

117TH CONGRESS
2^D SESSION

S. RES. 716

Calling for the immediate release of Brittney Griner, a citizen of the United States, who was wrongfully detained by the Government of the Russian Federation in February 2022.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 21, 2022

Mr. WYDEN (for himself, Mr. CORNYN, Mr. KELLY, Mr. CRUZ, Ms. SINEMA, Mr. WARNOCK, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Ms. SMITH, Mr. BROWN, Mr. CARDIN, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. CASEY, Mr. KAINE, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. WARREN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. BENNET, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. PETERS, Mr. PADILLA, Mr. COONS, Mr. HICKENLOOPER, Mr. DURBIN, and Mr. WHITEHOUSE) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Calling for the immediate release of Brittney Griner, a citizen of the United States, who was wrongfully detained by the Government of the Russian Federation in February 2022.

Whereas United States citizen Brittney Griner is a Women's National Basketball Association (referred to in this preamble as "WNBA") player;

Whereas Brittney Griner and her wife, Cherelle, are residents of Phoenix, Arizona, and are well respected leaders in that community;

Whereas Brittney Griner was raised in Houston, Texas, and many of her family members live in Texas;

Whereas after a prolific collegiate career at Baylor University, Brittney Griner was selected with the first overall pick in the 2013 WNBA draft by the Phoenix Mercury, where she has played her entire WNBA career;

Whereas during her WNBA career, Brittney Griner has been named the WNBA Defensive Player of the Year twice and has been a WNBA All Star 7 times;

Whereas Brittney Griner represented the United States as a member of the United States Women's National Basketball Team at 2 Olympics, where she helped Team USA win gold medals in each appearance;

Whereas Brittney Griner is an international figure who has played 7 seasons of professional basketball in Russia for UMMC Ekaterinburg during the WNBA off season;

Whereas Brittney Griner is a renowned leader in the LGBTQ+ community;

Whereas Brittney Griner has made a difference in the lives of many Arizonans, including through her annual "BG's Heart and Sole Shoe Drive", which has provided shoes to nearly 2,000 people who are experiencing homelessness in the Phoenix area;

Whereas the Phoenix Mercury and the Phoenix Rescue Mission are continuing this important effort to clothe the homeless in Brittney Griner's absence;

Whereas Brittney Griner was presumably detained by Russian authorities at Sheremetyevo Alexander S. Pushkin International Airport in Khimki, Russia, on February 17, 2022, and accused of carrying vape cartridges with hashish oil;

Whereas Russian authorities opened a criminal case against Brittney Griner for the alleged transportation of drugs, a crime which can carry a prison sentence of up to 10 years;

Whereas, on March 17, 2022, a Russian court denied a request for bail and house arrest for Brittney Griner, and has since extended her detention until July 2, 2022;

Whereas the Department of State has determined that Brittney Griner is “wrongfully detained”; and

Whereas the Biden Administration has pledged to return Brittney Griner back to the United States as soon as possible: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) calls on the Government of the Russian
3 Federation to immediately release Brittney Griner;

4 (2) urges the United States, in all interactions
5 with the Government of the Russian Federation, to
6 raise the case of Brittney Griner and to press for
7 her release;

8 (3) expresses the continued support for Paul
9 Whelan and all prisoners unjustly imprisoned in the
10 Russian Federation;

11 (4) urges the Government of the Russian Fed-
12 eration to provide consular access to Brittney Griner
13 while she remains in detention;

1 (5) urges the Government of the Russian Fed-
2 eration to respect the human rights of Brittney
3 Griner; and

4 (6) expresses support to the family of Brittney
5 Griner and a commitment to bringing her home.

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