

WHEREAS, on October 23, 1956, hundreds of thousands of Hungarians from all walks of life would join university students in a peaceful call for democracy and an end to the brutal and oppressive Soviet-dominated Hungarian communist government; and

WHEREAS, peaceful protestors were fired upon by the Hungarian Security Police killing hundreds and triggering the bloody fight for freedom and democracy and the first tear in the Iron Curtain; and

WHEREAS, millions of Hungarians, students and workers, men, women and children, would rise up against impossible odds and risk their lives to take part in their noble fight for freedom and democracy; and

WHEREAS, the Hungarian Freedom Fighters, students and workers, men, women and children, who rose up against impossible odds and risked their lives to take part in their noble fight for freedom and democracy, were able to establish a revolutionary government that released political prisoners, including major church leaders, took steps to establish a multi-party democracy, called for the withdrawal of all Soviet troops from Hungary, announced Hungary's withdrawal from the Warsaw Pact, and requested United Nations assistance in establishing Hungarian neutrality; and

WHEREAS, the Soviet Union launched a massive military counteroffensive against the revolt, sending tens of thousands of additional troops from the Soviet Union and launched air strikes, artillery bombardments and coordinated tank-infantry actions involving some 6,000 tanks which, remarkably, the outnumbered and under-equipped Hungarian Army and Hungarian Freedom Fighters resisted for several days; and

WHEREAS, Prime Minister Imre Nagy was seized by Soviet security forces, despite assurances of safe passage for him to leave the Yugoslav Embassy in Budapest where he sought asylum, and was taken to Rumania and subsequently tried and executed; and

WHEREAS, thousands of Hungarians were tortured, tried and executed by the post-1956 Hungarian government; and

WHEREAS, more than 200,000 Hungarians fled their country in the aftermath of the Soviet suppression of the Hungarian uprising, and over 47,000 of these people eventually were able to settle in the United States where they have contributed greatly to the intellectual strength, cultural diversity and the economic might of this country; and

WHEREAS, the uprising of the Hungarian people in 1956 dramatically confirmed the widespread contempt in which the Hungarians held the Soviet Union and the underlying weakness of the communist system imposed by Soviet authorities in Central and Eastern Europe, as well as the strength of popular support for democratic principles and the right of the Hungarian people to determine their own national destiny; and

WHEREAS, the 1956 Hungarian Revolution unmasked the true nature of the Soviet system, contributing to the disintegration of communist parties in the West and across the globe; and

WHEREAS, the Hungarians in 1989 dismantled the Iron Curtain and permitted East Germans safe passage to the West, actions that led to the fall of the Berlin Wall; and

WHEREAS, on October 23, 1989, the Republic of Hungary proclaimed its independence, and in 1990 the Hungarian Parliament officially designated October 23 as a Hungarian national holiday, indicating that the legacy of the 1956 Revolution continues to inspire Hungarians to this day; and

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WHEREAS, on March 12, 1999, the Government of Hungary, reflecting the will of the Hungarian people, formally acceded to the North Atlantic Treaty and became a member of NATO and on May 1, 2004, Hungary became a full member of the European Union.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that by the adoption of this resolution, the Los Angeles City Council along with the Mayor do hereby declare October 23, 2006 as "Hungarian Freedom Day" and commend the people of Hungary as they mark the 50th anniversary of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution.

October 31, 2006

PRESENTED BY: _____

COUNCILMEMBER ERIC GARCETTI

SECONDED BY: _____

COUNCILMEMBER JACK WEISS

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