincerely,

Eldar Guliyev
(303) 981 4066

Roxanne Kamalu

From: zarifa.musayeva@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 8:12 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Zarifa Musayeva
1335 MONTECITO AVE APT 29
MOUNTAIN VIEW, CA 94043-4541

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

Dear VMI Committee:

On May 28, 1918, independent Azerbaijan emerged as the first parliamentary republic in the Muslim world. It was crushed in 1920 by the Bolshevik invasion, yet during its short existence the country became the symbol of the Azerbaijani identity and the nation's aspirations. US President Barack Obama recognized this unique legacy, describing Azerbaijan as "an example for the international community as a first democratic and secular republic in the Muslim world."

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US Secretary of State John Kerry praised Azerbaijan's "commitment to fighting anti-Semitism and a commitment to diversity and pluralism."

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Sincerely,

Zarifa Musayeva
6506913066

Roxanne Kamalu

From: ness_tebritz@yahoo.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 8:12 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Naser Alamdari
712 Cramer Ave.
149, KY 40502-1412

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

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Sincerely,

Naser Alamdari
8592520002

Roxanne Kamalu

From: adils55@hotmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 8:07 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Adil Sadig Zada
2301 S Voss Rd #2329
Houston, TX 77057-3851

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

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Adil Sadig Zada

Roxanne Kamalu

From: mirgalam@yahoo.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 8:27 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Mirgalam Miriyev
5557 Houston # 276
Houston, TX 77035

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

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Sincerely,

Mirgalam Miriyev
(832)-466-3290

Roxanne Kamalu

From: sabinanb@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 8:32 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Sabina Babayeva
100 Woods Road PMB#496
Valhalla, NY 10595-1530

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

Dear VMI Committee:

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Sincerely,

Sabina Babayeva

Roxanne Kamalu

From: nilgun.sezgin@yahoo.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 8:37 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Nilgun Sezgin
1603 Green Tree Ln
Duncanville, TX 75137-3715

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

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Sincerely,

Nilgun Sezgin
214 240 0296

Roxanne Kamalu

From: zzeynalo@hotmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 8:37 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Zemfira Zeynalova
473 Monroe st.
monterey, CA 93940-2269

February 11, 2014

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Therefore, as a member of Azerbaijani-American community, I kindly ask you to join the other states and urge the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia - Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

Sincerely,

Zemfira Zeynalova
831-242-6574

Roxanne Kamalu

From: savastumer@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 9:02 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Michael Tumer
819 Wethersfield Dr
Vacaville, CA 95688-9251

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

Dear VMI Committee:

On May 28, 1918, independent Azerbaijan emerged as the first parliamentary republic in the Muslim world. It was crushed in 1920 by the Bolshevik invasion, yet during its short existence the country became the symbol of the Azerbaijani identity and the nation's aspirations. US President Barack Obama recognized this unique legacy, describing Azerbaijan as "an example for the international community as a first democratic and secular republic in the Muslim world."

As a member of both the Council of Europe and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Azerbaijan is in a unique position to bridge divides and promote greater understanding. Home to a vibrant and centuries-old Jewish community, Azerbaijan has developed strong relations with Israel.

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US Secretary of State John Kerry praised Azerbaijan's "commitment to fighting anti-Semitism and a commitment to diversity and pluralism."

According to Secretary Kerry, "Azerbaijan is a wonderful statement about the ability of different religions, different sects to come together and live together and to find a way forward."

Azerbaijan and the United States enjoy shared values and interests. Both nations are at the forefront in promoting regional security, economic and energy development, diversity and inclusiveness. Azerbaijan has emerged as America's reliable regional partner at one of the world's most unique and critical crossroads.

In Afghanistan, Azerbaijani servicemen serve shoulder to shoulder with American soldiers and Azerbaijan provides specialized training for Afghani police, border guard officers and civilian and military doctors.

Azerbaijan also stated intention to expand its partnership with Afghanistan's national institutions beyond 2014, highlighting the long-standing friendship between the Afghan and the Azerbaijani people.

As a key component in NATO's Northern Distribution Network, Azerbaijan provides a secure route for 40 percent of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force's (ISAF) multi-modal transit into Afghanistan.

