

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3012

To reauthorize the North Korean Human Rights Act of 2004, and for
other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

APRIL 28, 2023

Mrs. KIM of California (for herself and Mr. BERA) introduced the following
bill; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs

A BILL

To reauthorize the North Korean Human Rights Act of
2004, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “North Korean Human
5 Rights Reauthorization Act of 2023”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 Congress makes the following findings:

8 (1) The North Korean Human Rights Act of
9 2004 (Public Law 108–333; 22 U.S.C. 7801 et seq.)
10 and subsequent reauthorizations of such Act were

1 the product of broad, bipartisan consensus regarding
2 the promotion of human rights, documentation of
3 human rights violations, transparency in the delivery
4 of humanitarian assistance, and the importance of
5 refugee protection.

6 (2) The human rights and humanitarian condi-
7 tions within North Korea remain deplorable and
8 have been intentionally perpetuated against the peo-
9 ple of North Korea through policies endorsed and
10 implemented by Kim Jong-un and the Workers'
11 Party of Korea.

12 (3) According to a 2014 report released by the
13 United Nations Human Rights Council's Commis-
14 sion of Inquiry on Human Rights in the Democratic
15 People's Republic of Korea, between 80,000 and
16 120,000 children, women, and men were being held
17 in political prison camps in North Korea, where they
18 were subjected to deliberate starvation, forced labor,
19 executions, torture, rape, forced abortion, and infan-
20 ticide.

21 (4) North Korea continues to hold a number of
22 South Koreans and Japanese abducted after the
23 signing of the Agreement Concerning a Military Ar-
24 mistice in Korea, signed at Panmunjom July 27,
25 1953 (commonly referred to as the "Korean War

1 Armistice Agreement”) and refuses to acknowledge
2 the abduction of more than 100,000 South Koreans
3 during the Korean War in violation of the Geneva
4 Convention.

5 (5) Human rights violations in North Korea,
6 which include forced starvation, sexual violence
7 against women and children, restrictions on freedom
8 of movement, arbitrary detention, torture, execu-
9 tions, and enforced disappearances, amount to
10 crimes against humanity according to the United
11 Nations Commission of Inquiry on Human Rights in
12 the Democratic People’s Republic of Korea.

13 (6) The effects of the COVID–19 pandemic and
14 North Korea’s strict lockdown of its borders and
15 crackdowns on informal market activities and small
16 entrepreneurship have drastically increased food in-
17 security for its people and given rise to famine con-
18 ditions in parts of the country.

19 (7) North Korea’s COVID–19 border lockdown
20 measures also include shoot-to-kill orders that have
21 resulted in the killing of—

22 (A) North Koreans attempting to cross the
23 border; and

24 (B) at least 1 South Korean citizen in Sep-
25 tember 2020.

1 (8) The Government of the People’s Republic of
2 China is aiding and abetting in crimes against hu-
3 manity by forcibly repatriating North Korean refu-
4 gees to North Korea where they are sent to prison
5 camps, harshly interrogated, and tortured or exe-
6 cuted.

7 (9) The forcible repatriation of North Korean
8 refugees violates the People’s Republic of China’s
9 freely undertaken obligation to uphold the principle
10 of non-refoulement, as a state party to the Conven-
11 tion Relating to the Status of Refugees, done at Ge-
12 neva July 28, 1951 (and made applicable by the
13 Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, done at
14 New York January 31, 1967 (19 UST 6223)).

15 (10) North Korea continues to bar freedom of
16 religion and persecute religious minorities, especially
17 Christians. Eyewitnesses report that Christians in
18 North Korea have been tortured, forcibly detained,
19 and even executed for possessing a Bible or pro-
20 fessing Christianity.

21 (11) United States and international broad-
22 casting operations into North Korea—

23 (A) serve as a critical source of outside
24 news and information for the North Korean
25 people; and

1 (B) provide a valuable service for coun-
2 tering regime propaganda and false narratives.

