

I thank the gentlewoman from Florida for introducing this bill, and I thank the gentleman from New York for his cosponsorship. I urge my colleagues to support this bill, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Nebraska (Mr. FLOOD) that the House suspend the rules and pass the bill, H.R. 537, as amended.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the bill, as amended, was passed.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

CALLING FOR THE IMMEDIATE RELEASE OF RYAN CORBETT, A UNITED STATES CITIZEN

Mr. MCCAUL. Madam Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 965) calling for the immediate release of Ryan Corbett, a United States citizen, who was wrongfully detained by the Taliban on August 10, 2022, and condemning the wrongful detention of Americans by the Taliban.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 965

Whereas United States citizen Ryan Corbett has lived a life of service, by supporting humanitarian projects in Afghanistan by helping the Afghan people start and operate small businesses;

Whereas Ryan Corbett moved his family to Afghanistan in 2010 to help the local population and lived there for over a decade aiding the local Afghan population;

Whereas in 2017, Ryan Corbett founded "Bloom Afghanistan" to provide consulting and microloans to Afghan small businesses to help build a self-sustaining local economy of Afghan small businesses;

Whereas Ryan Corbett is known to his family, friends, colleagues, and associates as a loving father, as well as a kind, service-oriented man;

Whereas Ryan Corbett was forced to leave his life, community, and Afghan partners behind during the August 2021 Taliban takeover of Afghanistan and the ensuing evacuation of American citizens;

Whereas in August 2022, Ryan Corbett traveled to Afghanistan for a 10-day trip to check in on his business and employees and was detained by the Taliban;

Whereas the Taliban detained Ryan Corbett without being charged with a crime or granting him due process in any judicial proceedings;

Whereas, on October 10, 2023, Ryan Corbett was designated as wrongfully detained by the Department of State;

Whereas Ryan Corbett is being held in a 9-foot by 9-foot cell with two other detainees, and has been held in solitary confinement for months at a time;

Whereas the Taliban has not granted Ryan Corbett any consular visits by Department of State personnel;

Whereas during his detention, Ryan Corbett has only had 3 phone calls totaling 22 minutes with his family, and has only had 2 in-person visits with representatives of the

United States protecting power in Afghanistan, Qatar;

Whereas three non-American individuals previously detained with Ryan Corbett have been released and have reported on Ryan's conditions;

Whereas Ryan Corbett's former cellmates stated that prisoners at that facility must survive on scraps of fatty meat, only have access to sunlight once a month, and cannot use the bathroom without permission;

Whereas Ryan Corbett's former cellmates stated that during their captivity, Ryan Corbett was suffering from seizures, fainting, and discolored extremities; and

Whereas Ryan Corbett turned 40 years old during his wrongful detention, and his physical and mental health is rapidly declining due to the stress and harsh conditions, such that his family fears he will not survive his wrongful detention: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) calls on the Taliban to immediately and unconditionally release Ryan Corbett and all other American detainees;

(2) urges the Taliban to respect Ryan Corbett's human rights and to provide full, unfettered, and consistent health and safety visits to Ryan Corbett while in detention;

(3) encourages the Government of Qatar, as the protecting power of the United States in Afghanistan, to continue in its efforts to conduct basic health and wellness checks on Ryan Corbett, thanks Qatar for its efforts thus far, and encourages Qatar to be involved in securing the release of Ryan Corbett;

(4) urges all United States executive branch officials to continue to raise the case of Ryan Corbett and to press for his immediate release in all interactions with the Taliban;

(5) condemns the Taliban's practice of hostage taking and demands the Taliban to stop detaining United States citizens for political gain;

(6) expresses sympathy for and solidarity with the families of all other citizens and lawful permanent residents of the United States wrongfully detained abroad; and

(7) expresses support for the family of Ryan Corbett and a commitment to bringing Ryan Corbett home.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MCCAUL) and the gentleman from Massachusetts (Mr. KEATING) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentleman from Texas.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. MCCAUL. Madam Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on this measure.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Texas?