Working closely with the US Transportation Command and the US Air Mobility Command, Azerbaijan has aided important over-flight clearance, medical evacuation flights as well as landing and refueling operations for US and NATO efforts supporting the ISAF.

The roots of US-Azerbaijan joint operations run deep; over the years the Azerbaijani military also assisted in American-led efforts in Iraq and in the Balkans.

Azerbaijan is an active participant of international anti-terror efforts.

Azerbaijan and the United States work together to counter nuclear proliferation and narcotics trafficking, and to promote security in the wider Caspian region and beyond. In addition, Azerbaijan's military partnered directly with Oklahoma's National Guard as part of the National Guard State Partnership Program.

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Therefore, as a member of Azerbaijani-American community, I kindly ask you to join the other states and urge the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia - Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

Sincerely,

Michael Tumer
7076667743

Roxanne Kamalu

From: cxbayrak@ualr.edu
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 8:47 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Coskun Bayrak
124 Grenoble Circle
Maumelle, AR 72113-6893

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

Dear VMI Committee:

On May 28, 1918, independent Azerbaijan emerged as the first parliamentary republic in the Muslim world. It was crushed in 1920 by the Bolshevik invasion, yet during its short existence the country became the symbol of the Azerbaijani identity and the nation's aspirations. US President Barack Obama recognized this unique legacy, describing Azerbaijan as "an example for the international community as a first democratic and secular republic in the Muslim world."

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Therefore, as a member of Azerbaijani-American community, I kindly ask you to join the other states and urge the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia - Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

Sincerely,

Dr. C. Bayrak
5018518222

Elkhan Aghamirzayev
General Manager
BWZ Consulting

Committee on Veterans, Military and International Affairs, and
Culture and the Arts

February 12, 2014 at 8:30 a.m.

HR9

On May 28, 1918, independent Azerbaijan emerged as the first parliamentary republic in the Muslim world. It was crushed in 1920 by the Bolshevik invasion, yet during its short existence the country became the symbol of the Azerbaijani identity and the nation's aspirations. US President Barack Obama recognized this unique legacy, describing Azerbaijan as "an example for the international community as a first democratic and secular republic in the Muslim world."

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US Secretary of State John Kerry praised Azerbaijan's "commitment to fighting anti-Semitism and a commitment to diversity and pluralism." According to Secretary Kerry, "Azerbaijan is a wonderful statement about the ability of different religions, different sects to come together and live together and to find a way forward."

Azerbaijan and the United States enjoy shared values and interests. Both nations are at the forefront in promoting regional security, economic and energy development, diversity and inclusiveness. Under President Ilham Aliyev's leadership, Azerbaijan has emerged as America's reliable regional partner at one of the world's most unique and critical crossroads.

In Afghanistan, Azerbaijani servicemen serve shoulder to shoulder with American soldiers and Azerbaijan provides specialized training for Afghani police, border guard officers and civilian and military doctors. President Aliyev stated Azerbaijan's intention to expand its partnership with Afghanistan's national institutions beyond 2014, highlighting the long-standing friendship between the Afghan and the Azerbaijani people.

As a key component in NATO's Northern Distribution Network, Azerbaijan provides a secure route for 40 percent of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force's (ISAF) multi-modal transit into Afghanistan. Working closely with the US

Transportation Command and the US Air Mobility Command, Azerbaijan has aided important over-flight clearance, medical evacuation flights as well as landing and refueling operations for US and NATO efforts supporting the ISAF.

The roots of US-Azerbaijan joint operations run deep; over the years the Azerbaijani military also assisted in American-led efforts in Iraq and in the Balkans.

Azerbaijan is an active participant of international anti-terror efforts. Azerbaijan and the United States work together to counter nuclear proliferation and narcotics trafficking, and to promote security in the wider Caspian region and beyond. In addition, Azerbaijan's military partnered directly with Oklahoma's National Guard as part of the National Guard State Partnership Program.

Azerbaijan enjoys being America's largest trade partner in the South Caucasus and has successfully pursued major mutually beneficial trade deals. For example, Azerbaijan signed a major contract with Boeing – worth \$1 billion – for the purchase of eight civilian airplanes, including the Boeing 787 “Dreamliner. “In total, trade with Azerbaijan helps to support more than 11,000 jobs throughout the United States.

