

**SENATE CONCURRENT
RESOLUTION No. _____**

DIGEST OF INTRODUCED RESOLUTION

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION condemning religious persecution worldwide.

HOLDMAN

_____, read first time and referred to Committee on



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1 A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION condemning religious
2 persecution worldwide.

3 *Whereas, The International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA)*
4 *of 1998 declared it to be United States (U.S.) policy to condemn*
5 *violations of religious freedom and to promote and assist other*
6 *governments in the promotion of the fundamental right to*
7 *freedom of religion;*

8 *Whereas, In the years following the IRFA, persecution of*
9 *members of various religions has continued to persist in*
10 *measurable amounts across all habitable continents;*

11 *Whereas, Christian converts face public execution in*
12 *Somalia, are being stoned for practicing their faith in Kenya,*
13 *and over 6,000 were drowned or massacred by the Boko Haram*
14 *and Fulani militias with little government intervention in*
15 *Nigeria;*

16 *Whereas, In Mexico, Nicaragua, and Colombia, Christian*
17 *church leaders have been assaulted, threatened, and in some*
18 *cases killed by transnational criminal organizations or*
19 *paramilitary armed groups attempting to intimidate and silence*
20 *them;*

21 *Whereas, In China, Buddhists and Hui Muslims face*
22 *tightened restrictions and expanding destruction of places of*
23 *worship, Christian priests are being murdered for preaching*
24 *the Gospel, church belongings are being confiscated and*
25 *burned, and members of various religions that are not*



1 registered with the government face risks of imprisonment or
2 torture;

3 Whereas, In China's Xinjiang province, thousands of
4 Muslims have been detained for "re-education" or transferred
5 to forced labor facilities, with the Uighur population in
6 particular being subject to official harassment, arbitrary
7 detention, and draconian laws on religious dress;

8 Whereas, In India, ten of 28 states have laws restricting
9 religious conversions, hundreds of faith-based
10 nongovernmental organizations have lost licenses or foreign
11 funding, and 170 million Muslims live in an environment of
12 constant local violence without meaningful government
13 deterrence;

14 Whereas, North Korea's songbun system classifies citizens
15 based on their perceived loyalty to the state and places
16 religious practitioners within the "hostile" class, considering
17 them enemies of the state and deserving of discrimination,
18 punishment, isolation, and even execution for practicing their
19 faith or owning religious materials;

20 Whereas, In Burma, conditions for ethnoreligious
21 minorities, including the Muslim Rohingya and Christian Chin,
22 have been subject to institutionalized discrimination, mass
23 killings, rapes, government-run internment camps, and are
24 denied basic rights and dignity to the point that hundreds of
25 thousands have been forced to flee the country;

26 Whereas, In the Middle East, the Taliban continue to
27 persecute religious minorities in Afghanistan, millions of Sunni
28 Muslim Arabs, Yazidis, and Christians remain in internally
29 displaced person and refugee camps in Iraq, Christian
30 churches, villages, hospitals, and schools are being destroyed
31 by the Islamic government in Sudan, and widespread
32 Muslim-on-Muslim violence permeates throughout the region
33 along the Shia-Sunni divide;

34 Whereas, In Russia, the government continues to persecute



1 *religious minorities, including Muslims, Protestants, members*
2 *of the Orthodox Church of Ukraine, Falun Gong, indigenous*
3 *religions, and has issued record-breaking prison sentences to*
4 *Jehovah's Witnesses for alleged extremism;*

5 *Whereas, Religious intolerance remains a serious concern*
6 *across Europe, where Muslims and Jews have faced rising*
7 *levels of xenophobia and discrimination in eleven countries*
8 *including France, England, Poland, Austria, and Germany;*

9 *Whereas, Countless members of religious groups have a*
10 *history of being oppressed and persecuted by Communist*
11 *regimes and are held as prisoners for merely believing in and*
12 *worshipping according to their faith;*

13 *Whereas, The 2022 U.S. Commission on Religious Freedom*
14 *Annual Report requested fifteen countries be designated as*
15 *Countries of Particular Concern (CPC): Afghanistan, Burma,*
16 *China, Eritrea, India, Iran, Nigeria, North Korea, Pakistan,*
17 *Russia, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and*
18 *Vietnam, and suggested another twelve countries be placed on*
19 *the State Department's Special Watch List (SWL);*

20 *Whereas, On November 30, 2022, in accordance with*
21 *IRFA, the U.S. Secretary of State designated twelve CPCs,*
22 *including Burma, People's Republic of China, Cuba, Eritrea,*
23 *Iran, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Nicaragua,*
24 *Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan,*
25 *and placed Algeria, the Central African Republic, Comoros,*
26 *and Vietnam on the SWL;*

27 *Whereas, Although only sixteen countries were placed on*
28 *the CPC or SWL in 2022, religious discrimination and*
29 *persecution is a global human rights problem that continues to*
30 *rise; and*

31 *Whereas, The right to religious freedom is a universal right*
32 *recognized by the Universal Declaration of Human Rights:*
33 *Therefore,*



