

**Introduces Resolution in House of Representatives highlighting the Hospitality of Gander, Newfoundland and Other Towns Which Accepted American Flights as Airspace Closed**

WASHINGTON – Congresswoman Louise Slaughter (NY-28) announced today that she has introduced a resolution in the House of Representatives that thanks the residents of Gander, Newfoundland and citizens of Canada for their contributions to the United States in the waking hours of the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001.

For the first time in history on that fateful day, both the United States and Canada closed their airspace immediately grounding thousands of planes, many of which landed in Canada.

Particularly inspiring are the contributions of the Town of Gander in Newfoundland and Labrador whose airport received 38 flights, the second highest amount in Canada. The stranded passengers practically overwhelmed the town of 9,600 residents who went onto selflessly provide passengers with food, shelter, potluck suppers, guided tours, whale-watching excursions and impromptu concerts.

“I know that you can’t ask for any better neighbors or friends than the people of Canada,” said Slaughter who represents Niagara Falls, Buffalo and Rochester, NY. “It’s been almost 10 years since America was attacked on 9/11. As we look back on that dark day, we remember not only those who we lost but also recognize the friendships that were strengthened and the hospitality of our neighbors to the north who aided American passengers in our hour of need. There has always been a unique bond between Canada and America and for their friendship, we again say thank you.”

The resolution, H.Res 286, was introduced last night into the United States House of Representatives.

The resolution states, “Resolved that the House of Representatives, on behalf of a grateful American people, recognize and thank the citizens of Gander, Newfoundland and all other citizens across Canada who, during a time of unprecedented crisis, challenge and uncertainty, came to the aid of Americans and forever cemented the generosity, goodwill and mutual understanding that has defined the bilateral relationship between the United States and Canada.”

Full text of the resolution is included below.

**H.Res 286**

Recognizing, on the occasion of the 52nd annual meeting of the Canada-United States Inter-Parliamentary Group in September, 2011 in St. John's, Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada, the immeasurable assistance Gander International Airport, the Canadian Government and the citizens of Gander, Newfoundland and Labrador, provided to the United States immediately following the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001.

Whereas the U.S. Federal Aviation Administration ordered U.S. airspace closed at 9:45 EDT, and all U.S.-bound flights were ordered to land at the nearest airport.

Whereas immediately following the closure of U.S. airspace, Transport Canada ordered the closure of Canadian airports except for outgoing police, military and humanitarian flights, and incoming Canada and U.S. bound international flights.

Whereas this marked the first occasion that either the United States or Canada closed its airspace.

Whereas Transport Canada initiated Operation Yellow Ribbon following the closure of the U.S. airspace to handle the diversion of civilian airline flights bound for the United States.

Whereas the purpose of Operation Yellow Ribbon was to remove all air traffic from U.S. airspace and away from potential U.S. targets as quickly as possible to minimize further terrorist threats.

Whereas NAV CANADA – Canada's civil air navigation services provider – recorded 239 aircraft destined for the U.S. and Canada landing safely at 17 airports in Canada.

Whereas Newfoundland and Labrador welcomed more airline passengers than any other province, with 13,000 stranded individuals.

Whereas about half of the 75 aircraft that landed in Newfoundland in fact landed at Gander International Airport, which is known to airline pilots around the world as the lifeboat of the Atlantic and is the first North American airport on the trans-Atlantic route.

Whereas before the terrorist attacks, Gander International Airport was scheduled to receive eight flights that day and instead received the second most number of flights, at 38, and the second most number of passengers, at 6,600, out of all the Canadian airports during Operation Yellow Ribbon. Whereas the Town of Gander in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador, Canada, has a population of approximately 9,600, only 3,000 more than the total number of stranded passengers.

Whereas the citizens of Gander and other Newfoundlanders provided stranded passengers with food, clothing, shelter, medicine, potluck suppers, guided tours, whale-watching excursions and impromptu concerts over the course of three tense and uncertain days.

Whereas the kindness and generosity offered by the citizens of Gander, Newfoundland and Labrador to stranded American passengers will forever be remembered as an embodiment of human compassion.

Whereas the stranded passengers have since sponsored scholarships for Newfoundlanders, donated computer equipment to area communities, financed a new conference room for the Gander area community of Lewisporte and held annual reunions to show their appreciation for the goodwill of the citizens of Gander.

Whereas the United States owes a tremendous debt of gratitude to the citizens of Gander, Newfoundland and Labrador.

Whereas all local Canadian communities surrounding the affected airports also welcomed the large number of passengers and accommodated them in their homes and public facilities.

Whereas the United States also owes a tremendous debt of gratitude to all Canadian airports and the surrounding communities that welcomed the remaining flights:

in Newfoundland and Labrador, 1 flight to Deer Lake Regional Airport, 21 flights to St. John's International Airport, 7 flights to Canadian Forces Base Goose Bay and 8 flights to Stephenville International Airport;

in Nova Scotia, 47 flights to Halifax Stanfield International Airport;

in New Brunswick, 10 flights to Greater Moncton International Airport;

in Quebec, 10 flights to Montréal-Mirabel International Airport and 7 flights to Montréal-Pierre Elliott Trudeau International Airport;

in Ontario, 14 flights to Toronto Pearson International Airport and 4 flights to John C. Munro Hamilton International Airport;

in Manitoba, 15 flights to Winnipeg James Armstrong Richardson International Airport;

in Alberta, 6 flights to Edmonton International Airport and 13 flights to Calgary International Airport;

In the Northwest Territories, 1 flight to Yellowknife Airport;

in Yukon, 3 flights to Erik Nielsen Whitehorse International Airport; and

in British Columbia, 34 flights to Vancouver International Airport.

Resolved that the House of Representatives, on behalf of a grateful American people, recognize and thank the citizens of Gander, Newfoundland and all other citizens across Canada who, during a time of unprecedented crisis, challenge and uncertainty, came to the aid of Americans and forever cemented the generosity, goodwill and mutual understanding that has defined the bilateral relationship between the United States and Canada.

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