

Whereas a robust independent press plays a key role in exposing and refuting malign influence campaigns used by authoritarian governments, including the Russian Federation and the People's Republic of China;

Whereas the censorship, victimization, and killing of journalists around the world, particularly in war zones, has profound implications for the ability of the public, including Americans, to be informed about conflicts with local, regional, and global ramifications and other issues;

Whereas the United States has advanced press freedom globally, including by leading the drafting of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, which was adopted by the United Nations in Paris on December 10, 1948, and states, in Article 19, "Everyone has the right to freedom of opinion and expression; this right includes freedom to hold opinions without interference and to seek, receive and impart information and ideas through any media and regardless of frontiers.";

Whereas, in 1993, the United Nations General Assembly proclaimed the third day of May of each year to be "World Press Freedom Day"—

(1) to celebrate the fundamental principles of press freedom;

(2) to evaluate press freedom around the world;

(3) to defend the media against attacks on its independence; and

(4) to pay tribute to journalists who have lost their lives while working in their profession;

Whereas Congress has passed legislation supporting press freedom abroad, including—

(1) the Daniel Pearl Freedom of the Press Act of 2009 (Public Law 111-166), which expanded the examination of the freedom of the press around the world in the annual Country Reports on Human Rights Practices published by the Department of State; and

(2) the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act (subtitle F of title XII of Public Law 114-328), which has been used to place targeted visa and economic sanctions on individuals for their roles in the targeted killings of journalists;

Whereas in 2021, in an effort to combat attacks against journalists, the Department of State adopted the Khashoggi Ban pursuant to section 212(a)(3)(C) of the Immigration and Nationality Act (8 U.S.C. 1182(a)(3)(C)), which imposes visa restrictions on individuals who, acting on behalf of a foreign government, are believed to have been directly engaged in serious, extraterritorial counter-dissident activities, including activities that suppress, harass, surveil, threaten, or harm journalists, activists, or other persons perceived to be dissidents for their work;

Whereas the United States Government has—

(1) supported broadcast journalism around the world to provide news to millions of people living under authoritarian regimes; and

(2) provided emergency assistance to journalists facing immediate risks to their lives as a result of their reporting;

Whereas 2024 marked the 19th consecutive year of decline in global freedom, with an estimated 40 percent of the global population living in countries deemed "Not Free";

Whereas 2024 marked the 14th consecutive year of decline in global internet freedom, with people in at least 56 countries who are facing legal repercussions for expressing themselves online and people in 43 countries who are facing physical assaults or death for their online commentary;

Whereas infringement on freedom of expression, including media freedom, has been one of the key drivers of broader declines in global freedom during the last 50 years, including attacks and prosecutions against

journalists, pressure on media outlets, repressive regulatory and legal frameworks, internet shutdowns, unlawful efforts to undermine strong encryption, and blocks on online sources of information;

Whereas there are alarming indications about growing divisions resulting from the spread of authoritarian information campaigns with the potential to weaken democratic societies;

Whereas punishments against women journalists are increasing disproportionately, with 30 percent more women journalists being held in prison in 2022 than in the previous year, and with most of the longest prison sentences handed down against journalists in 2023 given to women;

Whereas journalists and media workers are murdered, imprisoned, attacked, and harassed around the world, including—

(1) at least 124 journalists and media workers who were killed worldwide during 2024 and at least 15 journalists who have been killed during the first 4 months of 2025;

(2) approximately 361 journalists who were imprisoned during 2024, with 50 of these journalists imprisoned by the People's Republic of China;

(3) between September 1, 2014 and August 31, 2024, impunity for the killing of journalists persisted, with nearly 80 percent of the 241 journalist murders during this period occurring without accountability; and

(4) journalists and media outlets targeted by government actors with sophisticated spyware products that pose a severe risk to their privacy and the security of their sources and families;

Whereas more than 375 writers and public intellectuals, including columnists and editorial journalists, were imprisoned across 40 different countries during 2024; and

Whereas United States journalists have been killed, injured, and imprisoned while reporting abroad, including—

(1) Christopher Allen, who was killed while covering the conflict in South Sudan on August 26, 2017, and for whom there has been no credible investigation to pursue justice after nearly 8 years;

(2) Austin Tice, who was kidnaped in Syria and has been held in captivity since August 13, 2012;

(3) Brent Renaud, who was killed by Russian forces while covering the war in Ukraine on March 13, 2022;

(4) Shireen Abu Akleh, who was killed by Israeli forces on May 11, 2022, while reporting in the West Bank;

(5) Evan Gershkovich, who was wrongfully detained in Russia on baseless charges of espionage from March 2023 to August 2024;