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With the increasing importance of natural gas, a more abundant and more environmentally friendly hydrocarbon, Azerbaijan is working with partners in the region and beyond, including the United States, to expand direct export routes of Caspian natural gas to European markets. The recently announced Trans-Anatolian (TANAP) and Trans-Adriatic (TAP) natural gas pipelines, which are essential for Europe's Southern Gas Corridor, highlight the strategic importance of Azerbaijan's natural resources, including its major Shah Deniz gas field. These pipelines, along with other Azerbaijani Caspian initiatives, strengthen global energy security and cement Azerbaijan's role as a key partner in Europe's energy future.

Azerbaijan has also been an extremely predictable partner for the West never having revised long term energy contracts with the western companies (including American ones) like many other countries have done before.

Therefore, I kindly ask you to join the other states and urge the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia – Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

Best Regards,

Elkhan Aghamirzayev

Roxanne Kamalu

From: n.abilov@yahoo.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 9:37 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Nemat Abilov
12660 STAFFORD RD APT 714
STAFFORD, TX 77477-3551

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

Dear VMI Committee:

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Therefore, as a member of Azerbaijani-American community, I kindly ask you to join the other states and urge the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia - Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

Sincerely,

Nemat Abilov
8322751780

Roxanne Kamalu

From: kduzkale@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 10:02 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Kayihan Duzkale
5814 Washington blvd
Arlington, VA 22205-2906

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

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Sincerely,

Kayihan Duzkale

Roxanne Kamalu

From: sevdakup@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 9:37 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Sevda Aleckson
37 Vantis Drive
Aliso Viejo, CA 92656-2600

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

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Sincerely,

Sevda Aleckson
9499161680

Roxanne Kamalu

From: ysashalena@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 10:52 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Alex Yu
15138 Stagg Street
Van Nuys, CA 91405-1025

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

Dear VMI Committee:

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Sincerely,

Alex Yu

Roxanne Kamalu

From: zatsme@yahoo.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 10:17 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Ruslan Babayev
1427 E Ostrander Ave
Spokane, WA 99207-4433

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

Dear VMI Committee:

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Therefore, as a member of Azerbaijani-American community, I kindly ask you to join the other states and urge the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia - Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

Sincerely,

Ruslan Babayev
5095343939

Roxanne Kamalu

From: turalb@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 8:52 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Tural Badirkhanli
3 Bayside Village Pl, Apt 307
San Francisco, CA 94107-1467

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

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Roxanne Kamalu

From: alidemirdas@yahoo.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 9:27 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Ali Demirdas
4013 Venetian Rd.
West Columbia, SC 29170-1144

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

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Sincerely,

Ali Demirdas
8435432167

Roxanne Kamalu

From: bpl1139@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 9:37 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

BERRIN NIGHTINGALE
2929 SW CORNELL AVE
PALM CITY, FL 34990-2955

February 11, 2014

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BERRIN NIGHTINGALE

Roxanne Kamalu

From: halidekasan@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 10:42 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Halide Gazioglu
3120 Booth Falls Ct.
Vail, CO 81657-5821

February 11, 2014

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Roxanne Kamalu

From: gurbanov.anar@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 8:42 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Anar Gurbanov
34245 Hogan Terrace
Fremont, CA 94555-3840

February 11, 2014

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Sincerely,

Anar Gurbanov
3477408210

Roxanne Kamalu

From: elhavina@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 9:12 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Zelda Elcin
2264 79th Street
Brooklyn, NY 11214-2005

February 11, 2014

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Sincerely,

Zelda Elcin
7182167070

Roxanne Kamalu

From: ilhan37@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 9:27 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Ilhan Aran
57 Addington Rd.Apt.2
Brookline, MA 02445-4542

February 11, 2014

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Therefore, as a member of Azerbaijani-American community, I kindly ask you to join the other states and urge the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia - Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

Sincerely,

Ilhan Aran
6172837000

Roxanne Kamalu

From: raorg309@yahoo.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 10:17 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Rana Hacıyeva
Carra street
Gladewater, TX 75647

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

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Sincerely,

Rana Hacıyeva

Roxanne Kamalu

From: oplg@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 11:07 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

oscar gallo
700 e ocean blvd unit 2008
Long Beach, CA 90802-5038

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

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Sincerely,

oscar gallo
3107105950

Roxanne Kamalu

From: dbalakis@phys.ufl.edu
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 9:52 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Durdana Balakishiyeva
3700 Windmeadows Blvd, Y257
Gainesville, FL 32608-0432

February 11, 2014

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Sincerely,

Durdana Balakishiyeva
3528707322

Roxanne Kamalu

From: ftuzer@yahoo.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 10:42 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Ferit Tuzer
1209 Green St Apt 2F
Philadelphia, PA 19123-3216

February 11, 2014

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Sincerely,

Ferit Tuzer
2152981255

Roxanne Kamalu

From: atalaysofuoglu@hotmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 8:57 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Atalay Sofuoglu
303 Cezanne Lane
Folsom, CA 95630-5617

February 11, 2014

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Sincerely,

Atalay Sofuoglu
6304700140

Roxanne Kamalu

From: duzkale@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 11:12 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Hatice Duzkale
5814 Washington Blvd.
Arlington, VA 22205-2906

February 11, 2014

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Roxanne Kamalu

From: utkuekin@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 10:42 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Utku Ekin
325 N. 15th Street 1103B
Philadelphia, PA 19102-1013

February 11, 2014

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Therefore, as a member of Azerbaijani-American community, I kindly ask you to join the other states and urge the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia - Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

Sincerely,

Utku Ekin
6092578609

Roxanne Kamalu

From: polytradeintl@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 8:47 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Bahri Aliriza
46608 Silhouette Square
Sterling, VA 20164-6321

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

Dear VMI Committee:

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Bahri Aliriza
703-598-7269

Roxanne Kamalu

From: nijat1989@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 8:57 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Nijat Worley
19 E Centre St.
Baltimore, MD 21202-2365

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

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Sincerely,

Nijat Worley
7202196677

Roxanne Kamalu

From: muradpasha@aol.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 10:37 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

joey murad
16 20 202st.
bayside, NY 11360-1021

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

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Sincerely,

joey murad
718)352 6029

Roxanne Kamalu

From: ergun@cox.net
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 10:47 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Ergun Kirlikovali
9741 Irvine Center Dr
Irvine, CA 92618-4324

February 11, 2014

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Ergun Kirlikovali
9498781186

Roxanne Kamalu

From: info@globaltradesltd.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 11:17 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Esmaal Khalilpour
958 Edwards Ferry Rd
Leesburg, VA 20176-3324

February 11, 2014

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Esmal Khalilpour
7037747718

Roxanne Kamalu

From: mertatayurt@yahoo.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 8:37 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Mert Atayurt
1150 Montgomery Street
West Lafayette, IN 47906-1328

February 11, 2014

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Sincerely,

Mert Atayurt
4435408001



Armenian National Committee of America – Western Region

Written Statement of
Armenian National Committee of America – Western Region

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS, MILITARY, &
INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, &
CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

February 12, 2014, 8:30AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 312

IN OPPOSITION TO:

H.R. NO. 9 Urging the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

To: Chair Takai, Vice Chair Ito, and Members of the Committee
Re: **Testimony in Opposition to H.R. NO. 9**

Aloha Honorable Chair, Vice-Chair, and Committee Members:

On behalf of the Armenian National Committee of America, I submit the following testimony to voice my **strong opposition** to **H.R. NO. 9**. We are opposed to the resolution because it misrepresents the truth with respect to the Republic of Azerbaijan, Armenian-Azeri relations and the status of Nagorno-Karabakh.

This resolution's state purpose is to urge the administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. In fact, the United States, through its participation in the Minsk Group have been continuously attempting to negotiate and broker a settlement to this conflict over the past twenty years. Contrary to the representations made in the resolution, the biggest hindrance to a settlement of this has been the dogmatic and unbending position of Azerbaijan, which has continuously rejected any settlement or negotiation that any international body or the United States has facilitated.

