

HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 500

By Weaver

A RESOLUTION to condemn global Christian persecution.

WHEREAS, the greatest human rights violation today is the persecution of religious minorities, the greatest number being Christians, according to a 2014 Pew Research report; and

WHEREAS, according to current global data reported by OpenDoorsUSA, there is massive suffering by Christians, including beatings, kidnappings, rapes, arrests, and forced marriages; and

WHEREAS, according to the United States Department of State, Christians in more than sixty countries face persecution from their governments or surrounding neighbors; and

WHEREAS, unremitting global Christian persecution is annihilating Christianity, particularly in the Middle East, where the Christian population has been reduced from fourteen percent in 1910 to four percent in 2010; and

WHEREAS, in 2015, persecution of Christians has increased around the world, spreading to parts of Asia, Latin America, and especially sub-Saharan Africa; and

WHEREAS, in April 2015, a meeting titled "The Persecution of Christians Globally: A Threat to International Peace and Security" was held alongside a regular United Nations session where speakers cited that between 2006 and 2012, Christians were targeted through harassment, persecution, or martyrdom in 151 out of 193 member states of the United Nations and called for increased UN action to protect Christians; and

WHEREAS, mass Christian annihilation, such as more than a million Armenians of Turkey in the twentieth century, is not spoken of; and

WHEREAS, global Christian persecution has reached historic levels, and it is described as one of the "greatest crises of the modern age"; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE HUNDRED NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF TENNESSEE, THE SENATE CONCURRING, that silence supports the oppressors and so the General Assembly condemns the global unrelenting persecution of Christians and acts of terror and aggression against Christians.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the General Assembly calls upon the President, Congressional leaders, and Governors to speak out specifically about the global persecution of Christians.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the General Assembly calls upon the U.S. State Department Ambassador-at-large for International Religious Freedom to address specifically, and as a top priority, the global persecution of Christians.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the General Assembly encourages faith leaders of all denominations to join in speaking out against the global persecution of Christians.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that appropriate copies of this resolution be prepared and transmitted to the President of the United States, the Speaker and Clerk of the United States House of Representatives, and the President and Secretary of the United States Senate.