

One Hundred Fifth Congress
of the
United States of America

AT THE SECOND SESSION

*Begun and held at the City of Washington on Tuesday,
the twenty-seventh day of January, one thousand nine hundred and ninety-eight*

Concurrent Resolution

Whereas on May 2, 1973, Joanne Chesimard and 2 friends were stopped in their vehicle by New Jersey State Troopers James Harper and Werner Foerster on the New Jersey Turnpike;

Whereas while being questioned, Ms. Chesimard and the driver opened fire with automatic pistols striking Trooper Werner Foerster twice in the chest and Trooper James Harper in the left shoulder;

Whereas the suspects then turned Trooper Foerster's own weapon on him firing an additional two bullets into his head execution style;

Whereas this heinous and premeditated act resulted in the tragic death of New Jersey State Trooper Werner Foerster;

Whereas Trooper Foerster left behind a wife, Rose Foerster, and family;

Whereas in 1977, after a 6 week trial, a jury found Ms. Chesimard guilty of first-degree murder for the slaying of Trooper Foerster, a respected New Jersey State Trooper;

Whereas as a result of this conviction Ms. Chesimard was sentenced to life in a New Jersey State prison;

Whereas in 1979, Ms. Chesimard broke free from a maximum security cell at the Reformatory for Women in Clinton, New Jersey, with the help of 4 men who took a guard and prison van driver hostage;

Whereas after escaping prison, Ms. Chesimard fled to Cuba for political asylum;

Whereas the Federal Bureau of Investigation lists 77 felony fugitives known to have been granted safe haven by the Cuban Government, including Robert Vesco, Frank Terpil, and Victor Gerena, wanted for, or convicted of, violent crimes, including murder, robbery, kidnapping, air piracy, and terrorism;

Whereas these individuals have been indicted or convicted of criminal offenses in the United States and have not paid their debt to society;

Whereas people in New Jersey were shocked and outraged to see television interviews showing Ms. Chesimard living freely in Cuba, portraying herself as the victim and denying any crimes against Trooper Foerster;

Whereas the Governor of New Jersey, Christine Whitman, has requested Federal assistance from Attorney General Janet Reno for the return of Ms. Chesimard; and

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Whereas Members of Congress have petitioned Secretary of State Madeleine Albright requesting that the Department of State do everything in its power to have Joanne Chesimard, and all other individuals who have fled the United States to avoid prosecution or confinement for criminal offenses and who are currently living freely in Cuba, returned to the United States in order for them to face prosecution or confinement in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That it is the sense of Congress that—

(1) the Government of Cuba should return to the United States convicted murderer Joanne Chesimard in order for her to complete her life sentence for the murder of New Jersey State Trooper Werner Foerster;

(2) the Government of Cuba should return to the United States all other individuals who have fled the United States to avoid prosecution or confinement for criminal offenses and who are currently living freely in Cuba in order for them to face prosecution or confinement in the United States; and

(3) the return from Cuba to the United States of all individuals who have fled the United States to avoid prosecution or confinement for criminal offenses and who are currently living in Cuba should be a top priority for the United States Government.

Attest:

Clerk of the House of Representatives.

Attest:

Secretary of the Senate.