

years, fueled by 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, according to the Reporters Without Borders' World Press Freedom Index, press freedom is at a 25-year low and, for the first time in the history of this Index, more than ½ of the world's countries now fall into the "difficult" or "very serious" categories for press freedom;

Whereas Freedom House's Freedom on the Net 2025 report marked the 15th consecutive year of decline in global internet freedom, with people in at least 57 of the 72 countries covered facing legal repercussions for expressing themselves online (a record high) and people in 44 countries facing physical assaults or death for their online commentary;

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

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 kidnapped in Syria and has been missing 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 from March 2023 to August 2024 on baseless charges of espionage;

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

Whereas more journalists and media workers were killed in 2025 than in any other year since the Committee to Protect Journalist began collecting data more than 3 decades ago;

Whereas since October 7, 2023, at least 227 journalists and media workers have been killed in Israel, Gaza, and Lebanon, 207 of whom were Palestinians killed in Gaza by the Israeli military, making the Gaza conflict the deadliest on record for journalists, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists;

Whereas for the fifth year in a row, more than 300 journalists were imprisoned worldwide at the end of 2025, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists, including Zhang Zhan in the People's Republic of China, Yeris Curbelo Aguilera in Cuba, Mzia Amaglobeli in Georgia, RFE/RL journalist Nika Novak in Russia, RFE/RL journalist Farid Mehralizada in Azerbaijan, and former RFE/RL journalist and dual United States-Iranian national Reza Valizadeh in Iran;

Whereas, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists 2025 census, more than ½ of these detained journalists are serving terms exceeding 5 years, including—

(1) French journalist Christophe Gleizes in Algeria;

(2) Sevinj Vagfigizi in Azerbaijan;

(3) Dzianis Ivashyn in Belarus; and

(4) Thomas Awah, Jr., Tsi Conrad, Amadou, Vamouké, and Mancho Bibixy in Cameroon;

(5) Ilham Tohti, Jimmy Lai, and Dong Yuyu in the People's Republic of China and Hong Kong;

(6) Frenchie Mae Cumpio in the Philippines;

(7) Rukhshona Khakimova in Tajikistan;

(8) Dauletmurat Tazhimuratov in Uzbekistan; and

(9) Pham Doan Trang and Le Huu Minh Tuan in Vietnam;

Whereas, according to the Committee to Protect Journalists 2025 census, nearly ½ of these detained journalists have never been sentenced, including—

(1) Dawit Isaak and Seyoum Tsehaye in Eritrea; and

(2) Palestinian journalist Ali Al-Samoudi in Israel;

(3) Elsbeth D'Anda in Nicaragua; and

(4) Ukrainian journalists Anastasiya Glukhovska and Iryna Levchenko in Russia;

Whereas, according to PEN America, more than 400 writers and public intellectuals, including columnists and editorial journalists, were imprisoned across 40 different countries during 2025;

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

Whereas press freedom—

(1) is a key component of democratic governance, human rights, activism in civil society, and socioeconomic development; and

(2) enhances public accountability, transparency, and participation in civil society and democratic governance: 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 timely information and in holding governments and leaders accountable to citizens, including for human rights abuses;

(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) recognizes the critical importance of international journalists' access to conflict zones to conduct independent reporting;

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

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

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

(9) reaffirms the centrality of press freedom to efforts of the United States Government to support democracy, mitigate conflict, and promote human rights and good

governance domestically and around the world; and

(10) 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 and threats 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 RESOLUTION 716—EX-PRESSING THE SENSE OF THE SENATE REGARDING CRITICAL ELEMENTS OF THE UNITED STATES POLICY TOWARDS THE PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC OF CHINA

Mr. COONS (for himself, Mr. RICKETTS, Mrs. SHAHEEN, Mr. CRUZ, Mr. KAINE, Mr. MORENO, Mrs. MURRAY, Mr. CURTIS, Mr. KIM, Mr. MCCORMICK, Ms. DUCKWORTH, Mr. BANKS, Mr. TILLIS, Mr. YOUNG, Mr. WICKER, and Ms. SLOTKIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 716

Whereas the People's Republic of China is the foremost rival and strategic competitor of the United States that has the intent and capacity to undermine the security, economic prosperity, and strategic interests of the United States and the allies and partners of the United States;

Whereas the People's Republic of China has rapidly modernized and expanded its military in a manner that—

(1) poses direct threats to the security and economic prosperity of the United States, including by expanding its arsenal of nuclear, maritime, conventional long-range strike, cyber, space, and intelligence capabilities;

(2) aims to project power and deter the United States presence in the Indo-Pacific region;

(3) facilitates intensified coercive military and illegal, coercive, aggressive, and deceptive activities (also known as "gray zone activities") that—

(A) threaten the security and sovereignty of countries in the Indo-Pacific region; and

(B) compromise freedom of navigation in vital lanes of commerce, such as the South China Sea and the Taiwan Strait;

(4) aims to give the People's Republic of China the capability to carry out its threat to alter the status quo in the Taiwan Strait by coercion or force, including by delaying or denying third-party involvement in a Taiwan Strait contingency; and

(5) supports United States adversaries, such as the Islamic Republic of Iran, the Democratic People's Republic of Korea, and the Russian Federation, including through the sharing of military technology and materiel;

Whereas the People's Republic of China employs a wide range of state-directed economic and industrial policies designed to—

(1) disadvantage United States workers, firms, and long-term economic competitiveness;

(2) secure dominance in strategic industries; and

(3) distort global markets, including by—

(A) exploiting its position across global supply chains, such as critical minerals, advanced manufacturing inputs, and other strategic goods;

(B) forcing technology transfers;

(C) engaging in intellectual property theft;

(D) creating market distortions;

(E) imposing expansive export controls; and

(F) establishing barriers to market access;

Whereas the People's Republic of China is working—

(1) to surpass the United States in the development of critical emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence and quantum computing, which will define twenty-first century economic and military power; and

(2) to use such technologies—

(A) to expand the reach and range of their offensive military capabilities; and

(B) to conduct widespread cyber operations, including operations targeting the United States and its partners;

Whereas the People's Republic of China continues to be the primary source of precursor chemicals used by transnational criminal organizations to synthesize illicit substances (including illicit fentanyl and nitazenes) that harm communities in the United States;

Whereas the People's Republic of China leverages international institutions and regional organizations, including standards-setting bodies and technical governance frameworks, in ways that—

(1) give an unfair advantage to Chinese firms;

(2) embed technologies and rules preferred by the People's Republic of China in global markets to the disadvantage of companies in the United States and allied countries seeking to compete in strategic sectors; and

(3) obstruct Taiwan's participation in global forums; and

Whereas the People's Republic of China is an authoritarian state that—

(1) restricts and suppresses human rights, religious and ethnic minority groups, civil society, and free speech and media; and

(2) engages in a sophisticated global campaign of transnational repression: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That it is the sense of the Senate that the United States should—

(1) address the security, economic, technological, diplomatic, and strategic threats posed by the People's Republic of China as the foremost priorities of United States foreign policy;

(2) sustain and strengthen deterrence against the People's Republic of China and enhance the capacity of the United States—

(A) to defend its interests;

(B) to support freedom of navigation; and

(C) to maintain peace and stability in the Indo-Pacific region, including in the Taiwan Strait and the South China Sea;

(3) protect United States economic interests against the predatory economic and trade practices of the People's Republic of China, including by—

(A) strengthening export controls and closing loopholes;

(B) restricting investments in strategic industries in the United States;

(C) enforcing forced labor restrictions; and

(D) imposing costs to offset state-subsidized entities and goods;

(4) dominate the artificial intelligence and other foundational technologies sectors compared to the People's Republic of China and other peer and near-peer competitors;

(5) reaffirm the ironclad United States commitment to, and support for, United

States treaty allies in the Indo-Pacific region, which stand at the frontlines of the People's Republic of China's aggression, increased defense spending to deter such aggression, and provide vital basing for United States forces, including—

(A) Japan, consistent with the Treaty of Mutual Cooperation and Security Between the United States of America and Japan, signed at Washington, January 19, 1960;

(B) South Korea, consistent with the Mutual Defense Treaty Between the United States and the Republic of Korea, signed at Washington, October 1, 1953;

(C) Australia, consistent with the Security Treaty between Australia, New Zealand, and the United States of America, signed at San Francisco, September, 1951, and through the partnership among Australia, the United Kingdom, and United States (commonly known as "AUKUS");

(D) the Philippines, consistent with the Mutual Defense Treaty between the United States and the Philippines, signed at Washington, August 30, 1951; and