There was no objection.

Mr. MCCAUL. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Madam Speaker, on August 10, 2022, Ryan Corbett was detained by the Taliban in Afghanistan.

Ryan Corbett is a loving husband to Anna, and father of three wonderful children: Ketsia, Miriam, and Caleb. I spent quite a bit of time with the family.

In 2 weeks, his oldest daughter graduates from high school, but instead of

being home with his family right now celebrating his daughter, he is suffering in a Taliban prison.

Ryan Corbett and his family lived in Afghanistan for over a decade. He supported humanitarian efforts and provided opportunities for the Afghan people. He is a good man who has dedicated his life to helping others. He is not a criminal.

Despite pressure to act from the committee I chair, the House Foreign Affairs Committee, it took over a year for this administration to declare Ryan as wrongfully detained.

After constant engagement with this administration, the Corbett family has yet to receive any information regarding a plan to secure his release. Many of these requests for meetings with high-level administration officials have been repeatedly ignored. This is unacceptable. This administration must put a priority on bringing Ryan and other wrongfully detained Americans home now.

Ryan's situation is dire. Ryan's wife, Anna, reports his mental and physical health have significantly deteriorated in recent months.

The Taliban has refused to allow Ryan the voice to advocate for himself. He has only spoken to his wife a handful of times since he has been detained. Ryan is being held in inhumane conditions in a tiny cell with unreliable access to food and no ability to go outside. He is fed only scraps to eat, and he has faced solitary confinement for weeks on end.

Ryan is facing serious medical conditions, experiencing seizures and often fainting. I want to assure Ryan's wife, Anna, along with his family, friends, and coworkers that we will continue our fight every day until we bring him home.

As the father of five children myself, I cannot begin to imagine the pain and suffering Ryan's family is feeling right now.

This Congress and all Americans stand with Ryan, and that is why I am proud to support this bipartisan resolution today that condemns the Taliban regime for its illegal imprisonment of Ryan and demands his immediate release. It calls upon the Biden administration to prioritize bringing all American citizens home who are wrongfully detained overseas.

The President must project strength on the world stage and secure the immediate release of Ryan. Anything less is a failure of American leadership.

Madam Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

□ 1630

Mr. KEATING. Madam Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

I rise in strong support of H. Res. 965, calling for the immediate release of Ryan Corbett, a United States citizen, who was wrongfully detained by the Taliban on August 10, 2022, and condemning the wrongful detention of Americans by the Taliban, as well.

I thank Representative TENNEY and Chairman MCCAUL for their work on this resolution, as well as Ranking Member MEEKS and so many other people who joined together in a bipartisan effort to highlight the Taliban's wrongful detention of Ryan Corbett.

Ryan and his family made Kabul home for more than a decade. In 2017, he founded a business consultancy focused on straightening out Afghanistan's private sector.

Anna Corbett spoke in front of our committee this past November and again in April at a roundtable for the families of detainees. She shared the harrowing experience she and her family have been through themselves and some insights she has gained into Ryan's conditions in a Taliban prison. She has continued to advocate with our government to continue to do all that it can to bring him home.

I know that the Biden administration has made the return of Americans detained overseas, including Ryan's case, a priority at the highest of levels, particularly for Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs Roger Carstens and Special Representative for Afghanistan Tom West. I thank them for their focus on bringing American citizens wrongfully detained abroad home and pledge to continue to work with them, Representative TENNEY, and others to bring Ryan home, too.

Finally, I thank our partners in Qatar, who serve as our protecting power in Afghanistan and who have been key partners in helping secure the release of American citizens in Afghanistan and around the world. We are grateful for Qatar's ability to conduct occasional health and safety visits to Ryan and demand that the Taliban allow these visits much more frequently.

Ultimately, we call on the Taliban themselves to release Ryan immediately and allow him to safely return to his family.