Resolutions such as H.R. NO. 9 are being introduced in many states throughout the nation, not because of their veracity or because of deep ties between Americans and Azerbaijanis but rather, due to the well-financed and influential lobby which has emerged in light of Azerbaijan's growth as an oil-producing nation. Influence peddling for the benefit of Azerbaijan is rampant as a result of the millions of dollars which have been spent by Azerbaijan in recent years in Washington and



Armenian National Committee of America – Western Region

state capitals, in conjunction with the junkets to Baku which have been provided to at numerous Members of Congress over the past several years.

In 2005 and 2006, 100 members of Congress agreed that “The Republic of Armenia is a valued ally of the United States and democratic countries throughout the world. The United States continues to value the strong bond that exists between Armenia and the United States. The [Baku-Tbilisi-Kars] railroad specifically bypasses Armenia and serves to isolate Armenia from East-West commercial corridors. The exclusion of Armenia from regional economic and commercial undertakings in the South Caucasus undermines the United States policy goal of promoting a stable and cooperative environment in the region. Azerbaijan's leading role in developing the proposed Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railroad and other similar actions by Azerbaijan serve to undermine and avoid a just solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and potentially destabilize the region.”

In February of 2012, Aliyev—in a sweeping and hateful indictment of an entire ethnic group, chillingly similar to Hitler’s attempts to demonize all Jew—publicly announced that “our main enemies are Armenians of the world,” and also said that “Armenia is a country of no value.” As recently as July of 2012, officials of Aliyev’s government have threatened to shoot down civilian airplanes flying between Armenia and Nagorno Karabakh. Since the cease fire began between the Armenians and Azeris, more than 100 Armenian soldiers have been killed by Azeri soldiers in unprovoked attacks. Azeri snipers seriously wounded a 16 year-old civilian girl in addition to killing three Armenian soldiers in recent weeks.

In August of 2012, in an act condemned by President Obama and leaders worldwide, the president of Azerbaijan, Ilham Aliyev pardoned, praised and promoted an unrepentant axe-murderer, who was convicted in a Hungarian court for murdering an Armenian NATO Partnership for Peace participant in his sleep in Budapest.

In February of 2013, Aliyev stripped an Azerbaijani writer, Akram Aylisli, of his state honors and pension (and also caused Aylisli’s relatives to be fired from government jobs) because he wrote sympathetically about Armenians in his recent novel. A political ally of Aliyev had offered a bounty of \$12,000 for Aylisli’s ear. In March of 2013, U.S. Ambassador to Baku Richard Morningstar criticized Aliyev’s crackdown on dissenters, and publicly called on Azerbaijan to respect the right of peaceful protest, promote the rule of law, and engage in a meaningful dialogue with citizens to address legitimate public concerns.

This resolution continues to make reference to Azerbaijan’s rapidly growing economy as an asset to the United States. In reality, Azerbaijan remains one of the most corrupt and despotic countries in the world. According to independent reports by international human rights watchdogs including Transparency International, despite its massive oil resources, “Azerbaijan is plagued by endemic corruption that prevents ordinary Azerbaijanis from sharing in their



Armenian National Committee of America – Western Region

country's natural wealth and is a significant barrier to Azerbaijan's development." In light of this reality this resolution or others are unlikely to foster a partnership between Azerbaijan and Hawai'i can benefit Hawai'i and its people in any way.

This resolution is flawed in so many ways that it should be opposed if not because of its misinformation, but for its inherent connection to a despotic regime. Azerbaijan continues to acquire weapons and continues its threats to Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh to restart the war. Azerbaijan is the main impediment to the region's security, peace, cooperation, and to the settlement to this conflict.

On behalf of the Armenian-American community of Hawaii, I ask that you please oppose this resolution. The sides should not be busy re-writing history or using politics to gain an advantage, but instead should be focusing on ways to achieve lasting peace and security in the region. Thank you for your attention.

Respectfully Submitted,

Elen Asatryan
Executive Director

Roxanne Kamalu

From: namus1@verizon.net
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 2:27 PM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Namus Zokhrabov
3747 sepulveda blvd
Los Angeles, CA 90034-6870

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

Dear VMI Committee:

On May 28, 1918, independent Azerbaijan emerged as the first parliamentary republic in the Muslim world. It was crushed in 1920 by the Bolshevik invasion, yet during its short existence the country became the symbol of the Azerbaijani identity and the nation's aspirations. US President Barack Obama recognized this unique legacy, describing Azerbaijan as "an example for the international community as a first democratic and secular republic in the Muslim world."