(E) trilateral cooperation between United States allies in the Indo-Pacific region, including among—

(i) the United States, Japan, and South Korea;

(ii) the United States, Japan, and the Philippines; and

(iii) the United States, Japan, and Australia;

(6) preserve peace and stability across the Taiwan Strait and maintain the longstanding United States policy on Taiwan, guided by the Taiwan Relations Act of 1979 (Public Law 96-8; 22 U.S.C. 3301 et seq.), the Three Joint Communiqués between the United States and the People's Republic of China, and the Six Assurances between the United States and Taiwan;

(7) strengthen support for United States partners in the Indo-Pacific region, including partners facing military, economic, and gray-zone coercion from the People's Republic of China, including by—

(A) broadening United States engagement with India, including through the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue;

(B) advancing United States partnerships with countries comprising the Association of Southeast Asian Nations; and

(C) working with Pacific island countries to support their resilience and prosperity;

(8) mitigate the leadership and influence of the People's Republic of China in multilateral organizations, technical bodies, and international standards-setting institutions to prevent the adoption of rules or standards that disadvantage the interests of the United States or of its partners; and

(9) advance the democratic norms and values that promote human rights, openness, and the flourishing of civil society in the Indo-Pacific region and beyond, in accordance with United States laws, such as Public Law 117-78 (commonly referred to as the "Uyghur Forced Labor Prevention Act") and the Asia Reassurance Initiative Act of 2018 (Public Law 115-409; 22 U.S.C. 3301 note).

S. RES. 717

Whereas Jereima "Jeri" Bustamante (referred to in this preamble as "Jeri Bustamante") lived the American Dream;

Whereas, after moving from Panama to the United States with her family, Jeri Bustamante—

(1) attended Miami Beach Senior High School; and

(2) earned a Bachelor's Degree in Communication and Media Sciences and a Master's Degree in Public Administration from Florida International University;

Whereas Jeri Bustamante had a tireless work ethic and a passion for communication and paid for her education by working while enrolled in school;

Whereas that tireless work ethic propelled Jeri Bustamante to professional success, beginning with an internship at a Miami television station and culminating in a period of service as press secretary to Governor Rick Scott;

Whereas the enthusiasm, compassion, tenacity, and vibrant energy of Jeri Bustamante are greatly missed by her family, friends, and coworkers;

Whereas the spirit of Jeri Bustamante lives on through the Jereima Bustamante Memorial Scholarship, which aims to help graduates of Miami Beach Senior High School achieve their goals and pursue the American Dream through a college education; and

Whereas April 8, 2026, marks 8 years since the life of Jeri Bustamante was tragically cut short in a fatal boating accident: Now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, That the Senate—

(1) honors the life and memory of Jereima "Jeri" Bustamante (referred to in this resolution as "Jeri Bustamante");

(2) offers heartfelt condolences to the family, loved ones, and friends of Jeri Bustamante;

(3) recognizes that living the American Dream remains possible for any individual who, following the example of Jeri Bustamante, works hard to pursue and achieve a goal; and

(4) encourages the recipients of the Jereima Bustamante Memorial Scholarship to carry on the legacy of Jeri Bustamante.

SENATE RESOLUTION 718—COMMEMORATING AND CONGRATULATING THE UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA, LOS ANGELES BRUINS WOMEN'S BASKETBALL TEAM FOR WINNING THE 2026 NATIONAL COLLEGIATE ATHLETIC ASSOCIATION DIVISION I WOMEN'S BASKETBALL NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP

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

S. RES. 718

Whereas, on Sunday, April 5, 2026, the University of California, Los Angeles (referred to in this preamble as "UCLA") Bruins' women's basketball team (referred to in this preamble as the "UCLA Bruins" or the "Bruins") won the National Collegiate Athletic Association (referred to in this preamble as the "NCAA") Division I Women's Basketball National Championship (referred to in this preamble as the "National Championship") by defeating the University of South Carolina Gamecocks 79-51 at the Mortgage Matchup Center in Phoenix, Arizona;

SENATE RESOLUTION 717—HONORING THE MEMORY OF JEREIMA "JERI" BUSTAMANTE ON THE EIGHTH ANNIVERSARY OF HER PASSING

Mr. SCOTT of Florida submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary: