

(3) in Arizona, where in May of 2021, Governor Doug Ducey signed HB 2035, which requires parental consent for a child to learn about topics such as the United States Supreme Court ruling in *Obergefell v. Hodges*, 576 U.S. 644 (2015), in which the Court held that the fundamental right to marry is guaranteed to same-sex couples; and

(4) in Arkansas, Florida, Montana, and Tennessee, which in 2021 enacted laws that treat instruction related to LGBTQI+ individuals in history, science, the arts, or any academic class as a sensitive topic that requires parental notification and allows parents to opt their child out of such instruction;

Whereas these laws harm students and force families to consider leaving their homes, as demonstrated in a Williams Institute report, which found that 56 percent of LGBTQI+ parents of students in Florida considered moving out of Florida and 16.5 percent have taken steps to move out of Florida because of HB 1557;

Whereas States have gone farther by specifically targeting transgender students and their families with policies that attack mental health counseling and gender-affirming care for transgender students, including—

(1) in Texas, where in 2022, Governor Greg Abbott issued a directive to the Department of Family and Protective Services to investigate the parents of young people seeking gender-affirming care for child abuse, which purported to require school professionals to report parents who are supportive of their transgender child for investigation; and

(2) the introduction of at least 55 bills in 22 States, since the beginning of the 2024 legislative session, that prohibit or create barriers to the social affirmation of transgender and nonbinary students in schools, such as using a student's chosen name and pronouns, regardless of the risk to the student's safety, health, and well-being;

Whereas 85 percent of transgender and nonbinary young people say that recent debates prompted by State legislation restricting the rights of transgender individuals have negatively impacted their mental health;

Whereas data provided by the Department of Justice shows that the number of reported anti-LGBTQI+ hate crimes in schools has increased from 145 reported incidents in 2019 to 251 reported incidents in 2022;

Whereas every young person must have equal educational opportunity and freedom from the fear that their basic civil and educational rights will be taken away from them;

Whereas young people who develop in positive school climates, free from bullying, harassment, and discrimination, report greater physical and psychological safety, greater mental well-being, and improved educational and life outcomes;

Whereas positive school transformation must recognize that safety is too low of a bar and that all communities deserve to be acknowledged and affirmed in schools;

Whereas students and families, educators, and community members in Arizona, Arkansas, Florida, Idaho, Montana, Tennessee, Texas, and in all States and territories are advocating for safe and inclusive learning environments that affirm LGBTQI+ young people, particularly those who are transgender, nonbinary, Black, Indigenous, people of color, and people with disabilities;

Whereas affirming policies, such as enumerated anti-bullying protections, gender neutral dress code guidelines, and inclusive learning practices, are proven strategies to address hostile learning environments for all students; and

Whereas we must all demand the best possible future for all young people in schools,

particularly those who identify as LGBTQI+, without exception: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) supports the goals and ideals of the Rise Up for LGBTQI+ Youth in Schools Initiative in demanding the best possible future for all young people in schools, particularly those who identify as LGBTQI+;

(2) recognizes the contributions of students and families, educators, and community members who participate in the Day of (No) Silence to draw attention to the bullying, harassment, assault, and discrimination faced by LGBTQI+ students; and

(3) encourages each State, territory, and locality to support the Rise Up for LGBTQI+ Youth in Schools Initiative and adopt laws and policies that prohibit bias-based victimization, exclusion, and erasure.

# SENATE RESOLUTION 629—CONDEMNING THE ARBITRARY ARREST OF UNITED STATES CITIZENS BY THE GOVERNMENT OF THE RUSSIAN FEDERATION AND CALLING FOR THE IMMEDIATE AND UNCONDITIONAL RELEASE OF SUCH CITIZENS

Mr. DURBIN (for himself, Mr. KAINE, Mr. FETTERMAN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. CASEY, Mr. COONS, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. KING, Mrs. MURRAY, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Ms. STABENOW, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. BENNET, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. WELCH, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. WYDEN, and Ms. WARREN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 629

Whereas the Government of the Russian Federation has arbitrarily and cruelly arrested United States citizens under false pretenses in order to extract bargaining leverage on unrelated matters;

Whereas the Russian Federation is a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council;

Whereas, on March 29, 2023, the Government of the Russian Federation arrested United States citizen and accredited Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich on fraudulent charges of espionage for his reporting on the Russian economy;

Whereas Gershkovich has spent more than one year in pretrial detention in the notorious Lefortovo prison in Moscow, including in isolation with limited access to medical care and attorneys;

Whereas, even during the Cold War, the Soviet Union never held a journalist from the United States for similar long-term detention, with the closest parallel being the 1986 arrest and 13-day detainment of U.S. News and World Report journalist Nicholas Daniloff;

Whereas the Department of State determined on April 10, 2023, that Gershkovich has been wrongfully detained by the Government of the Russian Federation;

Whereas, on December 28, 2018, the Government of the Russian Federation arrested United States citizen Paul Whelan and later convicted him on June 15, 2020, on fraudulent espionage charges;

Whereas Whelan has spent nearly four years in various high-security jails and labor camps in the Russian Federation, while enduring solitary confinement, forced labor, and the denial of medical care;

