

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 287 Session of 2017

INTRODUCED BY BERNSTINE, METCALFE, SACCONI, BAKER, SOLOMON, BIZZARRO, DIGIROLAMO, RYAN, READSHAW, NELSON, KAUFFMAN, MILLARD, TOEPEL, V. BROWN, WARD, SAYLOR, GROVE, COOK, ROTHMAN, MOUL, D. COSTA AND GILLEN, APRIL 25, 2017

AS AMENDED, HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, MAY 23, 2017

A RESOLUTION

1 Condemning the Syrian government's chemical weapons attack on
2 Khan Sheikoun, Syria, and President Bashar al-Assad for
3 Syria's ongoing and historical use of chemical weapons
4 against the Syrian people; CONDEMNING RUSSIA FOR CONTINUING <--
5 SUPPORT OF THE SYRIAN REGIME; and urging the Congress of the
6 United States to consider and approve an authorization for
7 the use of military force to allow for additional military
8 action in Syria for the purpose of deterring further use of
9 chemical weapons in Syria and the world.

10 WHEREAS, On April 4, 2017, chemical weapons were used in an
11 attack that killed dozens of people, including children in Khan
12 Sheikoun in Syria's Idlib province; and

13 WHEREAS, Initial reports suggest that the attack involved a
14 chemical nerve agent and autopsies on Syrians who died after
15 being brought to Turkey for treatment suggest sarin was used in
16 the attack; and

17 WHEREAS, The World Health Organization confirmed that some
18 survivors had symptoms consistent with exposure to a category of
19 chemicals that includes nerve agents; and

20 WHEREAS, The Hague-based Organisation for the Prohibition of

1 Chemical Weapons reports that it is in the process of gathering  
2 and analyzing information on the attack from all available  
3 sources; and

4 WHEREAS, On April 5, 2017, the United Nations Security  
5 Council called an emergency meeting to discuss the chemical  
6 weapons attack in Idlib province; and

7 WHEREAS, The reported use of chemical weapons in Idlib  
8 province, if confirmed, would constitute the largest single  
9 attack in Syria since 2013, the United Nations High  
10 Representative for Disarmament Affairs told the United Nations  
11 Security Council on April 5; and

12 WHEREAS, Syria has a history of using chemical weapons on its  
13 citizens. An investigation by the United Nations and the  
14 Organisation for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons found that  
15 Syrian government forces were responsible for three chlorine gas  
16 attacks in 2014 and 2015; and

17 WHEREAS, On April 6, 2017, two destroyers, the U.S.S. Porter  
18 and the U.S.S. Ross, fired 59 Tomahawk missiles at the airfield  
19 in Syria from which the Assad regime is believed to have  
20 conducted the April 4 chemical weapons attack; and

21 WHEREAS, On April 6, 2017, subsequent to the targeted air  
22 strikes the President of the United States delivered a statement  
23 to the American people in which the President decried the  
24 barbaric nature of the attacks on Syrian civilians, including  
25 children; and

26 WHEREAS, The President said, it is in the "vital national  
27 security interest of the United States to prevent and deter the  
28 spread and use of deadly chemical weapons"; and

29 WHEREAS, The President added: "There can be no dispute that  
30 Syria used banned chemical weapons, violated its obligations

1 under the Chemical Weapons Convention and ignored the urging of  
2 the UN Security Council"; and

3 WHEREAS, Subsequent to the April 6 air strikes, there has  
4 been public debate, as well as debate among members of the  
5 Congress, regarding a possible authorization for the use of  
6 military force to take additional military action against Syria;  
7 and

8 WHEREAS, There is some disagreement among members of the  
9 Congress as to whether additional military action should be  
10 taken against Syria at this time; and

11 WHEREAS, A number of members of the Congress have opened the  
12 door for a possible authorization for the use of military force,  
13 should the President bring such a proposal to the Congress; and

14 WHEREAS, Chemical weapons are considered weapons of mass  
15 destruction and their use in warfare is outlawed under the  
16 Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production,  
17 Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their  
18 Destruction, also known as the Chemical Weapons Convention; and

19 WHEREAS, The use of chemical weapons is considered morally  
20 reprehensible given the extreme suffering that chemical weapons  
21 can inflict on individuals who are exposed to them; ~~therefore be~~ <--  
22 ~~it~~ AND <--

23 WHEREAS, RUSSIAN PRESIDENT VLADIMIR PUTIN CONTINUES TO  
24 SUPPORT THE REGIME OF BASHAR AL-ASSAD; AND

25 WHEREAS, RUSSIA VETOED A UNITED NATIONS RESOLUTION CONDEMNING  
26 THE APRIL 2017 DEADLY GAS ATTACK IN SYRIA, BELIEVED TO HAVE BEEN  
27 CARRIED OUT WITH SARIN GAS, THE EIGHTH TIME DURING SYRIA'S SIX-  
28 YEAR-OLD CIVIL WAR THAT MOSCOW HAS USED ITS VETO POWER ON THE  
29 UNITED NATIONS SECURITY COUNCIL TO SHIELD ASSAD'S GOVERNMENT;  
30 THEREFORE BE IT

1       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the  
2 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania condemn the Syrian government's  
3 chemical weapons attack on Khan Sheikhoun, Syria, and President  
4 Bashar al-Assad for Syria's ongoing and historical use of  
5 chemical weapons against the Syrian people; and be it further

6       RESOLVED, THAT THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE       <--  
7 COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA CONDEMN RUSSIAN PRESIDENT VLADIMIR  
8 PUTIN AND RUSSIA FOR THE CONTINUING SUPPORT FOR THE REGIME OF  
9 BASHAR AL-ASSAD; AND BE IT FURTHER

10       RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the  
11 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania urge the Congress of the United  
12 States to consider and approve an authorization for the use of  
13 military force to allow for additional military action in Syria  
14 for the purpose of deterring further use of chemical weapons in  
15 Syria and the world; and be it further

16       RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to  
17 the President of the United States and to members of  
18 Pennsylvania's Congressional Delegation.