Madam Speaker, I encourage our colleagues to join together in supporting this measure, and I reserve the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCAUL. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as she may consume to the gentlewoman from New York (Ms. TENNEY), a member of the Committee on Ways and Means and the author of this measure. The Corbett family resides in her district.

Ms. TENNEY. Madam Speaker, I thank the Representative for yielding.

I rise in strong support of my resolution on the floor today calling for the immediate release of Ryan Corbett, a United States citizen, who was wrongfully detained by the Taliban on August 10, 2022, and condemning the wrongful detention of Americans by the Taliban. This resolution demands the Taliban immediately and unconditionally release Ryan Corbett and all other wrongfully detained Americans from captivity.

When I first heard from my constituent Ryan Corbett's lovely wife,

Anna, about Ryan's detention and the brutal conditions he was facing, I was heartbroken. Our community is heartbroken.

Ryan was detained by the Taliban, as I said, on August 10, 2022, after dedicating over a decade of his life and his family's life to helping the Afghan people start a self-sustaining local economy.

To date, Ryan has never been charged with a crime. Ryan is being held in a 9- by 9-foot basement cell without regular access to a bathroom, sunlight, medical care, or decent food.

Reports from now-freed individuals who were detained with Ryan state that he is in poor health with discolored extremities. He suffers from fainting and seizures and fading eyesight.

Ryan has been held for over 670 days. He has had only a mere handful of phone calls with his loving wife, Anna, and his three children, Ketsia, Miriam, and Caleb, all of whom were my guests at the State of the Union Address this year.

The Biden administration must do everything in its power to bring Ryan home and reunite him with Anna and their three wonderful children and let them spend time with their father in the way they should.

I am honored that 72 Members on both sides of the aisle have joined me as original cosponsors of this resolution, making it clear that freeing Ryan is a bipartisan priority.

In crafting this resolution, I worked closely with the minority and majority staff of the House Foreign Affairs Committee and, of course, the Corbett family. I give my heartfelt thanks to Chairman MCCAUL, Ranking Member MEEKS, and everyone in leadership on all sides of the Foreign Affairs Committee for their support in helping this resolution come to the floor. I am pleased to see that it passed the House Foreign Affairs Committee unanimously on February 6.

Madam Speaker, I urge all of my colleagues to support this resolution and show the Biden administration that Congress is paying attention and stands united in demanding Ryan's freedom.

Further, this resolution will send an indisputable message to Ryan and all of our American detainees that Congress is there with them, thinking of them and praying for them, and that we are continuing to work to secure their release.

I acknowledge and thank Anna Corbett and her children for their strength and courage during these difficult days filled with uncertainty and anguish about Ryan's health and whether he will be returned.

I also mention a special word of note. Anna is a true inspiration to everyone, not only her children but everyone in our community. She exhibits incredible grace and resolve in an unimaginably difficult situation as the mother of three children and the wife of Ryan Corbett, who has been suffering this for over 670 days.

Madam Speaker, I again thank my colleagues on both sides of the aisle and everyone who has joined in advocating for Ryan's release, and I encourage all of my colleagues to support this commonsense resolution. I thank everyone for their love and care of the Corbett family.

Mr. KEATING. Madam Speaker, I yield 3 minutes to the gentleman from Kentucky (Mr. MCGARVEY), who has been a strong supporter of Ryan's release and is working hand in hand with Ryan's father, who lives in his area.

Mr. MCGARVEY. Madam Speaker, I rise in support of this resolution and call for the immediate release of Ryan Corbett and all unlawfully detained Americans.

Today marks the 671st day that Ryan Corbett, an American citizen, has been wrongfully detained by the Taliban in Afghanistan—671 days.

When you have these jobs, you never know who is going to call your office. I learned of Ryan's capture when his father, Drew, called our office to let us know that his son was being unlawfully held by the Taliban. We were shocked.

It is absolutely horrifying to get that kind of call, especially from another dad in my hometown. I can't imagine as a parent what it is like to have your child taken from you, knowing they are alive, knowing they are struggling, and knowing you can't get to them. To get that call just breaks your heart.

The reality is Ryan's whole family deserves to have him home. Ryan has been allowed only eight phone calls with his family since being detained in 2022, a total of 85 minutes in 671 days. We stand committed to bringing Ryan back for them.

I am so grateful to Representative TENNEY for leading this resolution and for her persistence in fighting for Ryan and to Chairman MCCAUL and Representative KEATING for their words here today, and I thank the Biden administration for working to get Ryan home as quickly as possible.

We are with Ryan's dad, Drew; Ryan's wife, Anna; his children, Ketsia, Miriam, and Caleb; and the rest of Ryan's family and friends. We are fighting for Ryan. This is a bipartisan effort, an American effort, and we will keep doing everything we can to bring Ryan home safely.

Today, Congress sends a clear message: We must bring Ryan home now.

Madam Speaker, I strongly urge my colleagues to support this resolution.

Mr. MCCAUL. Madam Speaker, I yield such time as he may consume to the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MEUSER), a member of the Committee on Financial Services and an original cosponsor of this measure.

Mr. MEUSER. Madam Speaker, I thank Chairman MCCAUL very much for his assistance and leadership in bringing this resolution to the floor and for his leadership on the Foreign Affairs Committee.

I also thank Representative TENNEY, my good friend, for everything she has

done to advocate on behalf of Ryan Corbett, as well as Representative KEATING and others who are engaged in this important resolution.

I do rise today in strong support of this resolution, which calls for the immediate release of Ryan Corbett, who has been wrongfully detained by the Taliban since August 10, 2022.

Ryan, who is originally from Susquehanna County in my district, relocated his family to Afghanistan in 2010 with the mission of aiding and assisting the Afghan population, eventually founding Bloom Afghanistan, a firm that provides consulting and microloans to Afghan small businesses.

After evacuating his family in the wake of the Afghanistan withdrawal, Ryan returned to Afghanistan in 2022, during which time he was imprisoned by the Taliban and forced to endure the most inhumane conditions, rarely being able to communicate with his family. He has never been accused of a crime.

My team and I, and many teams, as you can see here, have been involved in efforts on behalf of Ryan Corbett. We have all met with Anna Corbett, who has been mentioned here now several times, and her children many times.

Anna Corbett is working tirelessly, covering every department that she possibly can, having meetings from the top people at the State Department to all Members of Congress and with other nations' ambassadors, doing everything possible for the release of her husband, Ryan.

Today, we continue to implore the State Department to use all appropriate pressure to ensure Ryan's release.

Alongside calling for his immediate release, we also recognize Qatar for its effort in helping free Ryan and facilitating many visits, calls, and medical check-ins.

The humanitarian funding from USAID for the Taliban should be, Madam Speaker, scrutinized, minimized, or perhaps terminated until all wrongfully detained Americans in Afghanistan are returned home.

Ryan has been held hostage, as has been stated, by the Taliban for 671 days. Any sign of appeasement from the Biden administration should be hardened, and we should deal from strength. We certainly need more stick and less carrot when it comes to the release of American hostages.

We appreciate the work of the State Department, but we need to get the job done. That means getting Ryan and other American hostages in Afghanistan home immediately.

Madam Speaker, I urge passage of this resolution.

Mr. KEATING. Madam Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Once again, I thank the gentleman from Texas for his leadership on the committee dealing with this, as well as Ranking Member MEEKS.

Madam Speaker, I close by expressing my deepest sympathy to Anna

Corbett and all of Ryan's children, family, and loved ones. I can only imagine the pain that they must feel every day and the fear they have for Ryan's safety every day. The strength and courage they have shown and their commitment to securing his release is truly remarkable, though nothing will ease their pain until Ryan is brought home.

They should know that Congress stands with them and that we will not rest until he is home safely and reunited with them. That is the mission of this resolution, and I urge all of my colleagues to join me in strongly supporting this measure.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

One American hostage is too many. We remember each one of them, and we will not rest until they are safely home.

