

**Suspend the Rules And Agree to the Resolution, H.Res. 488 with  
Amendments**

**(The amendments consist of a new preamble, a substitute text, and  
an amendment to the title)**

113TH CONGRESS  
2D SESSION

# H. RES. 488

Supporting the people of Venezuela as they protest peacefully for democratic  
change and calling to end the violence.

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## IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

FEBRUARY 25, 2014

Ms. ROS-LEHTINEN (for herself, Mr. SALMON, Mr. DIAZ-BALART, Ms. WASSERMAN SCHULTZ, Mr. SIRES, Mr. GARCIA, Mr. DeSANTIS, Mr. GRAYSON, Mr. McCAUL, Mr. DEUTCH, Ms. WILSON of Florida, Mr. MURPHY of Florida, Mr. YOHO, Mr. STOCKMAN, Mr. DUNCAN of South Carolina, and Mr. KINZINGER of Illinois) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

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# RESOLUTION

Supporting the people of Venezuela as they protest peacefully  
for democratic change and calling to end the violence.

Whereas the United States Government should support the  
rule of law, and free and peaceful exercise of representa-  
tive democracy in Venezuela, condemning violence and in-  
timidation against the country's political opposition, and  
calling for dialogue between all political actors in the  
country;

Whereas, on February 12, 2014, also known in Venezuela as the National Youth Day, students began protesting in several cities Venezuelan leader Nicolas Maduro's inability to stem violent crime, his undemocratic actions, and a rapidly deteriorating economy marked by high inflation and shortages of consumer goods;

Whereas, on February 12, 2014, a judge issued an arrest warrant for Leopoldo López, leader of the opposition party Voluntad Popular, for unfounded allegations in connection with the student protests;

Whereas, on February 17, 2014, the Government of Venezuela notified the United States Department of State that it had declared 3 consular officers at the United States Embassy in Venezuela *personae non gratae*;

Whereas over the last year, the Government of Venezuela has expelled a total of 8 United States Government officials from Venezuela;

Whereas, on February 18, 2014, opposition leader Leopoldo Lopez turned himself in to Venezuelan authorities, was arrested, and charged with criminal incitement, conspiracy, arson, and intent to damage property;

Whereas Leopoldo Lopez is currently being held in a prison at a military facility;

Whereas nongovernmental human rights organizations have alleged that the charges brought against Venezuelan opposition leader Leopoldo López appear to be a politically motivated attempt to silence dissent in the country;

Whereas the Venezuelan Government has blocked users' on-line images as opposition groups marched through Caracas;

Whereas the Venezuelan people have been protesting economic, social, and political concerns facing their country, including corruption, rising inflation rates, shortages of everyday products, increasing crime rates, and the erosion of human rights and respect for political dissent;

Whereas, on February 19, 2014, President Barack Obama criticized the Venezuelan Government for arresting protesters, called for their release, and urged the government to focus on the “legitimate grievances of the Venezuelan people”;

Whereas, as of February 26, 2014, there have been 14 people killed, over 100 injured, and many persons unjustly detained in relation to pro-democracy demonstrations throughout Venezuela;

Whereas Venezuelan leader Nicolas Maduro threatened to expel the United States news network CNN from Venezuela and has taken off the air the Colombian news channel NTN 24, which transmits in Venezuela, after news outlets reported on the nation-wide protests;

Whereas the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights released a statement on February 14, 2014, which “expresses its concern over the serious incidents of violence that have taken place in the context of protest demonstrations in Venezuela, as well as other complaints concerning acts of censorship against media outlets, attacks on organizations that defend human rights, and acts of alleged political persecution”; and

Whereas as a member of the Organization of American States and signatory to the Inter-American Democratic Charter, the Government of Venezuela has agreed to abide by the principles of constitutional, representative

democracy, which include free and fair elections and adherence to its own constitution: Now, therefore, be it

1       *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2               (1) supports the people of Venezuela in their  
3       pursuit of freedom of expression and freedom of as-  
4       sembly to promote democratic principles in Ven-  
5       ezuela;

6               (2) deplores acts which constitute a disregard  
7       for the rule of law, the inexcusable violence per-  
8       petrated against opposition leaders and protesters in  
9       Venezuela, and the growing efforts to use politically  
10      motivated criminal charges to intimidate the coun-  
11      try's political opposition;

12              (3) urges responsible nations throughout the  
13      international community to stand in solidarity with  
14      the people of Venezuela and to actively encourage a  
15      process of dialogue between the Government of Ven-  
16      ezuela and the political opposition to end the vio-  
17      lence;

18              (4) urges the United States Department of  
19      State to work in concert with other countries in the  
20      Americas to take meaningful steps to ensure that  
21      basic fundamental freedoms in Venezuela are in ac-  
22      cordance with the Inter-American Democratic Char-  
23      ter and to strengthen the ability of the Organization

1 of American States (OAS) to respond to the erosion  
2 of democratic norms and institutions in Venezuela;  
3 (5) urges the Organization of American States  
4 and its Inter-American Commission on Human  
5 Rights to utilize its good offices and all mechanisms  
6 at its disposal to seek the most effective way to ex-  
7 peditiously end the violence in Venezuela in accord-  
8 ance with the Inter-American Democratic Charter;  
9 and

10 (6) supports efforts by international and multi-  
11 lateral organizations to urge the Venezuelan Govern-  
12 ment to adopt measures to guarantee the rights to  
13 life, humane treatment, and security, and the polit-  
14 ical freedoms of assembly, association, and expres-  
15 sion to all of the people of Venezuela.

Amend the title so as to read: “Supporting the peo-  
ple of Venezuela as they protest peacefully for democracy,  
a reduction in violent crime and calling for an end to re-  
cent violence.”.