

H. Res. 554

In the House of Representatives, U. S.,

November 20, 2024.

Whereas national, ethnic, religious, and linguistic minorities and indigenous peoples, including Yezidis, Turkmen, Shabak, Sabaeen-Mandeans, Kaka'i, and indigenous Christians (including Chaldean, Syriac, Assyrian, Armenian, and Melkite communities), among others, have been an integral part of the cultural fabric and history of Iraq and the broader Middle East;

Whereas these same religious and ethnic minorities have made and continue to make invaluable contributions to the prosperity and well-being of societies across the Middle East and the world, including in the United States;

Whereas, according to the 2017 Report on International Religious Freedom, the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (“ISIS”) is responsible for carrying out a “campaign of violence against members of all faiths, in particular non-Sunnis”;

Whereas ethnic and religious minorities were subjected to innumerable atrocities by ISIS, including forced religious conversion, kidnapping, slavery, human trafficking, unlawful forced displacement, ethnic cleansing, torture, sexual violence, and sex trafficking, among other crimes;

Whereas the Secretary of State declared on March 17, 2016, and on August 15, 2017, that ISIS is responsible for genocide, crimes against humanity, and other atrocities against religious and ethnic minority groups in Iraq and Syria, including Shia Muslims, Christians, and Yezidis, among other religious and ethnic groups;

Whereas the Iraq and Syria Genocide Relief and Accountability Act of 2018 (Public Law 115–300) affirms that it is the policy of the United States to ensure that assistance for religious and ethnic minorities is directed towards those most in need, including those that the Secretary of State declared were targeted for genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes, and have been identified as being at risk of persecution, forced migration, genocide, crimes against humanity, or war crimes;

Whereas members of these religious and ethnic minority communities continue to face daily insecurity, discrimination, and hardship;

Whereas religious and ethnic minorities continue to face significant challenges to returning to their ancestral homelands, including in Mosul, Baaj, Sinjar, the Nineveh Plain, and other Yezidi places, due to security concerns, economic hardship, and shifting demographics; and

Whereas the restoration and stabilization of these regions will provide an opportunity for diverse ethnic and religious communities to flourish: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) commits to protecting and upholding internationally recognized human rights of members of religious and ethnic minority communities;

(2) supports the restoration of security, stability, and economic opportunity of, as well as the safe, dignified, and voluntary return of, internally displaced persons, including those originally from the territories of Mosul, Baaj, Sinjar, and the Nineveh Plain;

(3) supports the restoration of religious and cultural heritage sites in Iraq, including, churches, and other religious sites, and community buildings of religious and ethnic minority communities in these regions; and

(4) supports equal and inclusive representation for religious and ethnic minority groups in Iraq in line with article 125 of the Constitution of Iraq and encourages the Secretary of State to promote opportunities for affected minority groups to further that objective.

Attest:

Clerk.