3 (12) The position of Special Envoy on North
4 Korean Human Rights Issues was vacant from Jan-
5 uary 2017 to December 2022, even though the
6 President is required to appoint a Senate-confirmed
7 Special Envoy to fill this position in accordance with
8 section 107 of the North Korean Human Rights Act
9 of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7817). In January 2023 Presi-
10 dent Biden nominated Julie Turner as Special
11 Envoy on North Korean Human Rights and Issues
12 and her nomination is currently awaiting Senate
13 confirmation.

14 **SEC. 3. SENSE OF CONGRESS.**

15 It is the sense of Congress that—

16 (1) promoting information access in North
17 Korea continues to be a successful method of coun-
18 tering DPRK propaganda and the United States
19 Government should continue to support nongovern-
20 mental radio broadcasting to North Korea and pro-
21 mote other emerging methods in this space;

22 (2) because refugees among North Koreans
23 fleeing into China face severe punishments upon
24 their forcible return, the United States should urge
25 the Government of the People’s Republic of China—

1 (A) to immediately halt its forcible repatri-
2 ation of North Koreans;

3 (B) to allow the United Nations High
4 Commissioner for Refugees (referred to in this
5 section as “UNHCR”) unimpeded access to
6 North Koreans within China to determine
7 whether they are refugees and require assist-
8 ance;

9 (C) to fulfill its obligations as a state party
10 to the Convention Relating to the Status of
11 Refugees, done at Geneva July 28, 1951 (and
12 made applicable by the Protocol Relating to the
13 Status of Refugees, done at New York January
14 31, 1967 (19 UST 6223) and the Agreement
15 on the upgrading of the UNHCR Mission in the
16 People’s Republic of China to UNHCR branch
17 office in the People’s Republic of China, done
18 at Geneva December 1, 1995;

19 (D) to address the concerns of the United
20 Nations Committee Against Torture by incor-
21 porating into domestic legislation the principle
22 of non-refoulement; and

23 (E) to recognize the legal status of North
24 Korean women who marry or have children with
25 Chinese citizens and ensure that all such moth-

1 ers and children are granted resident status
2 and access to education and other public serv-
3 ices in accordance with Chinese law and inter-
4 national standards;

5 (3) the United States Government should con-
6 tinue to promote the effective and transparent deliv-
7 ery and distribution of any humanitarian aid pro-
8 vided in North Korea to ensure that such aid
9 reaches its intended recipients to the point of con-
10 sumption or utilization by cooperating closely with
11 the Government of the Republic of Korea and inter-
12 national and nongovernmental organizations;

13 (4) the Department of State should continue to
14 take steps to increase public awareness about the
15 risks and dangers of travel by United States citizens
16 to North Korea, including by continuing its policy of
17 blocking United States passports from being used to
18 travel to North Korea without a special validation
19 from the Department of State;

20 (5) the United Nations, which has a significant
21 role to play in promoting and improving human
22 rights in North Korea, should press for access for
23 the United Nations Special Rapporteur and the
24 United Nations High Commissioner for Human

1 Rights on the situation of human rights in North
2 Korea;

3 (6) Julie Turner, Nominee for Special Envoy on
4 North Korean Human Rights Issues should be con-
5 firmed without delay—

6 (A) to properly promote and coordinate
7 North Korean human rights and humanitarian
8 issues; and

9 (B) to participate in policy planning and
10 implementation with respect to refugee issues;

11 (7) the United States should urge North Korea
12 to repeal the Reactionary Thought and Culture De-
13 nunciation Law and other draconian laws, regula-
14 tions, and decrees that manifestly violate the free-
15 dom of opinion and expression and the freedom of
16 thought, conscience, and religion;

17 (8) the United States should urge North Korea
18 to ensure that any restrictions on addressing the
19 COVID–19 pandemic are necessary, proportionate,
20 nondiscriminatory, time-bound, transparent, and
21 allow international staff to operate inside the North
22 Korea to provide international assistance based on
23 independent needs assessments;

