

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 582

By Goins

A RESOLUTION to urge the Tennessee Congressional delegation to influence the Department of Justice to ensure that the Romeike family is granted asylum.

WHEREAS, the freedom of individual rights which this nation is founded upon should be extended to those individuals who seek asylum from injustice; and

WHEREAS, the Romeike family arrived in the United States from Germany in 2008, fleeing fines, imprisonment, and the seizure of their children, due to their decision to home school their six children based on a Christian curriculum; and

WHEREAS, home schooling is a violation of national law in Germany, a law that was promulgated under Adolf Hitler in 1938, which mandates that all children be sent to public schools; the German government began harshly enforcing this law, and at one point the police forcibly took the Romeike's children to school and have threatened to take custodial rights away from the parents; and

WHEREAS, after fleeing to the United States, the Romeike family settled in Tennessee and continues to home school their children while seeking asylum in this country; and

WHEREAS, in 2010, Memphis immigration judge, Lawrence Burman, granted the family asylum, finding that they faced persecution for their faith if they returned to Germany; however, the Department of Justice appealed, and Judge Burman's decision was overturned; both the Sixth Circuit Court and the Obama administration expressed the opinion that the Romeike family was not being persecuted since the public schooling law applies to all German citizens; and

WHEREAS, the Romeike family was denied a rehearing, but has found support from the Homeschool Legal Defense Association (HSLDA); and the Romeikes and the HSLDA are now petitioning the Supreme Court to hear the case; and

WHEREAS, Uwe Romeike, the father of the Romeike family, stated, "We hope that the Supreme Court will hear our appeal and that we may be able to stay here. America is a land of freedom and we cannot go back to Germany where our children will be taken from us just because we homeschool"; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED EIGHTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that we hereby urge the Tennessee Congressional delegation to do all within its power to influence the Department of Justice to permit asylum for the Romeike family.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that an appropriate copies of this resolution be prepared for delivery and presentation to each member of the Tennessee Congressional Delegation with this final clause omitted from such copy.