It is clear that the Taliban is holding Ryan for its own political gain and using him as leverage to extract concessions from this administration.

Anna, who we all know very well, has appeared before the Foreign Affairs Committee several times to discuss Ryan's unjust imprisonment. She has bravely shared the horror story of her husband and his family and what they are living through day in and day out.

A single day of unlawful detention is too long, and Ryan's nearly 2-year captivity must be resolved. Otherwise, we must question what the value is of an American passport and citizenship if our government fails us in our greatest moment of need.

We should be projecting power, levying sanctions, and holding governments accountable for their human rights abuses. This administration, at times, has projected weakness on the world stage, and when you do so, it is hard to negotiate from a position of strength.

Ryan's case is very dire. It is time to bring him home to his family and country.

This resolution, as Mr. KEATING stated, will send a very strong message to the Taliban that America, Republicans and Democrats alike, will not tolerate the illegitimate detention of American citizens. Our message is clear: Congress will not rest until Ryan is brought home.

We stand with Ryan, Anna, and their children. We have not, and we will not, forget them. It is hard to look Anna and her children in the eyes knowing that her husband is in solitary confinement in Afghanistan under Taliban rule.

Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to stand with Ryan Corbett and support this measure, and I yield back the balance of my time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. MEUSER). The question is on the motion offered by the gentleman from Texas (Mr. MCCAUL) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 965.

The question was taken; and (two-thirds being in the affirmative) the rules were suspended and the resolution was agreed to.

A motion to reconsider was laid on the table.

□ 1645

CONDEMNING RUSSIA'S UNJUST AND ARBITRARY DETENTION OF RUSSIAN OPPOSITION LEADER VLADIMIR KARA-MURZA

Mr. MCCAUL. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the concurrent resolution (H. Con. Res. 27) condemning Russia's unjust and arbitrary detention of Russian opposition leader Vladimir Kara-Murza who has stood up in defense of democracy, the rule of law, and free and fair elections in Russia, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the concurrent resolution.

The text of the concurrent resolution is as follows:

H. CON. RES. 27

Whereas, on April 11, 2022, Vladimir Kara-Murza was unjustly detained by Russian authorities for spreading supposedly "false information" in a speech in March 2022 to the Arizona House of Representatives;

Whereas Mr. Kara-Murza in his March 15, 2022, speech presented a defiant condemnation of Vladimir Putin's policies and leadership outlining his corruption and malign intentions, and condemning the illegal war of aggression Putin has unleashed against Ukraine;

Whereas, prior to his arrest in April 2022, Mr. Kara-Murza was poisoned twice by agents of the Russian Government and the Russian Federation in 2015 and 2017 with a military-grade agent banned internationally, likely in retaliation for his defiant stance in support of rule of law and democracy in Russia;

Whereas, despite having survived two assassination attempts and the subsequent side effects of these poisonings, Mr. Kara-Murza regularly returned to Russia to advocate for democratic representation in Russia;

Whereas Mr. Kara-Murza has consistently advocated for democracy in Russia and insisted that democracy in Russia must be advanced by Russians for all those living in Russia;

Whereas, in August 2022, new charges were brought against Mr. Kara-Murza for "carrying out the activities" of an "undesirable foreign organization" and his arrest was extended for his work as a leading member of Russian civil society;

Whereas, in October 2022, Mr. Kara-Murza was further charged unjustly with "high treason" in part due to his public condemnations of the Kremlin's military aggression on Ukraine and domestic repressions;

Whereas, in April 2023, Mr. Kara-Murza was unjustly sentenced to 25 years in prison;

Whereas the state of Mr. Kara-Murza's health has deteriorated and in addition to losing over 45 pounds, he was diagnosed with polyneuropathy, a condition that under Russian law should have precluded him from detainment;

Whereas, as a result of his diagnosis, he has lost feeling in both his feet and has experienced symptoms similar to those he experienced following his 2015 poisoning due to peripheral nerve damage;

Whereas section 5599F of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act