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Azerbaijan and the United States enjoy shared values and interests. Both nations are at the forefront in promoting regional security, economic and energy development, diversity and inclusiveness. Azerbaijan has emerged as America's reliable regional partner at one of the world's most unique and critical crossroads.

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Azerbaijan also stated intention to expand its partnership with Afghanistan's national institutions beyond 2014, highlighting the long-standing friendship between the Afghan and the Azerbaijani people.

As a key component in NATO's Northern Distribution Network, Azerbaijan provides a secure route for 40 percent of the NATO-led International Security Assistance Force's (ISAF) multi-modal transit into Afghanistan.

Working closely with the US Transportation Command and the US Air Mobility Command, Azerbaijan has aided important over-flight clearance, medical evacuation flights as well as landing and refueling operations for US and NATO efforts supporting the ISAF.

The roots of US-Azerbaijan joint operations run deep; over the years the Azerbaijani military also assisted in American-led efforts in Iraq and in the Balkans.

Azerbaijan is an active participant of international anti-terror efforts.

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In June 2010, Azerbaijan signed a \$205 million contract with Virginia-based Orbital Sciences Corporation to design, build and deliver a state of the art communications satellite. Azerbaijan successfully launched the satellite in February 2013.

The State Oil Fund of Azerbaijan has invested approximately \$3 billion in the United States, including in the US Treasury, Federal Home Loan Bank, Fannie Mae and Freddie Mac bonds, as well as in US corporate debt and equities. In 2012, the State Oil Company of Azerbaijan (SOCAR) established a representative office in Washington, DC, and announced plans to expand its presence elsewhere in the United States.

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Therefore, as a member of Azerbaijani-American community, I kindly ask you to join the other states and urge the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia - Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

Sincerely,

Namus Zokhrabov

Roxanne Kamalu

From: namin2002@hotmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 2:27 PM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

delbar namin
5454 zelzh ave
encino, CA 91316-2210

February 11, 2014

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Sincerely,

delbar namin
8189967576

Roxanne Kamalu

From: sadykhovjc@yahoo.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 2:52 PM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Chingiz Sadykhov
1251 Turk Str. Apt#1110
San Francisco, CA 94115-4894

February 11, 2014

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Therefore, as a member of Azerbaijani-American community, I kindly ask you to join the other states and urge the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia - Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

Sincerely,

Chingiz Sadykhov
(415)921-2558

Written Statement of
Eric Roubentz

**HOUSE COMMITTEE ON VETERANS, MILITARY, &
INTERNATIONAL AFFIARS, &
CULTURE AND THE ARTS**

February 12, 2014, 8:30AM
State Capitol, Conference Room 312

IN OPPOSITION TO:

H.R. NO. 9 Urging the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia-Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

To: Chair Takai, Vice Chair Ito, and Members of the Committee
Re: **Testimony in Opposition to H.R. NO. 9**

Aloha Honorable Chair, Vice-Chair, and Committee Members:

Thank you for the opportunity to submit the following comments reflecting my **strong opposition** to **H.R. NO. 9**.

This resolution is inherently flawed. It begins with an arbitrary statement of purpose, and continues to misrepresent the truth.

This resolution's purpose is to urge the administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict. In fact, the United States, the European Union, The United Nation, the Minsk Group, and other international bodies including Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh themselves are continuously attempting to negotiate a settlement to this conflict. Azerbaijan, however, is the one party to this conflict that has continuously rejected any settlement or negotiation that any international body or the United States has facilitated.

Moreover, since 1998, the United States has been rendering official assistance to Nagorno-Karabakh to help overcome the consequences of the devastating aggression by Azerbaijan. In House Report 112-494 , the Committee of Appropriations noted

“As this process moves forward, the Committee continues to urge all parties to refrain from threats of violence and to support confidence- building measures that facilitate interaction among the parties, in order to address regional security and people-to-people programs. The Committee expects that funds provided will address ongoing humanitarian needs and the plight of the victims of the conflict, including at least \$5,000,000 for humanitarian and development programs in Nagorno-Karabakh.”

