

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 11

BY SENATOR CLAITOR AND REPRESENTATIVE LORUSSO

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, wrestling is a sport where even the poorest of countries and individuals can participate and have success; and

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, the governors of thirty-three states with rich wrestling traditions, including Governor Bobby Jindal of Louisiana, expressed their concerns regarding the recent decision by the IOC to remove wrestling as an Olympic sport in the 2020 Olympic Games

and strongly urge the IOC to reconsider its position and vote to extend wrestling's long legacy within the Olympic Games.

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

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

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PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE

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SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES