

the Netherlands, Panama, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, the United Kingdom and Uruguay—issued a public declaration stating that the Maduro regime's December 6, 2020, elections did not meet internationally accepted standards, "[n]or did they meet conditions required by Venezuelan laws," and that "they cannot recognise the results of this electoral process as legitimate or representative of the will of the Venezuelan people";

Whereas, on June 12, 2020, the Maduro regime's illegitimate Supreme Court unilaterally appointed new members to Venezuela's National Electoral Council without the approval of the democratically elected National Assembly;

Whereas, throughout 2020, the Maduro regime—

(1) sought to co-opt and undermine independent political parties through a campaign of systematic persecution; and

(2) used its discredited Supreme Court to strip independent political parties of their leadership, including Voluntad Popular, Primero Justicia, and Acción Democrática;

Whereas the Maduro regime has a demonstrated track record of holding fraudulent elections over the last four years;

Whereas, in May 2018, the Maduro regime held fraudulent presidential elections that were broadly criticized as illegitimate, leading more than 50 countries to recognize the end of Nicolás Maduro's term in office and the inauguration of National Assembly President Juan Guaidó as Interim-President of Venezuela on January 23, 2019;

Whereas, on July 30, 2017, the Maduro regime manipulated the results for Venezuela's Constituent Assembly by more than 1,000,000 votes, according to Smartmatic, the company that supplied Venezuela's electronic voting machines;

Whereas, according to the Venezuelan constitution, Juan Guaidó, as President of the National Assembly, serves as Venezuela's Interim President in the absence of a democratically elected president of Venezuela;

Whereas the conditions do not currently exist for the free, fair, and transparent election of new members of the National Assembly or the president of Venezuela;

Whereas, as of September 7, 2020, the internationally recognized nongovernmental organization Foro Penal confirmed that, out of the 110 individuals recently released from prison by the Maduro regime to serve out the remainder of their sentences under house arrest, 53 were political prisoners, and that currently 363 political prisoners remain unjustly detained by the Maduro regime without due process;

Whereas, on September 16, 2020, the United Nations Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela found that Nicolás Maduro and senior members of his regime ordered and carried out a campaign of extrajudicial executions, forced disappearances, torture, and arbitrary detentions that amounted to systematic crimes against humanity;

Whereas the Maduro regime's efforts to hold fraudulent legislative elections, undermine the democratically elected National Assembly and independent political parties, and implement a campaign of state-sponsored violence and repression further erodes democracy and the rule of law in Venezuela; and

Whereas, as codified under section 4 of the Venezuela Defense of Human Rights and Civil Society Act (Public Law 113-278; 128 U.S.C. 3013), it is the policy of the United States "to support the people of Venezuela in their aspiration to live under conditions of peace and representative democracy as defined by the Inter-American Democratic Charter of the Organization of American States": Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) denounces the Maduro regime's fraudulent legislative elections on December 6, 2020, as an effort to undermine Venezuela's democratically elected National Assembly;

(2) does not recognize the legitimacy of the National Assembly installed by the Maduro regime on January 6, 2021;

(3) joins members of the international community, including members of the Lima Group, the Organization of American States, and the European Union, in rightfully rejecting the Maduro's regime's fraudulent and illegitimate legislative elections on December 6, 2020;

(4) urges that presidential and legislative elections in Venezuela be conducted at the earliest possible date that conditions for international standards for free, fair, and transparent electoral processes, including credible international election observation, can be met;

(5) calls on the Maduro regime to cease its campaign of systematic persecution against Venezuela's independent political parties and their leadership;

(6) calls on the Maduro regime to immediately release all political prisoners, facilitate access by humanitarian organizations, and end its campaign of extrajudicial executions, forced disappearances, torture, and arbitrary detentions of political opponents, human rights defenders, civil society activists, peaceful protesters, and citizens; and

(7) takes note of the finding of the United Nations Independent International Fact-Finding Mission on the Bolivarian Republic of Venezuela that the Maduro regime's campaign of state-sponsored violence and repression against the people of Venezuela amounted to crimes against humanity, and calls for Nicolás Maduro and senior members of his regime to be held accountable for their actions.

#### SENATE RESOLUTION 45—CELEBRATING BLACK HISTORY MONTH

Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Mr. SCOTT of South Carolina, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. HASSAN, Ms. CORTEZ MASTO, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. WYDEN, Ms. SMITH, Mr. MARKEY, Ms. HIRONO, Mr. BROWN, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. COONS, Ms. BALDWIN, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. WARNER, Mr. KAINE, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, Ms. ROSEN, Mr. MURPHY, Ms. SINEMA, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. WHITEHOUSE, Mr. SCHATZ, Mrs. GILLIBRAND, Ms. KLOBUCHAR, Mr. KING, Mr. BENNET, Ms. WARREN, Mr. OSSOFF, Mr. HEINRICH, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. CARPER, Mr. CASEY, Mr. REED, Mr. CARDIN, Ms. CANTWELL, Mr. BLUNT, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. CRAPO, Mr. GRASSLEY, Mr. RISCH, Mr. CRAMER, Mr. WICKER, Mr. SULLIVAN, Mr. SHELBY, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. SCOTT of Florida, Mr. PORTMAN, Ms. ERNST, and Mr. BARR) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary:

S. RES. 45

Whereas, in 1776, people envisioned the United States as a new nation dedicated to the proposition stated in the Declaration of Independence that "all men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable Rights, that among these are Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness";

Whereas Africans were first brought involuntarily to the shores of the United States as early as the 17th century;

Whereas African Americans suffered enslavement and subsequently faced the injustices of lynch mobs, segregation, and denial of the basic and fundamental rights of citizenship;

Whereas, in 2021, the vestiges of those injustices and inequalities remain evident in the society of the United States;

Whereas, in the face of injustices, people of good will and of all races in the United States have distinguished themselves with a commitment to the noble ideals on which the United States was founded and have fought courageously for the rights and freedom of African Americans and others;

Whereas African Americans, such as Lieutenant Colonel Allen Allensworth, Maya Angelou, Arthur Ashe, Jr., James Baldwin, James Beckwourth, Clara Brown, Blanche Bruce, Ralph Bunche, Shirley Chisholm, Holt Collier, Miles Davis, Louis Armstrong, Larry Doby, Frederick Douglass, W. E. B. Du Bois, Ralph Ellison, Medgar Evers, Aretha Franklin, Alex Haley, Dorothy Height, Jon Hendricks, Olivia Hooker, Lena Horne, Charles Hamilton Houston, Mahalia Jackson, Stephanie Tubbs Jones, B.B. King, Martin Luther King, Jr., Coretta Scott King, Thurgood Marshall, Constance Baker Motley, Rosa Parks, Walter Payton, Bill Pickett, Homer Plessy, Bass Reeves, Hiram Revels, Amelia Platts Boynton Robinson, Jackie Robinson, Aaron Shirley, Sojourner Truth, Harriet Tubman, Booker T. Washington, the Greensboro Four, the Tuskegee Airmen, Prince Rogers Nelson, Recy Taylor, Fred Shuttlesworth, Duke Ellington, Langston Hughes, Muhammad Ali, Elijah Cummings, Ella Fitzgerald, Mamie Till, Toni Morrison, Gwen Ifill, Diahann Carroll, Chadwick Boseman, John Lewis, Katherine Johnson, Rev. C.T. Vivian, Hank Aaron, Edith Savage-Jennings, Septima Clark, Mary McLeod Bethune, Cicely Tyson, John Hope Franklin, and Chief Justice of South Carolina Ernest Finney, along with many others, worked against racism to achieve success and to make significant contributions to the economic, educational, political, artistic, athletic, literary, scientific, and technological advancement of the United States;

Whereas the contributions of African Americans from all walks of life throughout the history of the United States reflect the greatness of the United States;

Whereas many African Americans lived, toiled, and died in obscurity, never achieving the recognition those individuals deserved, and yet paved the way for future generations to succeed;

Whereas African Americans continue to serve the United States at the highest levels of business, government, and the military;

