

**HOUSE . . . . . No. 3507**

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**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

PRESENTED BY:

***Vanna Howard and Edward J. Kennedy***

*To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:*

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying resolution:

Resolutions condemning political oppression and encouraging free and fair elections in Cambodia.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:	DATE ADDED:
<i>Vanna Howard</i>	<i>17th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/20/2023</i>
<i>Edward J. Kennedy</i>	<i>First Middlesex</i>	<i>1/20/2023</i>
<i>Rodney M. Elliott</i>	<i>16th Middlesex</i>	<i>1/20/2023</i>
<i>Michelle M. DuBois</i>	<i>10th Plymouth</i>	<i>2/7/2023</i>
<i>Patrick Joseph Kearney</i>	<i>4th Plymouth</i>	<i>2/16/2023</i>

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By Representative Howard of Lowell and Senator Kennedy, a joint petition (accompanied by resolutions, House, No. 3507) of Vanna Howard, Edward J. Kennedy and others for legislation to condemn political oppression and encouraging free and fair elections in Cambodia. Veterans and Federal Affairs.

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[SIMILAR MATTER FILED IN PREVIOUS SESSION  
SEE SENATE, NO. 2406 OF 2021-2022.]

**The Commonwealth of Massachusetts**

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**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Third General Court  
(2023-2024)**  
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Resolutions condemning political oppression and encouraging free and fair elections in Cambodia.

1           WHEREAS free and fair elections are a vital component of a democratic state in the  
2 protection of the liberty and human rights of its citizenship; and

3           WHEREAS the Paris Peace Accords of 1991, signed by the United States and 19 other  
4 nations, sought to resolve political conflict and turmoil in Cambodia by setting forth the right to  
5 self-determination of its people through free and fair elections; and

6           WHEREAS significant expenditures in the form of international aid have been made in  
7 order to promote a pluralistic, multi-party democratic system in Cambodia; and

8           WHEREAS Prime Minister Hun Sen has been in power in Cambodia since 1985 and has  
9 been using his absolute power to consolidate authority over the nation’s government, granting

10 control of every state agency and security apparatus including the country's Supreme Court to the  
11 ruling Cambodia People's Party (CPP); and

12 WHEREAS each of the five elections held in Cambodia for the office of Prime Minister  
13 since 1991 have been marked by fraud, voter intimidation, and the misuse of legal mechanisms  
14 by the government to suppress support for opposition candidates and parties, and have thereby  
15 not been free nor fair; and

16 WHEREAS the government of Cambodia has engaged in oppressive tactics aimed at  
17 limiting conditions that are intrinsic to a democratic state including the restriction of its media  
18 environment by ordering radio stations to cease operations and by arresting journalists; and

19 WHEREAS in efforts to repress viable political challenges, the government of Cambodia  
20 has dissolved the biggest and only viable rival party, the Cambodia National Rescue Party  
21 (CNRP), and has arrested said party's President, Kem Sokha, on politically motivated charges;  
22 and

23 WHEREAS the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has been enriched by its significant  
24 population of Cambodian American people, many of whom entered the United States as refugees  
25 or as asylum seekers escaping genocide and from conditions that demonstrate the humanitarian  
26 hardships posed by the absence of democracy; and

27 WHEREAS the United States has a responsibility to take action in order to prevent the  
28 undermining of democracy around the globe;

29 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature calls upon the Congress, the  
30 President and the Vice President of the United States to support and enact legislation and further

31 request that Cambodia adopt the recent recommendations by the United Nations Special  
32 Rapporteur of Human Rights in Cambodia in order to promote democracy and prevent the  
33 further erosion of human rights in Cambodia, including the Cambodia Democracy Act of 2019  
34 and the Cambodian Trade Act of 2019; and

35           THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature transmit copies of  
36 this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the  
37 House of Representatives, to the Majority Leader of the Senate, and to each Senator and  
38 Representative from Massachusetts in the Congress of the United States.