

WASHINGTON, D.C. – H.Res.574, expressing the sense of Congress regarding the Los Angeles Galaxy on their victory in the 2005 Major League Soccer championship and authored by Representative Xavier Becerra (CA-31), passed unanimously by a voice vote in the House of Representatives yesterday, December 13, 2005.

Following the debate and the resolution's subsequent passage, Rep. Becerra submitted the following remarks into the Congressional Record:

Mr. Speaker, I rise today to congratulate the players, coaches, staff, and owners of the Los Angeles Galaxy for winning the 2005 Major League Soccer (MLS) Cup Championship and to pay tribute to this historic feat.

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On November 13, 2005 in Frisco, Texas, the Galaxy became the 10<sup>th</sup> MLS Champion by defeating the New England Revolution by a score of 1-0 in extra time. This is the Galaxy's second MLS championship and represents only the third time in league history that a team has won the "domestic double" – the Lamar Hunt U.S. Open Cup and the MLS Cup Championship – in the same year.

The team was challenged throughout the entire season both from sustaining several injuries and also player absences due to call-ups by the United States Men's National Team. The

Galaxy's ability to overcome these adversities is a testament to the skill of the coaching staff and the talent of players who never once compromised team cohesiveness for individual glory.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to take a moment to recognize the individual players for their role in developing this championship team. This year's superb squad was led by team captain Peter Vagenas and a terrific line up that included Chris Albright, Benjamin Benditson, Pablo Chinchilla, Mubarike Chisoni, Steve Cronin, Ednaldo da Conceicao, Landon Donovan, Todd Dunivant, Michael Enfield, Josh Gardner, Herculez Gomez, Guillermo Gonzalez, Alan Gordon, Ned Grabavoy, Kevin Hartman, Ugo Ihemelu, David Johnson, Cobi Jones, Quavas Kirk, Tyrone Marshall, Paulo Nagamura, Joseph Ngwenya, Michael Nsien, Troy Roberts, Marcelo Saragosa, Josh Saunders, Michael Umana, and the 2005 MLS Cup's Most Valuable Player, midfielder Guillermo "Pando" Ramirez.

The coaching crew was also instrumental in cultivating this triumphant team. The fantastic staff was led by head coach Steve Sampson; assistant coaches Afshin Ghotbi, Billy McNicol, and Ignacio Hernandez; Head Athletic Trainer Ivan Pierra; Team Administrator Anthony Garcia; and Equipment Manager Raul Vargas.

Mr. Speaker, my hometown of Los Angeles has the best fans any team can ask for. They are more than just spectators, they are the 12

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player on the field – building momentum and inspiring their team to fight on to victory. These devoted and spirited fans contributed to eight sold out home games and brought the average home game attendance to 24,000 people this season.

The Los Angeles Galaxy deserves as many accolades for their heroic work off the field as they do for their gallant efforts on the field. During the past several years, the Galaxy Foundation has hosted the Foundation's Feast, which provides Thanksgiving dinner for 200 needy children and families. The Foundation also hosts a special holiday shopping spree for children selected by several local Salvation Army chapters.

Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank Chairman Tom Davis, Ranking Member Henry Waxman, Congressman Chris Cannon, and Congressman Danny Davis for their help in bringing H.Res. 574 to the floor today.

The Los Angeles Galaxy is a truly remarkable team whose high standards of excellence, professionalism, demonstrated courage, sacrifice, and teamwork should be commended. Their passion continues to captivate a growing and diverse fan base from all across Southern California.

Mr. Speaker and fellow colleagues, please join me and all soccer fans from across the country and the around world in congratulating the 2005 Major League Soccer Cup Champions Los Angeles Galaxy.

Praise for the Los Angeles Galaxy echoed throughout the House chamber yesterday as leading members of the House Government Reform Committee spoke in support of H.Res.574.

“The L.A. Galaxy dominated the season as one of the most experienced and talented teams in MLS soccer,” Rep. Chris Cannon (UT-3) said.

“The Galaxy is beloved by fans and boasts one of the strongest fan bases in the league,” Rep. Danny Davis (IL-7) said. “The Galaxy did not only come out victorious, but it showed the crowd that soccer is coming into its own in the United States. The team represented the City of Los Angeles and their fans with honor and courage.”

“The Los Angeles Galaxy scored another goal today,” Rep. Becerra said. “The House of Representatives came together in an overwhelming bipartisan fashion to recognize the dedication and teamwork of all the players, coaches, and staff of the Galaxy. It is important that I acknowledge and personally thank Chairman Tom Davis, Ranking Member Harry Waxman, Representatives Chris Cannon, Danny Davis and all of the co-sponsors of H.Res.574, including Juanita Millender-McDonald, Joe Baca, Howard Berman, Norman Dicks, Lane Evans, Sam Farr, Jane Harman, Mike Honda, Tom Lantos, Zoe Lofgren, Michael McNulty, Grace Napolitano, Charlie Norwood, Lucille Roybal-Allard, Linda Sanchez, Adam Schiff, Brad Sherman, Hilda Solis, Mark Udall, and Diane Watson. Without all of their help and support, the passage of this resolution would not have become reality.”

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