Whereas the birthdays of Abraham Lincoln and Frederick Douglass inspired the creation of Negro History Week, the precursor to Black History Month;

Whereas Negro History Week represented the culmination of the efforts of Dr. Carter G. Woodson, the "Father of Black History", to enhance knowledge of Black history through *The Journal of Negro History*, published by the Association for the Study of African American Life and History, which was founded by Dr. Carter G. Woodson and Jesse E. Moorland;

Whereas Black History Month, celebrated during the month of February, originated in 1926 when Dr. Carter G. Woodson set aside a special period in February to recognize the heritage and achievements of Black people in the United States;

Whereas Dr. Carter G. Woodson stated, "We have a wonderful history behind us. . . If you are unable to demonstrate to the

world that you have this record, the world will say to you, 'You are not worthy to enjoy the blessings of democracy or anything else.'";

Whereas, since its founding, the United States has imperfectly progressed toward noble goals;

Whereas the history of the United States is the story of people regularly affirming high ideals, striving to reach those ideals but often failing, and then struggling to come to terms with the disappointment of that failure, before committing to try again;

Whereas, on November 4, 2008, the people of the United States elected Barack Obama, an African-American man, as President of the United States; and

Whereas, on February 22, 2012, people across the United States celebrated the groundbreaking of the National Museum of African American History and Culture, which opened to the public on September 24, 2016, on the National Mall in Washington, District of Columbia: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) acknowledges that all people of the United States are the recipients of the wealth of history provided by Black culture;

(2) recognizes the importance of Black History Month as an opportunity to reflect on the complex history of the United States, while remaining hopeful and confident about the path ahead;

(3) acknowledges the significance of Black History Month as an important opportunity to commemorate the tremendous contributions of African Americans to the history of the United States;

(4) encourages the celebration of Black History Month to provide a continuing opportunity for all people in the United States to learn from the past and understand the experiences that have shaped the United States; and

(5) agrees that, while the United States began as a divided country, the United States must—

(A) honor the contribution of all pioneers in the United States who have helped to ensure the legacy of the great United States; and

(B) move forward with purpose, united tirelessly as a nation "indivisible, with liberty and justice for all."

#### SENATE RESOLUTION 46—CALLING ON THE PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES TO TAKE EXECUTIVE ACTION TO BROADLY CANCEL FEDERAL STUDENT LOAN DEBT

Mr. SCHUMER (for himself, Ms. WARREN, Mr. BROWN, Mr. DURBIN, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. MERKLEY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. VAN HOLLEN, Mr. SCHATZ, Mr. BLUMENTHAL, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. WYDEN, Mr. LUJÁN, Mr. MENENDEZ, Mr. SANDERS, and Mr. OSSOFF) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions:

S. RES. 46

Whereas the United States is facing historic public health and economic crises caused by the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic that threatens the financial well-being of nearly every American family;

Whereas even before the COVID-19 pandemic, the United States also faced a historic student loan crisis, which is currently holding back our struggling economy and restricting opportunity and prosperity for millions of American families;

Whereas nearly 43,000,000 Americans currently hold more than \$1,500,000,000,000 in Federal student loan debt;

Whereas more than 9,000,000 Federal student loan borrowers are currently in default on those Federal student loans;

Whereas the COVID-19 economic recession and historic unemployment have compounded stagnant wages, labor market discrimination, and rising costs of living, making it nearly impossible for many Americans to ever fully repay their student loans;

Whereas this historic student debt crisis has left millions of Americans less prepared to weather the recession triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic as Black and Brown communities, which never fully recovered from the devastating effects of the previous economic recession, have been hit hardest by the devastating health and economic consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic;

Whereas student debt disproportionately impacts Black and Brown borrowers, who face the worst effects of the student debt crisis, with—

(1) Black households disproportionately holding the most debt, compared to other households;

(2) Black students, due to ongoing structural barriers that have resulted in persistent racial inequities in incomes and wealth, forced to accrue more student debt and more often than their White peers;

(3) Black student borrowers struggling more in student loan repayment, including defaulting at higher rates than their White peers;

(4) nearly half of Black graduates owing more on their undergraduate student loans 4 years after graduation than they did when they received their degree;

(5) the median Black student borrower owing 95 percent of their debt 20 years after starting college, while the median White student borrower owing 6 percent of their debt after such period;

(6) Latino student borrowers, who borrow at rates similar to their White peers despite having lower household incomes and significantly less household wealth, are more likely than their White peers to default on their student loans;

(7) within 6 years of starting school, Latino borrowers are almost twice as likely to default on their student loans, in comparison to their White peers; and

(8) women of color, particularly Black women, on average take on more student loan debt than members of any other group and are more likely to face difficulties repaying student loans;

Whereas parents, grandparents, and older individuals are especially vulnerable to the burden of student loan debt, as people over the age of 50 are most likely to default on their student loans and over 114,000 retired people have had their Social Security benefits garnished due to their student loans;

Whereas almost 1/3 of the outstanding Federal student loan debt is held by individuals who did not complete their degree or program, and nearly 40 percent of Federal student loan borrowers have no degree 6 years after enrolling in college;

Whereas Black students and other students who have attended Historically Black Colleges and Universities have had to bear a larger share of student loan debt because of the historic and continued underfunding of these institutions at the State and Federal levels;

Whereas student loan debt cancellation for the families that need it most can substantially increase Black and Latino household wealth and help close racial wealth gaps;

Whereas women hold more than two-thirds of the Nation's student loan debt and must borrow an average of \$3,000 more than men to attend higher education;

Whereas, if left unaddressed, the student debt crisis will worsen inequality, exacerbate the current recession, widen the racial wealth gap, and slow economic recovery;

Whereas broad student loan debt cancellation is the most efficient and effective solution to our student debt crisis, would help millions of families, and would remove a significant drag holding back our economy;

Whereas broad student loan debt cancellation would provide immediate relief to millions of American families who are struggling during this pandemic and recession, and prevent them from having an unsustainable student debt burden waiting for them once this pandemic is over;

Whereas broad student loan debt cancellation would provide a boost to our struggling economy through a consumer-driven economic stimulus, greater home-buying rates and housing stability, expanded access to more affordable financial products including car loans and mortgages, higher college completion rates, and greater small business formation;

Whereas more than 230 community, civil rights, consumer, and student advocacy organizations have urged student loan debt cancellation for all borrowers in response to the COVID-19 pandemic public health and economic crises;

Whereas cancelling up to \$50,000 in Federal student loan debt per borrower is the most equitable way to ensure the benefits of cancellation reach the borrowers most in need of relief because that action would lift a disproportionate number of low-income borrowers and Black and Latino borrowers completely out of student debt, including nearly 90 percent of all borrowers in the lowest income quintile and over 90 percent of Black and Latino borrowers in the lowest income quartile;

Whereas borrowers who would receive full student loan debt cancellation if the Federal Government cancelled \$50,000 per borrower in student loan debt have lower income and assets than the borrowers who would receive partial cancellation if the Federal Government took that action;

Whereas Congress has already granted the Secretary of Education the legal authority to broadly cancel student debt under section 432(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1082(a)), which grants the Secretary the authority to modify, "... compromise, waive, or release any right, title, claim, lien, or demand, however acquired, including any equity or any right of redemption";

Whereas, in 2020, the Department of Education reportedly used this authority to implement relief for Federal student loan borrowers during the COVID-19 pandemic; and

Whereas, on June 29, 2020, President Donald J. Trump, with the support of Secretary of Education Betsy DeVos, vetoed H.J. Res. 76 "Providing for congressional disapproval under chapter 8 of title 5, United States Code, of the rule submitted by the Department of Education relating to 'Borrower Defense Institutional Accountability'", blocking a resolution that passed Congress with bipartisan support to overturn a Department of Education rule that makes it harder for defrauded Federal student loan borrowers to see their loans discharged: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) recognizes the Secretary of Education's broad administrative authority to cancel Federal student loan debt under the existing authorities of section 432(a) of the Higher Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 1082(a));

(2) calls on the President of the United States to take executive action to broadly cancel up to \$50,000 in Federal student loan