This resolution refers to Azerbaijan's partnership and cooperation with the United States to fight against international terrorism. During the Karabakh war, between 1993 and 1994, Azerbaijan

used its connections with Islamic terrorist networks to hire thousands of Afghan mujahideens and other Islamic mercenaries linked to various international terrorist organizations to fight against Armenia and Karabakh.

This resolution continues to make reference to Azerbaijan's rapidly growing economy as an asset to the United States. In reality, Azerbaijan remains one of the most corrupt and despotic countries in the world. According to independent reports by international human rights watchdogs including Transparency International, despite its massive oil resources, "Azerbaijan is plagued by endemic corruption that prevents ordinary Azerbaijanis from sharing in their country's natural wealth and is a significant barrier to Azerbaijan's development." I find this very fact unsettling, and do not see how this resolution or others creating a partnership between Azerbaijan and Hawai'i can benefit Hawai'i and its people in any way.

Similarly, this resolution mentions the Baku-Tbilisi-Kars railway project initiated by Azerbaijan as contributing to the prosperity of Azerbaijan and the United States' regional allies. In reality, due to the political nature of this project, both the United States and the European Union have refused to fund the project. In fact, in 2005 and 2006, our US Congress adopted the "South Caucasus Integration and Open Railroads Act" that prohibited the United States' assistance to the BTK railroad because "the proposed railroad specifically bypasses Armenia and serves to isolate Armenia from East-West commercial corridors." The act also continues to explain that Azerbaijan's actions serve to undermine and avoid a just solution to the Nagorno-Karabakh conflict and potentially destabilize the region.

This resolution is flawed in so many ways that it should be opposed if not because of its misinformation, but for its inherent connection to a despotic regime we share little commonality with. Azerbaijan continues to acquire weapons and continues its threats to Armenia and Nagorno-Karabakh to restart the war. Azerbaijan is the main impediment to the region's security, peace, cooperation, and to the settlement to this conflict.

I ask that you please oppose this resolution. The sides should not be busy re-writing history or using politics to gain an advantage, but instead should be focusing on ways to achieve lasting peace and security in the region.

Thank you,

Eric Roubentz
Volvo of Honolulu
President
704 Ala Moana Blvd.

Roxanne Kamalu

From: igamidov@gmail.com
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 2:32 PM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

ilham Gamidov
1000 Blossom river way 511
San Jose, CA 95123-6345

February 11, 2014

VMI Committee

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Therefore, as a member of Azerbaijani-American community, I kindly ask you to join the other states and urge the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia - Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

Sincerely,

ilham Gamidov
4088218291

Roxanne Kamalu

From: omer@turkiye.net
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 1:57 PM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Omer Komili
7127 Hollister Ave Suite 25A-150
Goleta, CA 93117-2859

February 11, 2014

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Sincerely,

Omer Komili
949-874-4438

TESTIMONY OF CHRIS LETHEM IN STRONG SUPPORT OF HOUSE RESOLUTION 9

WEDNESDAY, 02-12-14 8:30AM IN CONFERENCE ROOM 312

COMMITTEE ON VETERANS, MILITARY, & INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS, & CULTURE AND THE ARTS

REP. K. MARK TAKAI, CHAIR

REP. KEN ITO, VICE CHAIR

URGING THE ADMINISTRATION OF THE UNITED STATES TO STRENGTHEN ITS EFFORTS TO FACILITATE A POLITICAL SETTLEMENT TO THE ARMENIA-AZERBAIJAN NAGORNO-KARABAKH CONFLICT.

Dear Chair Mark Takai and members of the Committee on Veterans, Military and International Affairs and the Arts. As a former U.S. Marine and someone who has lived many years of my life overseas as an expatriate. I have developed respect for the import of international relations. I support this resolution recognizing our unique and continually developing relationship with Azerbaijan. I have provided a summarized history of our relationship with Azerbaijan.

On December 25, 1991, Soviet Union ceased its existence and the United States formally recognized 12 former Soviet republics, including Azerbaijan, as independent states. On March 6, 1992, Azerbaijan opened its embassy in Washington, and on March 16, 1992, the United States opened its embassy in Baku, the capital of Azerbaijan. The embassy of Azerbaijan is located in Washington, D.C.

