

HOUSE COMMEMORATION NO. 1019

Introduced by: Representatives Thompson, Ahlers, Dykstra, Hills, Lucas, and Pitts and
Senators Katus, Hoerth, Jerstad, and Kloucek

A LEGISLATIVE COMMEMORATION, Recognizing the fiftieth anniversary of the Hungarian Revolution that began on October 23, 1956; the sacrifices of the brave Hungarian Freedom Fighters; the great contributions of Hungarian-Americans in South Dakota; and reaffirming the friendship between the people and governments of the United States and Hungary.

WHEREAS, on October 23, 1956, hundreds of thousands of Hungarians would join students in a peaceful call for democracy and an end to the brutal Soviet-dominated communist government; peaceful protestors were fired upon by the Security Police killing hundreds and triggering the bloody fight for freedom; the Hungarian Freedom Fighters, who risked their lives to take part in their noble fight, were able to establish a revolutionary government that released political prisoners, took steps to establish a multi-party democracy, called for the withdrawal of Soviet troops, and requested international assistance; and

WHEREAS, the Soviet Union launched a massive military counteroffensive against the revolt; Prime Minister Imre Nagy was seized by Soviet forces, and subsequently tried and executed; thousands of Hungarians were tortured and tried and hundreds executed by the post-1956 Hungarian government; more than 200,000 Hungarians fled their country, and over 47,000 eventually settled in the United States where they have contributed greatly to the intellectual strength, cultural diversity, and economic might of this country; 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; on October 23, 1989, the Republic of Hungary proclaimed its independence; on March 12, 1999, Hungary became a member of NATO, and on May 1, 2004, Hungary became a member of the European Union:

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT COMMEMORATED, by the Eighty-second Legislature of the State of South Dakota, that the people of Hungary be commended as they mark the fiftieth anniversary of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution which set the stage for the ultimate collapse of communism in 1989 throughout central and eastern Europe, and two years later in the Soviet Union itself; and

BE IT FURTHER COMMEMORATED that the Legislature expresses thanks to the freedom

fighters, many who sacrificed their lives for freedom, for their bravery in the face of insurmountable odds; and

BE IT FURTHER COMMEMORATED that the Legislature expresses condolences to the people of Hungary and the families who lost loved ones in the freedom fight, and for those executed following the revolution; and

BE IT FURTHER COMMEMORATED that the Legislature expresses thanks to those refugees who brought their talents, skills, and love of freedom and helped build a stronger America; and

BE IT FURTHER COMMEMORATED that the Legislature reaffirms the friendship and cooperative relations between the governments of Hungary and the United States and between the Hungarian and American people.