



## H.Res. 838 – Welcoming His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI on his first apostolic visit to the United States

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### FLOOR SITUATION

H.Res. 838 being considered on the floor under suspension of the rules and will require a two-thirds majority vote for passage. This legislation was introduced by Representative Thaddeus McCotter (R-MI) on December 4, 2007. The resolution was referred to the House Committee on Foreign Affairs, but was never considered.

H.Res. 838 is expected to be considered on the floor of the House on April 9, 2008.

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### SUMMARY

H.Res. 838 resolves that the House of Representatives welcomes His Holiness Pope Benedict XVI on his first apostolic visit to the United States.

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### BACKGROUND

Pope Benedict XVI was born Josef Alois Ratzinger on April 16, 1927, in Marktl am Inn, Germany. In 1939, he joined a minor seminary where his brother was studying and was ordained a priest in 1952. He then studied theology at the University of Munich and received a doctorate in theology in 1957. He taught and served in academia and attended the Second Vatican Council, which lasted from 1962 – 1965, as an expert theologian. Pope Paul VI appointed him archbishop of Munich and Freising in 1977, and as cardinal one year later.

Pope John Paul II approved the election of (then) Cardinal Ratzinger as Dean of the College of Cardinals in 2002, and gave him the new title of Cardinal-Bishop of Ostia. Upon the death of Pope John Paul II on April 2, 2005, Cardinal Ratzinger presided as prefect of the Congregation of the Doctrine of Faith and participated in the Conclave to elect the next pope. On April 19, 2005, Cardinal Ratzinger was elected the 265<sup>th</sup> Pope and adopted the name Benedict XVI in honor of St. Benedict and Pope Benedict XV. Pope Benedict XVI is the first German pope to serve in 948 years.

Making his first Papal visit to the U.S., Pope Benedict XVI will arrive on April 15, 2008, at Andrews Air Force Base where he will be greeted by President Bush and the First Lady. On his visit to the District of Columbia, Pope Benedict will visit the Basilica of the National Shrine of the Immaculate Conception, offer Mass at Nationals Park, and make an address regarding Catholic education in the U.S. at The Catholic University of America. The Pope will then travel to New York, where he will address the U.N., visit Ground Zero in lower Manhattan, and conclude his Papal visit by offering Mass at Yankee Stadium in the Bronx. The Pope departs on Sunday, April 20, 2008. The last Papal visit to the U.S. was in 1999, when Pope John Paul II visited St. Louis, Missouri.

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### STAFF CONTACT

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