In 2005, as a freshman Senator, Barack Obama visited Azerbaijan on a working trip together with a senior U.S. Senator Richard Lugar.

Speaking at a conference on U.S.-Azerbaijani relations at Georgetown University in September 2009, the Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs William J. Burns outlined three main areas of interest for the United States in its bilateral relations with Azerbaijan: security cooperation, energy, and economic and democratic reform.

In 1992, the U.S. Congress adopted Section 907 of the Freedom Support Act, which banned any direct US aid to the government of Azerbaijan. However, Section 907 is believed to have damaged US national interests by undermining the administration's neutrality in promoting a settlement in Nagorno-Karabakh, along with its ability to encourage economic and broad legal reforms in Azerbaijan, and efforts to advance an East-West energy transport corridor.

After the September 11 attacks in 2001, Congress passed the foreign appropriations legislation of 2002, granting President the right to waive Section 907. In view of Azerbaijan's contribution and support for the US military operations in Afghanistan, President George W. Bush waived the section in January 2002; and President Barack Obama further extended that waiver.

Azerbaijan as a Security partner has provided over-flight, refueling, and landing rights for U.S. and coalition aircraft bound for Afghanistan and Iraq; shared information to combat terrorism financing; detained and prosecuted suspected terrorists. Apart from usage of Azerbaijani airspace by US air force, over one-third of all of the nonlethal equipment including fuel, clothing, and food used by the US

military in Afghanistan travels through Baku. In November 2011, the United States Secretary of the Navy Ray Mabus met with the Azerbaijani President and Defense Minister announcing the military ties between their countries would expand.

U.S.–Azerbaijani ties in economic sphere developed primarily in the context of Caspian energy resources and their transportation to Western markets. The U.S. companies are actively involved in the development of Caspian hydrocarbons in offshore Azerbaijani oilfields, and the U.S. government actively supported the Baku–Tbilisi–Ceyhan pipeline as the primary route of transportation for Caspian oil.

The United States has signed a bilateral trade agreement with Azerbaijan, granting it the status of a "most favored nation", in 1995; and a bilateral investment treaty with Azerbaijan, naming it a beneficiary country under the Generalized System of Preferences (GSP) program, in 2008 The U.S. also supports Azerbaijan's application for accession to the World Trade Organization.

So again I urge the House of Representatives to consider the multifaceted aspects of our growing relationship with Azerbaijan and support this resolution.

Thank you

Chris Lethem

LATE

Roxanne Kamalu

From: n.m.kazan@comcast.net
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 5:22 PM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Meral Kazan
1450 kearney rd
ann arbor, MI 48104-4062

February 11, 2014

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Therefore, as a member of Azerbaijani-American community, I kindly ask you to join the other states and urge the Administration of the United States to strengthen its efforts to facilitate a political settlement to the Armenia - Azerbaijan Nagorno-Karabakh Conflict.

Sincerely,

Meral Kazan
7346638991

Roxanne Kamalu

From: uguneyi@sbcglobal.net
Sent: Tuesday, February 11, 2014 8:02 PM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Umit Guneyi
3025 Socrates Drive
Reno, NV 89512-4505

February 12, 2014

VMI Committee

Dear VMI Committee:

On May 28, 1918, independent Azerbaijan emerged as the first parliamentary republic in the Muslim world. It was crushed in 1920 by the Bolshevik invasion, yet during its short existence the country became the symbol of the Azerbaijani identity and the nation's aspirations. US President Barack Obama recognized this unique legacy, describing Azerbaijan as "an example for the international community as a first democratic and secular republic in the Muslim world."

As a member of both the Council of Europe and the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, Azerbaijan is in a unique position to bridge divides and promote greater understanding. Home to a vibrant and centuries-old Jewish community, Azerbaijan has developed strong relations with Israel.

Azerbaijan's leadership in promoting tolerance and intercultural dialogue is widely recognized and highly valued by world leaders.

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Sincerely,

Umit Guneyi
(775) 786-2311

LATE

Roxanne Kamalu

From: iscakir@yahoo.com
Sent: Wednesday, February 12, 2014 1:52 AM
To: vmitestimony
Subject: Testimony in support of HR 9

Isfendiyar Cakir
13815 97th. ave
Kirkland, WA 98034-1812

February 12, 2014

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