(6) Alsu Kurmasheva who was wrongfully detained in Russia on bogus charges of failure to register as a foreign agent from October 2023 to August 2024; and

(7) Dylan Collins, a journalist at Agence France-Presse (AFP), who was injured in an attack on a group of journalists in southern Lebanon by Israeli forces on October 13, 2023: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) declares that a free press—

(A) is a central component of free societies and democratic governance;

(B) contributes to an informed civil society and government accountability;

(C) helps to expose corruption;

(D) enhances public accountability and transparency of governments at all levels; and

(E) disseminates information that is essential to improving public health and safety;

(2) expresses concerns about threats to the exercise of freedom of expression, including by the press, around the world;

(3) recognizes and commends journalism's role in providing trusted, accurate, and time-

ly information and in holding governments and leaders accountable to citizens;

(4) recognizes the indispensable role of journalists and media outlets in informing voters and the international community about elections in multiple countries worldwide in 2025;

(5) pays tribute to journalists who made tremendous sacrifices, including the loss of their lives, in the pursuit of truth and justice;

(6) condemns all actions around the world that suppress press freedom and endanger the safety of journalists;

(7) calls for the unconditional and immediate release of all wrongfully detained journalists;

(8) reaffirms the centrality of press freedom to efforts of the United States Government to support democracy, mitigate conflict, and promote good governance domestically and around the world; and

(9) calls upon the President and the Secretary of State—

(A) to preserve and build upon the leadership of the United States on issues relating to press freedom and journalist safety, on the basis of the protections for freedom of the press afforded the American people under the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States;

(B) to transparently investigate and bring to justice the perpetrators of attacks against American journalists;

(C) to support transparent investigations and efforts to ensure accountability for attacks against journalists of other nationalities; and

(D) to promote the respect and protection of press freedom around the world.

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION 12—AUTHORIZING THE USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL IN THE CAPITOL VISITOR CENTER FOR A CEREMONY TO PRESENT THE CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL, COLLECTIVELY, TO THE UNITED STATES ARMY RANGERS VETERANS OF WORLD WAR II

Mr. MCCONNELL (for himself and Mr. PADILLA) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was considered and agreed to:

S. CON. RES. 12

*Resolved by the Senate (the House of Representatives concurring),*

**SECTION 1. USE OF EMANCIPATION HALL FOR CEREMONY TO PRESENT THE CONGRESSIONAL GOLD MEDAL TO THE UNITED STATES ARMY RANGERS VETERANS OF WORLD WAR II.**

(a) AUTHORIZATION.—Emancipation Hall in the Capitol Visitor Center is authorized to be used on June 26, 2025, for a ceremony to present the Congressional Gold Medal awarded under the United States Army Rangers Veterans of World War II Act (Public Law 117-132; 31 U.S.C. 5111 note).

(b) PREPARATIONS.—Physical preparations for the conduct of the ceremony described in subsection (a) shall be carried out in accordance with such conditions as may be prescribed by the Architect of the Capitol.

AUTHORITY FOR COMMITTEES TO MEET

Mr. CORNYN. Mr. President, I have one request for a committee to meet during today's session of the Senate. It has the approval of the Majority and Minority Leaders.

Pursuant to rule XXVI, paragraph 5(a), of the Standing Rules of the Senate, the following committee is authorized to meet during today's session of the Senate:

COMMITTEE ON AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION, AND FORESTRY

The Committee on Agriculture, Nutrition, and Forestry is authorized to meet during the session of the Senate on Monday, May 5, 2025, at 5:30 p.m., to conduct a business meeting.

ORDERS FOR TUESDAY, MAY 6, 2025

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, I ask unanimous consent that when the Sen-

ate completes its business today, it stand adjourned until 10 a.m. on Tuesday, May 6; that following the prayer and pledge, the morning hour be deemed expired, the Journal of proceedings be approved to date, the time for the two leaders be reserved for their use later in the day, morning business be closed, and the Senate resume consideration of H.J. Res. 61 under the previous order; further, that following the vote on the motion to proceed to S.J. Res. 13, if made, the Senate recess until 2 p.m. to allow for the weekly conference meetings; finally, that if any nominations are confirmed during Tuesday's session, the motions to re-

consider be considered made and laid upon the table and the President be immediately notified of the Senate's action.

The PRESIDING OFFICER. Without objection, it is so ordered.

ADJOURNMENT UNTIL 10 A.M. TOMORROW

Mr. THUNE. Mr. President, if there is no further business to come before the Senate, I ask that it stand adjourned under the previous order.

There being no objection, the Senate, at 7:03 p.m., adjourned until Tuesday, May 6, 2025, at 10 a.m.