Whereas the Department of State determined on April 10, 2023, that Whelan has been

wrongfully detained by the Government of the Russian Federation;

Whereas United States Ambassador to the Russian Federation Lynne Tracy publicly stated on March 26, 2024, following Evan Gershkovich's court hearing, "Evan's case is not about evidence, due process, or rule of law. It is about using American citizens as pawns to achieve political ends, as the Kremlin is doing in the case of Paul Whelan";

Whereas, on June 2, 2023, the Government of the Russian Federation arrested United States citizen and Radio Free Europe/Radio Liberty journalist Alsu Kurmasheva on politically motivated charges of working as a foreign agent and "spreading falsehoods about the Russian military," and who now faces a prison sentence up to 15 years;

Whereas the Government of the Russian Federation has repeatedly denied consular access, basic medical care, and ordered Kurmasheva to remain in pre-trial detention in prison conditions Kurmasheva described as "inhumane";

Whereas, on August 14, 2021, the Government of the Russian Federation arrested United States citizen and international schoolteacher Marc Fogel for possession of medical marijuana prescribed by his physician, then sentenced him on June 16, 2022, to an excessive 14-year sentence in a Russian labor camp;

Whereas lawyers from the Russian Federation informed Fogel's family that the typical sentence for the offense is five years of probation, and in 2019, the same Russian court sentenced a Russian defendant to eight years in prison for the possession of 1,500 grams of various narcotics;

Whereas the Government of the Russian Federation sentenced Fogel to punishment vastly disproportionate to the severity of his nonviolent crime, wildly dissimilar to the typical punishments for comparable offenses in the Russian Federation, and clearly motivated by ongoing political tensions between the Russian Federation and the United States;

Whereas, on January 28, 2024, the Government of the Russian Federation arrested United States citizen and amateur ballerina Ksenia Khavana on fraudulent charges of high treason during a visit to the Russian Federation after she donated \$50 to a charity supporting humanitarian aid for Ukraine;

Whereas Khavana has been held in a high-security prison with no access to hot water or heat during winter, and faces a 20-year sentence with limited means of legal defense;

Whereas, on February 17, 2022, the Government of the Russian Federation arrested Brittney Griner on trumped-up charges, kept her in detention for approximately ten months, and eventually released her on December 8, 2022, in exchange for notorious Russian arms dealer Viktor Bout;

Whereas, on April 11, 2022, the Government of the Russian Federation arrested United States permanent resident Vladimir Kara-Murza for criticizing renewed invasion of Ukraine by the Russian Federation and resulting ongoing war and the criminality of the Government of the Russian Federation, and sentenced Kara-Murza on April 17, 2023, to a 25-year sentence for "high treason";

Whereas human rights groups in the Russian Federation estimate that the Government of the Russian Federation holds nearly 20,000 political prisoners in Russian jails, including, until his February 2024 death in a Siberian gulag, opposition leader Alexei Navalny;

Whereas the Government of the Russian Federation has kidnapped more than 19,000 Ukrainian children and abducted them to the Russian Federation, resulting in President Vladimir Putin being indicted by the International Criminal Court for war crimes;

Whereas, under Vladimir Putin, Russian courts are neither independent nor fair in the administration of justice and are entirely beholden to the political whims of Putin;

Whereas the Government of the Russian Federation has refused to provide neither minimal due process nor fair independent legal proceedings for United States citizens Gershkovich, Whelan, Kurmasheva, Fogel, and Khavana;

Whereas the Department of State has called for the release of Gershkovich, Whelan, Kurmasheva, Fogel, and Khavana;

Whereas the arrest and continued detention of Gershkovich, Whelan, Kurmasheva, Fogel, and Khavana amount to hostage taking by the Government of the Russian Federation: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) condemns—

(A) the arbitrary arrest and continued detention of United States citizens Evan Gershkovich, Paul Whelan, Alsu Kurmasheva, Marc Fogel, and Ksenia Khavana, and United States permanent resident Vladimir Kara-Murza by the Government of the Russian Federation;

(B) the hostage taking of United States citizens by a Permanent Member of the United Nations Security Council; and

(C) the ongoing persecution, arrest, and political imprisonment of ordinary Russian citizens and human rights defenders who call for the end of the war in Ukraine and demand freedom in the Russian Federation;

(2) urges the Department of State to determine that Alsu Kurmasheva, Marc Fogel, Ksenia Khavana, and Vladimir Kara-Murza have been wrongfully detained by the Government of the Russian Federation; and

(3) calls on the immediate and unconditional release of United States citizens Evan Gershkovich, Paul Whelan, Alsu Kurmasheva, Marc Fogel, and Ksenia Khavana, and United States permanent resident Vladimir Kara-Murza.

Mr. DURBIN. Madam President, I want to address what can only be called the hostage-taking of Americans by the government of Vladimir Putin of Russia. The list is troubling and growing.

