

105TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 176

Expressing the sense of the Congress that the Russian Federation should preserve and protect the rights and freedoms currently afforded those of religious faith under the Russian Constitution.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

OCTOBER 24, 1997

Mr. HUTCHINSON (for himself, Mr. DELAY, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma, Mr. WOLF, Mr. PITTS, Mr. EHLERS, Mr. ROHRABACHER, Mr. BOB SCHAFFER of Colorado, Mr. HOYER, Mr. HORN, Mr. ADERHOLT, Mr. PICKERING, Mr. COOK, Ms. SANCHEZ, Mr. WHITFIELD, Mr. KING, Mr. RUSH, Mr. CALVERT, Mr. SNOWBARGER, Mr. HAYWORTH, Mr. HOEKSTRA, Mr. OBERSTAR, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. GORDON, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. DOYLE, Mr. ACKERMAN, Mr. SOUDER, Mrs. EMERSON, Mr. CUNNINGHAM, Mr. McNULTY, Mr. PAPPAS, Mr. ADAM SMITH of Washington, Mr. INGLIS of South Carolina, Mr. TALENT, Mr. DEFazio, Mr. RYUN, Mr. WICKER, Mr. CRAPO, and Mr. HANSEN) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of the Congress that the Russian Federation should preserve and protect the rights and freedoms currently afforded those of religious faith under the Russian Constitution.

Whereas the influence of religious faith provides the necessary foundation for the building of a moral and just society;

Whereas people of faith from around the world have worked hand in hand with the Russian people throughout history to provide significant humanitarian assistance to Russia;

Whereas the 1993 Russian Constitution promises freedom of religion for all Russians and allows for the free functioning of all religious denominations;

Whereas the Russian Federation is a signatory to international agreements on human rights and religious freedoms such as the United Nations Universal Declaration on Human Rights, the European Convention, and the 1989 Vienna Concluding Document of the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe;

Whereas on September 24, 1997, the Russian Duma passed, and on September 25, 1997, President Yeltsin signed into law legislation discriminating against religious minorities in the Russian Federation by violating their core civil liberties, including freedom of conscience, freedom of association, and freedom of speech; and

Whereas this law violates the Russian Constitution by providing preferential treatment for some religious groups, and severely restricting, if not abolishing, many others: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring), That—*

3 (1) it is the sense of the Congress that the “On
4 Freedom of Conscience and on Religious Associa-
5 tion” law enacted by the Russian Government on
6 September 25, 1997, will deny people of faith the

1 rights, freedoms, and privileges afforded Russian
2 citizens under the Russian Constitution;

3 (2) the Congress unequivocally condemns the
4 enactment of this law as a flagrant violation of
5 internationally accepted standards of human rights;
6 and

7 (3) it is the sense of the Congress that none of
8 the funds appropriated under the Foreign Oper-
9 ations, Export Financing, and Related Programs
10 Appropriations Act, 1998 should be made available
11 for the Government of the Russian Federation un-
12 less it has taken the appropriate steps to assure that
13 religious discrimination does not result from imple-
14 mentation of this law, or unless the law is effectively
15 challenged and changed through an appropriate re-
16 view process.

○