

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. 769

To amend title 36, United States Code, to designate March 9 as U.S. Hostage and Wrongful Detainee Day and to designate the Hostage and Wrongful Detainee flag as an official symbol to recognize citizens of the United States held as hostages or wrongfully detained abroad.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MARCH 9, 2023

Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mrs. SHAHEEN, and Mr. GRAHAM) introduced the following bill; which was read twice and referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

A BILL

To amend title 36, United States Code, to designate March 9 as U.S. Hostage and Wrongful Detainee Day and to designate the Hostage and Wrongful Detainee flag as an official symbol to recognize citizens of the United States held as hostages or wrongfully detained abroad.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “U.S. Hostage and
5 Wrongful Detainee Day Act of 2023”.

6 **SEC. 2. DESIGNATION.**

7 (a) **HOSTAGE AND WRONGFUL DETAINEE DAY.**—

1 (1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 1 of title 36, United
2 States Code, is amended—

3 (A) by redesignating the second section
4 146 (relating to Choose Respect Day) as section
5 147; and

6 (B) by adding at the end the following:

7 **“§ 148. U.S. Hostage and Wrongful Detainee Day**

8 “(a) DESIGNATION.—March 9 is U.S. Hostage and
9 Wrongful Detainee Day.

10 “(b) PROCLAMATION.—The President is requested to
11 issue each year a proclamation calling on the people of
12 the United States to observe U.S. Hostage and Wrongful
13 Detainee Day with appropriate ceremonies and activi-
14 ties.”.

15 (2) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMEND-
16 MENT.—The table of sections for chapter 1 of title
17 36, United States Code, is amended by striking the
18 item relating to the second section 146 and inserting
19 the following new items:

“147. Choose Respect Day.

“148. U.S. Hostage and Wrongful Detainee Day.”.

20 (b) HOSTAGE AND WRONGFUL DETAINEE FLAG.—

21 (1) IN GENERAL.—Chapter 9 of title 36, United
22 States Code, is amended by adding at the end the
23 following new section:

1 **“§ 904. Hostage and Wrongful Detainee flag**

2 “(a) DESIGNATION.—The Hostage and Wrongful De-
3 tainee flag championed by the Bring Our Families Home
4 Campaign is designated as the symbol of the commitment
5 of the United States to recognizing, and prioritizing the
6 freedom of, citizens and lawful permanent residents of the
7 United States held as hostages or wrongfully detained
8 abroad.

9 “(b) REQUIRED DISPLAY.—

10 “(1) IN GENERAL.—The Hostage and Wrongful
11 Detainee flag shall be displayed at the locations
12 specified in paragraph (3) on the days specified in
13 paragraph (2).

14 “(2) DAYS SPECIFIED.—The days specified in
15 this paragraph are the following:

16 “(A) U.S. Hostage and Wrongful Detainee
17 Day, March 9.

18 “(B) Flag Day, June 14.

19 “(C) Independence Day, July 4.

20 “(D) Any day on which a citizen or lawful
21 permanent resident of the United States—

22 “(i) returns to the United States from
23 being held hostage or wrongfully detained
24 abroad; or

25 “(ii) dies while being held hostage or
26 wrongfully detained abroad.

1 “(3) LOCATIONS SPECIFIED.—The locations
2 specified in this paragraph are the following:

3 “(A) The Capitol.

4 “(B) The White House.

5 “(C) The buildings containing the official
6 office of—

7 “(i) the Secretary of State; and

8 “(ii) the Secretary of Defense.

9 “(c) DISPLAY TO BE IN A MANNER VISIBLE TO THE
10 PUBLIC.—Display of the Hostage and Wrongful Detainee
11 flag pursuant to this section shall be in a manner designed
12 to ensure visibility to the public.

13 “(d) LIMITATION.—This section may not be con-
14 strued or applied so as to require any employee to report
15 to work solely for the purpose of providing for the display
16 of the Hostage and Wrongful Detainee flag.”.

17 (2) TECHNICAL AND CONFORMING AMEND-
18 MENT.—The table of sections for chapter 9 of title
19 36, United States Code, is amended by adding at
20 the end the following:

“904. Hostage and Wrongful Detainee flag.”.

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