This month marks the 1-year anniversary of Wall Street Journal reporter Evan Gershkovich's dubious arrest in Russia. He has spent more than a year in pretrial detention in a notorious Moscow prison, including in isolation, with limited medical attention. Even during the height of the Cold War, the Soviet police state didn't arrest and hold American journalists in such a brazen and transparently crude manner. The longest was a U.S. News & World Report reporter, who was released after 13 days.

But it is not just Evan whom Vladimir Putin is holding hostage. In 2018, Russia arrested American citizen Paul Whelan and sentenced him to 16 years in prison on fraudulent espionage charges. He has spent 4 years in various Russian high-security jails and labor camps, enduring solitary confinement and forced labor.

Last year, Russia arrested American citizen and Radio Free Europe journalist Alsu Kurmasheva for being a foreign agent. She is facing a 5-year sentence. While in pretrial detention, her

conditions are being described as “inhumane.”

In August 2021, Russia arrested American citizen and international schoolteacher Marc Fogel for possessing medical marijuana prescribed by his physician. Then they sentenced him to a ludicrous 14-year sentence in Russian labor camps.

Earlier this year, Russia arrested American citizen Ksenia Khavana on nonsense charges of high treason after she donated—get this—\$50 to a charity supporting humanitarian aid for Ukraine. For that, she is facing a 20-year sentence in prison.

Two years ago, Russia also arrested U.S. legal permanent resident Vladimir Kara-Murza, sentencing him to 25 years for criticizing Putin's disastrous war in Ukraine.

These are some of the photographs of the individuals whom I have just described.

Mr. Kara-Murza was a visitor in my office. I know him personally. I met with him a month before his arrest. And, despite two murder attempts by poisoning, he was determined to go back to Russia to fight for democracy. Evgenia, his wife, is here this week for a bipartisan event on the anniversary of his arrest.

And let us not forget Brittney Griner, whose arrest in 2022 on trumped-up charges was cynically used to secure the release of notorious Russian arms merchant Viktor Bout.

It is outrageous that Russia, a permanent member of the United Nations Security Council, is holding hostage American citizens. It is the act of a desperate rogue regime, similar to the criminal actions of countries like Iran, North Korea, and Venezuela.

Today, I am introducing a resolution condemning Russia's hostage-taking, calling for the immediate release of these hostages and urging the administration to consider “wrongfully detained” status.

And, to those detained and their families, I want you to know you are not forgotten. We will continue to advocate for your release.

#### ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, APRIL 9, 2024

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, this is a very short one tonight.

I ask unanimous consent that when the Senate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m. on Tuesday, April 9; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, and morning business be closed; that upon the conclusion of morning business, the Senate proceed to executive session to resume consideration of the Bazis nomination postcloture; further, that all time on

the Bazis nomination be considered expired at 11:30 a.m. and that following the cloture vote on the White nomination, the Senate recess until 2:15 p.m. to allow for the weekly caucus meetings, with all time during recess counting postcloture; finally, that if any nominations are confirmed during Tuesday's session, the motions to reconsider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

#### ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. SCHUMER. Madam President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:46 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, April 9, 2024, at 10 a.m.

#### NOMINATIONS

Executive nominations received by the Senate:

##### NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION

SUBJECT TO QUALIFICATIONS PROVIDED BY LAW, THE FOLLOWING FOR DIRECTOR, NATIONAL OCEANIC AND ATMOSPHERIC ADMINISTRATION COMMISSIONED OFFICER CORPS AND OFFICE OF MARINE AND AVIATION OPERATIONS.

##### *To be rear admiral*

CHAD M. CARY

##### IN THE AIR FORCE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 12203:

##### *To be brigadier general*

COL. KIMBERLY A. MCCUE

THE FOLLOWING NAMED AIR NATIONAL GUARD OF THE UNITED STATES OFFICER FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE RESERVE OF THE AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTIONS 12203 AND 12212:

##### *To be brigadier general*

COL. JOHN A. CLUCK

THE FOLLOWING NAMED OFFICERS FOR APPOINTMENT IN THE UNITED STATES AIR FORCE TO THE GRADE INDICATED UNDER TITLE 10, U.S.C., SECTION 624:

##### *To be brigadier general*

COL. JACK R. ARTHAUD  
COL. ANTHONY D. BABCOCK  
COL. CATHERINE V. BARRINGTON  
COL. ARIEL G. BATUNGBACAL  
COL. CASSIUS T. BENTLEY III  
COL. MICHAEL D. CURRY  
COL. LINDSAY C. DROZ  
COL. MASON R. DULA  
COL. TODD R. DYER  
COL. TRAVIS L. EDWARDS  
COL. CHAD R. ELLSWORTH  
COL. PAUL G. FILCEK  
COL. BRIAN A. FILLER  
COL. JOHN B. GALLEMORE  
COL. TIMOTHY A. HERRITAGE  
COL. JAMES V. HEWITT  
COL. JAY A. JOHNSON  
COL. MATTHEW E. JONES  
COL. MICHELE A. LOBIANCO  
COL. SEAN E. LOWE  
COL. ROBERT P. LYONS III  
COL. MARK A. MASSARO  
COL. CRAIG D. PRATHER  
COL. JOSEPH L. SHEFFIELD