

Regular Session, 2013

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 11

BY SENATOR CLAITOR AND REPRESENTATIVE LORUSSO

INTERNATIONAL AFFAIRS. Urges IOC to reconsider its position on Olympic wrestling.

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To urge and request the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to reconsider its position on Olympic Wrestling.

WHEREAS, wrestling has been popular throughout recorded history; and

WHEREAS, the modern sportive form of wrestling, an individual weaponless combat activity, was developed in prehistoric times from survival fighting when it became convenient to replace death or serious injury with a more symbolic form of victory; and

WHEREAS, origins of the sport can be traced back 15,000 years to cave drawings in France; and

WHEREAS, early Egyptian and Babylonian reliefs depict wrestlers using most of the holds known to the present-day sport; and

WHEREAS, in ancient Greece, wrestling occupied a prominent place in legend and literature; wrestling competition was the supreme contest of the Olympic Games; and

WHEREAS, although there is considerable evidence that wrestling existed in all early civilizations, it was in ancient Greece that it really developed into a sport and was included in the Olympic Games in 708 BC; and

WHEREAS, when the modern Olympic Games resumed in Athens, Greece, in 1886, wrestling reestablished its position as one of the core sports of the games; and

1           WHEREAS, during the Middle Ages, wrestling remained popular and enjoyed the  
2 patronage of many royal houses, including those of France, Japan, and England; and

3           WHEREAS, early American settlers brought a strong wrestling tradition with them  
4 from England, and the colonists also found wrestling to be quite popular among the Native  
5 Americans; and

6           WHEREAS, amateur wrestling flourished throughout the early years of America and  
7 served as a popular activity at country fairs, holiday celebrations, and in military exercises;  
8 and

9           WHEREAS, due to what the IOC has classified as "growing cost", the IOC has been  
10 faced with the difficult choice of reducing the number of athletes in the summer games; and

11           WHEREAS, core sports would continue indefinitely in future Olympics, but non-  
12 core sports would be selected on a game-by-game basis; and

13           WHEREAS, on February 12, 2012, the IOC Executive Board made the ill-advised  
14 and ill-fated vote to recommend that wrestling be dropped as a core sport; and

15           WHEREAS, if approved by the full IOC, wrestling, the oldest of core Olympic  
16 sports, will have to compete with seven non-core sports, consisting of baseball/softball,  
17 squash, karate, sport climbing, wakeboarding, wushu and roller sports for a place in the 2020  
18 Olympics; and

19           WHEREAS, wrestling federations exist in approximately 180 countries and the  
20 recent London Olympic Games had wrestlers from over 70 countries; and

21           WHEREAS, the Olympics are supposed to be a display of sports from around the  
22 world; and

23           WHEREAS, there is not a sport that is more historically global than wrestling; and

24           WHEREAS, every culture and nation throughout history have created their own form  
25 of wrestling; and

26           WHEREAS, wrestling has a distinct economic advantage in comparison with other  
27 sports; and

28           WHEREAS, wrestling is a sport that costs nothing in which to participate and  
29 requires no fancy equipment nor specially designed sports complexes; and

30           WHEREAS, wrestling is a sport where even the poorest of countries and individuals

1 can participate and have success; and

2 WHEREAS, wrestlers learn that long-term success has much more to do with the  
3 investment made than the natural gifts one is given; and

4 WHEREAS, wrestlers learn the value of preparation and hard work and the role they  
5 play in achieving one's goals; and

6 WHEREAS, wrestling provides real-life experiences that build and strengthen  
7 participants, including: self-reliance, mental fortitude, work ethic, competitive spirit,  
8 responsibility, self-discipline, goal orientation, and confidence; and

9 WHEREAS, Dan Gable, an Olympic gold medalist and former U.S. Olympic  
10 wrestling coach, succinctly summarized wrestling's character building characteristics when  
11 he stated, "Once you've wrestled, everything else in life is easy"; and

12 WHEREAS, many CEOs, high-level business people, and other successful  
13 individuals have stated that they owe their work ethic to the rigorous training and  
14 maintenance schedule that they learned in wrestling; and

15 WHEREAS, wrestling is also one of the most popular youth sports in the United  
16 States, with nearly 275,000 competitors from 2010 to 2011; and

17 WHEREAS, the personal nature of the sport as well as the rigorous training required  
18 have been attributed to building the confidence of its participants; and

19 WHEREAS, involvement in wrestling is a great way to develop the ability to defend  
20 one's self, without resorting to the violent tactics inherent in most other forms of self-  
21 defense; and

22 WHEREAS, the decision to phase out wrestling will have a detrimental impact on  
23 many teams around the world, including the United States, whose wrestling medals are only  
24 outnumbered by swimming and track and field; and

25 WHEREAS, the Olympics are the ultimate goal for every young wrestler; and

26 WHEREAS, Olympic Wrestling competition is the final stage for most wrestlers, and  
27 removing it from the Olympics would destroy the dreams of young wrestlers across the  
28 world who toil day after day chasing this dream; and

29 WHEREAS, not having wrestling at the Olympics will cripple the sport at the lower  
30 level and ruin the dreams and ambitions of thousands of devoted athletes; and

1           WHEREAS, wrestling is, at its core, one of the most fundamental sports in which  
2 man has ever engaged and is the most primal and purest form of one-on-one competition  
3 known to mankind; and

4           WHEREAS, removing wrestling from the Olympics would be a huge travesty in light  
5 of its contribution to the history of not only sports, but to the history of mankind as well; and

6           WHEREAS, the governors of thirty-three states with rich wrestling traditions,  
7 including Governor Bobby Jindal of Louisiana, expressed their concerns regarding the recent  
8 decision by the IOC to remove wrestling as an Olympic sport in the 2020 Olympic Games  
9 and strongly urge the IOC to reconsider its position and vote to extend wrestling's long  
10 legacy within the Olympic Games.

11           THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of Louisiana does hereby  
12 urge and request the International Olympic Committee to reconsider its position on Olympic  
13 Wrestling.

14           BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a copy of this Resolution be transmitted to the  
15 International Olympic Committee, the Association of National Olympic Committees and the  
16 Pan American Sports Organization.

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The original instrument and the following digest, which constitutes no part  
of the legislative instrument, were prepared by James Benton.

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DIGEST

Claitor

SCR No. 11

Requests the International Olympic Committee to reconsider its position on Olympic Wrestling.