

Atlanta, and in 2005, President George W. Bush awarded Ali the Presidential Medal of Freedom.

Muhammad Ali also left a lasting impact on my home State of California. For roughly 7 years, Ali lived in Los Angeles, and five of his professional fights were held in Southern California. Due to his courage and conviction, the 1987 California Bicentennial Foundation for the U.S. Constitution selected Ali to personify the vitality of the Constitution and the Bill of Rights.

The Congressional Gold Medal is a fitting award for an American who devoted his life and career to uplifting underserved communities in the United States and abroad. I want to thank Representative CARSON for introducing this bill in the House, and I hope that our colleagues on both sides of the aisle will join us in awarding a posthumous Congressional Gold Medal to Muhammad Ali.

By Mr. PADILLA (for himself and Ms. BUTLER):

S. 3857. A bill to take certain land in the State of California into trust for the benefit of the Jamul Indian Village of California, and for other purposes; to the Committee on Indian Affairs.

Mr. PADILLA. Madam President, I rise to introduce the Jamul Indian Village Land Transfer Act.

The Jamul Indian Village Land Transfer Act would place four parcels of approximately 172 acres of land already owned in fee by the Jamul Indian Village into trust by the United States for the benefit of the Tribe.

The four parcels of land in the bill would not be used for any class II or class III gaming under the Indian Gaming Regulatory Act.

Over time, Jamul's ancestral lands have diminished from over 640 acres to just 6 acres, which now comprise the Tribe's entire trust land base. This 6-acre reservation is one of the smallest reservations in the country.

In 2005, Jamul Tribal members voluntarily moved off of the reservation in order to allow the Tribe to pursue economic development, build a casino, and become self-sufficient and less reliant on the Federal Government.

The Tribe has worked hard to maximize the use of its 6-acre reservation. Jamul opened a casino in 2006 and is working towards the opening of an adjacent hotel next year. Once the hotel is complete, the casino and hotel will occupy the entire Tribal reservation.

This legislation would place additional acres into trust for the benefit of the Tribe, allowing Jamul to build a true homeland and bring their members back to the reservation. On the largest parcel covered by the bill, Jamul plans to develop housing for their Tribal members so they can create a true homeland, as well as use the land for administrative offices, a health clinic, a childcare center, educational services, a community center, law enforcement offices, and other community resources for Tribal members.

Another parcel contains the only physical access road to the Tribe's reservation, and the fourth parcel contains the Tribe's historical church and cemetery.

I am proud to work with the Jamul Indian Village to introduce this bill that would enhance Tribal community development, preserve a sacred site, and improve economic development opportunities that will positively impact the Tribes' members and culture for generations to come. I look forward to working with my colleagues to pass the Jamul Indian Village Land Transfer Act in the Senate as quickly as possible.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 569—RECOGNIZING RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AS A FUNDAMENTAL RIGHT, EXPRESSING SUPPORT FOR INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AS A CORNERSTONE OF UNITED STATES FOREIGN POLICY, AND EXPRESSING CONCERN OVER INCREASED THREATS TO AND ATTACKS ON RELIGIOUS FREEDOM AROUND THE WORLD

Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. KAINE, and Mr. TILLIS) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 569

Whereas freedom of religion is a fundamental right;

Whereas the First Amendment of the Constitution stipulates that "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof";

Whereas, in pushing for religious freedom in the Commonwealth of Virginia, James Madison argued that the right to freedom of religion "is precedent, both in order of time and in degree of obligation, to the claims of Civil Society";

Whereas freedom of religion is a foundational element of democracy, human rights, and the rule of law in the United States and abroad, as well as a guiding principle for United States foreign policy;

Whereas Article 18 of the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights states "Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion; this right includes freedom to change his religion or belief, and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief in teaching, practice, worship, and observance";

Whereas the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (referred to in this preamble as "USCIRF") stipulates that "freedom of religion or belief is an expansive right that includes the freedoms of thought, conscience, expression, association, and assembly";

Whereas the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6401 et seq.) recognizes religious freedom as a "universal human right";

Whereas the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6401 et seq.) requires the President to annually designate as a "country of particular concern" each country the government of which has engaged in

or tolerated "particularly severe" religious freedom violations, including—

- (1) systematic, ongoing, and egregious violations such as torture;
- (2) cruel, inhuman, or degrading treatment or punishment;
- (3) prolonged detention without charges; and
- (4) forced disappearances;

Whereas, on December 29, 2023, the Biden administration designated Burma, the People's Republic of China, Cuba, Eritrea, Iran, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, Nicaragua, Pakistan, Russia, Saudi Arabia, Tajikistan, and Turkmenistan as countries of particular concern;

Whereas the Frank R. Wolf International Religious Freedom Act (Public Law 114-281; 130 Stat. 1426) requires the President to annually designate countries with severe religious freedom violations that do not reach the threshold of "systematic, ongoing, and egregious" violations to a "Special Watch List";

Whereas, on December 29, 2023, the Biden administration designated Algeria, Azerbaijan, the Central African Republic, Comoros, and Vietnam as Special Watch List countries;

Whereas, to enhance accountability for global human rights violations, including violations of religious freedom, President Joseph R. Biden signed the permanent authorization of the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act (22 U.S.C. 2656 note) into law on April 8, 2022;

Whereas the Senate passed a resolution calling for the global repeal of blasphemy, heresy, and apostasy laws in 2020 (Senate Resolution 458, 116th Congress, agreed to December 19, 2020);

Whereas, in 2023, threats to religious freedom worsened around the world, including incidents targeting the exercise of religion in public or private, participation in religious advocacy, conversion from one religion to another, engagement in religious practices broadly, and those choosing to have no faith at all;

Whereas, according to USCIRF, there were thousands of incidents wherein religious freedom was violated in 2023, including—

- (1) the targeting of 2,228 individuals by 27 countries and entities;
- (2) the imprisonment of 1,491 individuals;
- (3) the ongoing imprisonment of 1,311 individuals; and
- (4) the death of 9 individuals while in custody;

Whereas USCIRF has identified 95 countries with legislation criminalizing blasphemy used to enforce arbitrary limitations on religious freedom of expression;

Whereas the Department of State has determined that religious minorities continue to be victims of genocides that relate to matters of religious freedom, including in—

- (1) Burma, where security forces have committed crimes against humanity and genocide against Rohingya Muslims since 2017, including the systematic killing, torture, and confinement of Rohingyas to small, overcrowded camps without freedom of movement or access to adequate food, health care, and education; and
- (2) China, where since 2017 the Chinese government has committed crimes against humanity and genocide against Uyghurs, including by—

- (A) imprisoning more than 1,000,000 Uyghurs in "re-education camps";
- (B) subjecting Uyghur women to forced sterilizations and abortions;
- (C) deliberately separating Uyghur families;
- (D) instituting government surveillance through intrusive homestay programs; and
- (E) eliminating the Uyghur language from educational materials;

Whereas religious minorities face harassment, intimidation, violence, and imprisonment from state and non-state actors around the world, including in—

(1) Afghanistan, where the Taliban has rigorously enforced its harsh interpretation of Shari'a law that violates the freedom of religion or belief of religious minorities, including Christians, Ahmadiyya Muslims, Baha'is, and nonbelievers who face imprisonment or death if discovered;

(2) Burma, where in addition to violence targeted at religious minorities, strict laws in favor of the Buddhist majority regulate religious conversion, marriages, and births of non-Buddhists such as Muslims and Christians;

(3) China, where the government utilizes targeted surveillance to monitor, harass, and detain Christians, Tibetan Buddhists, Falun Gong practitioners, Uyghur Muslims, and other religious minorities for exercising their beliefs;

(4) Cuba, where the government subjects religious leaders and groups that are unregistered through its Office of Religious Affairs to detention, interrogation, imprisonment, and confiscation of property;

(5) India, where laws promoting religiously discriminatory policies, including laws that target religious conversion, interfaith relationships, the wearing of hijabs, and cow slaughter, have been implemented at the national, state, and local levels and negatively impact the livelihoods of Muslims, Christians, Sikhs, Dalits, and Adivasis;

(6) Iran, where the government disproportionately subjects members of religious minorities such as Baha'is, Christians, Gonabadi Dervishes, and Sunni Muslims to amputations, floggings, detention, harassment, surveillance, executions, and exile;

(7) Nicaragua, where the government arbitrarily detains and exiles religious clerics and leaders who advocate for the rights of religious minorities and criticize the government's persecution of the Roman Catholic Church;

(8) Nigeria, where the government's enforcement of blasphemy laws embedded in Nigeria's criminal and Shari'a codes results in the arbitrary detainment and imprisonment of those who express their religious identity;

(9) North Korea, where any religion contrary to the ruling ideology known as Kimilsungism-Kimjongilism is deemed an existential threat to the state;

(10) Pakistan, where religious minorities face killings, lynchings, mob violence, forced conversions, and sexual violence for their religious identities;

(11) Russia, where laws on terrorism and extremism are used to target religious minorities such as Jehovah's Witnesses, Muslims, and members of the Ukrainian Greek-Catholic Church for their beliefs;

(12) Tajikistan, where the government represses the display of public religiosity by individuals of all faiths and institutes strict restrictions against Muslims, including a ban on beards and hijabs;

(13) Turkmenistan, where the government controls all aspects of religious life and expression, monitors religious practice, and punishes nonconformity through administrative harassment, imprisonment, and torture; and

(14) Russian-occupied areas of Ukraine, where the Russian military has reportedly perpetrated 43 cases of targeted persecution of the clergy and more than 109 acts pressuring churches and religious figures representing Orthodox Christians, Ukrainian Greek-Catholics, Roman Catholics, Protestants, Muslims, and Jehovah's Witnesses since the launch of its full-scale invasion in February 2022;

Whereas violent extremists and non-state actors continue to capitalize upon violence and instability in countries to perpetrate serious human rights violations against religious minorities, including in—

(1) Latin America, where criminal gangs and paramilitary groups threaten and displace indigenous communities, destroy places of worship, and forcibly require conversion or renunciation of ancestral practices;

(2) Nigeria, where violent, non-state militant groups such as Boko Haram target Christians, as well as persons engaged in "un-Islamic" activities, including Muslim critics and elders;

(3) the Sahel region of Africa, where violent extremist organizations threaten violence against Christians who do not convert to Islam;

(4) Syria, where violent extremist organizations restrict the religious freedom of non-confirming Sunni Muslims and threaten the property, safety, and existence of religious minority groups such as Alawites, Christians, and Druze; and

(5) Yemen, where the Houthi rebels harass, defame, and incite hatred against vulnerable faith communities including the Christians, Baha'is, Jews, and non-religious persons who continue to be forced to flee to the south of the country or leave Yemen entirely; and

Whereas religious sites continue to be damaged or destroyed, especially in areas of conflict, including in—

(1) Burma, where the military junta has destroyed approximately 200 houses of worship and religious sites such as Buddhist monasteries, churches, and mosques, and has occupied religious compounds for use as military bases;

(2) China, where the government has destroyed mosques, shrines, gravesites, and other religious and cultural sites throughout Xinjiang and the country;

(3) Ethiopia, where ongoing violence between the government and non-state actors has led to drone strikes and attacks on church compounds such as the Full Gospel Church in the Oromiya region in which 8 people were killed;

(4) India, where places of worship such as Christian churches and Muslim madrasas continue to be destroyed, especially those in predominantly Christian and Muslim neighborhoods;

(5) Nigeria, where violent, non-state groups, such as Boko Haram, attack population centers and religious targets, including churches and mosques;

(6) Sudan, where members of the Rapid Support Forces attacked a Coptic Christian monastery and raided the Sudanese Episcopal Church in Khartoum, using both as bases for military operations; and

(7) Ukraine, where approximately 500 houses of worship have been damaged or destroyed since Russia's full-scale invasion of the country began in February 2022: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes religious freedom as a fundamental human right;

(2) recognizes the critical importance of religious freedom in—

(A) supporting democracy, good governance, and the rule of law;

(B) encouraging pluralism and robust political participation; and

(C) fostering global stability and peace;

(3) expresses grave concern over threats to religious freedom around the world, such as through harassment, violence, and imprisonment;

(4) condemns all efforts to suppress religious freedom, including through the criminalization of—

(A) religious exercise in public or private;

(B) the choice to have no faith;

(C) conversion from one religion to another;

(D) advocacy for religious freedom;

(E) sharing and spreading religious messages and educational materials; and

(F) construction and maintenance of religious holy sites;

(5) supports the invaluable work of religious freedom advocates in fighting for greater religious freedom around the world; and

(6) urges the Department of State to—

(A) continue robust bilateral and multilateral engagement with allies and partners on religious freedom;

(B) maintain and expand support for human rights activists, journalists, and civil society leaders working to protect religious freedom in countries of particular concern and Special Watch List countries;

(C) leverage all diplomatic and sanctions tools available to the United States Government to hold religious freedom violators accountable for their actions, including those authorized by the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (22 U.S.C. 6401 et seq.);

(D) continue to impose sanctions on those responsible for violations of religious freedom pursuant to the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Act (22 U.S.C. 2656 note);

(E) consider human rights abuses and religious freedom violations in prioritizing partners for free trade agreements; and

(F) promote religious freedom as an utmost priority for the United States in implementation of United States foreign policy.

SENATE RESOLUTION 570—DESIGNATING MARCH 1, 2024, AS "NATIONAL SPEECH AND DEBATE EDUCATION DAY"

Mr. GRASSLEY (for himself, Mr. COONS, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. LANKFORD, Mr. BARRASSO, Mr. DAINES, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mrs. HYDE-SMITH, Mrs. BLACKBURN, Mr. KING, Mr. CARPER, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. WARNOCK, and Mr. MERKLEY) submitted the following resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. RES. 570

Whereas it is essential for youth to learn and practice the art of communicating with and without technology;

Whereas speech and debate education offers students myriad forms of public speaking through which students may develop talent and exercise unique voice and character;

Whereas speech and debate education gives students the 21st century skills of communication, critical thinking, creativity, and collaboration;

Whereas critical analysis and effective communication allow important ideas, texts, and philosophies the opportunity to flourish;

Whereas personal, professional, and civic interactions are enhanced by the ability of the participants in those interactions to listen, concur, question, and dissent with reason and compassion;

Whereas students who participate in speech and debate have chosen a challenging activity that requires regular practice, dedication, and hard work;

Whereas teachers and coaches of speech and debate devote in-school, afterschool, and weekend hours to equip students with life-changing skills and opportunities;

Whereas National Speech and Debate Education Day emphasizes the lifelong impact of providing people of the United States with the confidence and preparation to both discern and share views;