

113TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. RES. 532

Calls on the Government of Turkey to allow free expression and Internet freedom.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 1, 2014

Ms. ESHOO (for herself, Mr. MARINO, Mr. KENNEDY, and Mr. KEATING) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

RESOLUTION

Calls on the Government of Turkey to allow free expression and Internet freedom.

Whereas an independent, unfettered media and freedom of expression, including the Internet and social media, are essential elements of democratic, transparent, and open societies;

Whereas millions of people in Turkey, including senior members of the Government of Turkey, use the Internet and social media to communicate on a daily basis;

Whereas the Government of Turkey imposed a countrywide ban on access to Twitter on March 20, 2014, and to YouTube on March 27, 2014, blocking the use of the communications platforms;

Whereas respected nongovernmental organizations have condemned the decision to block Twitter and YouTube as an attack on Internet freedom and freedom of expression in Turkey;

Whereas Twitter has been blocked in Turkey, China, Iran, North Korea, and Syria and YouTube has been blocked in Turkey, China, Iran, and Pakistan;

Whereas the Turkish Bar Association argued that the ban on Twitter is unconstitutional and in violation of Turkish and European human rights laws; and

Whereas on March 26, 2014, the Turkish district court in Ankara blocked implementation of the ban due to the restriction on freedom of expression and communication that are protected by the Turkish Constitution and the European Convention of Human Rights: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) calls on the Government of Turkey to lift
3 restrictions on freedom of the press, freedom of ex-
4 pression, and Internet freedom, including social
5 media, in Turkey;

6 (2) recognizes the critical role that technology
7 and social media play in helping independent jour-
8 nalists and the general public to communicate, ac-
9 cess information, and support accountability; and

- 1 (3) reaffirms the importance of Internet free-
- 2 dom to promote democracy and good governance
- 3 around the world.