24 (9) the United States should expand the Re-
25 wards for Justice program to be open to North Ko-

1 rean officials who can provide evidence of crimes
2 against humanity being committed by North Korean
3 officials;

4 (10) the United States should continue to seek
5 cooperation from all foreign governments—

6 (A) to allow the UNHCR access to process
7 North Korean refugees overseas for resettlement;
8 and

9 (B) to allow United States officials access
10 to process refugees for possible resettlement in
11 the United States; and

12 (11) the Secretary of State, through diplomacy
13 by senior officials, including United States ambassadors
14 to Asia-Pacific countries, and in close cooperation
15 with South Korea, should make every effort
16 to promote the protection of North Korean refugees,
17 escapees, and defectors.

18 **SEC. 4. REAUTHORIZATIONS.**

19 (a) SUPPORT FOR HUMAN RIGHTS AND DEMOCRACY
20 PROGRAMS.—Section 102(b)(1) of the North Korean
21 Human Rights Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7812(b)(1)) is
22 amended by striking “2022” and inserting “2028”.

23 (b) ACTIONS TO PROMOTE FREEDOM OF INFORMATION.—
24 Section 104 of the North Korean Human Rights
25 Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7814) is amended—

1 (1) in subsection (b)(1), by striking “2022”
2 and inserting “2028”; and

3 (2) in subsection (c), by striking “2022” and
4 inserting “2028”.

5 (c) REPORT BY SPECIAL ENVOY ON NORTH KOREAN
6 HUMAN RIGHTS ISSUES.—Section 107(d) of the North
7 Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7817(d))
8 is amended by striking “2022” and inserting “2028”.

9 (d) REPORT ON UNITED STATES HUMANITARIAN AS-
10 SISTANCE.—Section 201(a) of the North Korean Human
11 Rights Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7831(a)) is amended, in
12 the matter preceding paragraph (1), by striking “2022”
13 and inserting “2028”.

14 (e) ASSISTANCE PROVIDED OUTSIDE OF NORTH
15 KOREA.—Section 203 of the North Korean Human Rights
16 Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7833) is amended—

17 (1) in subsection (b)(2), by striking “103(15)”
18 and inserting “103(17)”; and

19 (2) in subsection (c)(1), by striking “2018
20 through 2022” and inserting “2023 through 2028”.

21 (f) ANNUAL REPORTS.—Section 305(a) of the North
22 Korean Human Rights Act of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7845(a))
23 is amended, in the matter preceding paragraph (1) by
24 striking “2022” and inserting “2028”.

1 **SEC. 5. ACTIONS TO PROMOTE FREEDOM OF INFORMA-**
2 **TION.**

3 Title I of the North Korean Human Rights Act of
4 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7811 et seq.) is amended—

5 (1) in section 103(a), by striking “Broadcasting
6 Board of Governors” and inserting “United States
7 Agency for Global Media”; and

8 (2) in section 104(a)—

9 (A) by striking “Broadcasting Board of
10 Governors” each place such term appears and
11 inserting “United States Agency for Global
12 Media”;

13 (B) in paragraph (7)(B)—

14 (i) in the matter preceding clause (i),
15 by striking “5 years” and inserting “10
16 years”;

17 (ii) by redesignating clauses (i)
18 through (iii) as clauses (ii) through (iv),
19 respectively;

20 (iii) by inserting before clause (ii) the
21 following:

22 “(i) an update of the plan required
23 under subparagraph (A);”; and

24 (iv) in clause (iii), as redesignated, by
25 striking “pursuant to section 403” and in-
26 serting “to carry out this section”.

1 **SEC. 6. SPECIAL ENVOY FOR NORTH KOREAN HUMAN**
2 **RIGHTS ISSUES.**

3 Section 107 of the North Korean Human Rights Act
4 of 2004 (22 U.S.C. 7817) is amended by adding at the
5 end the following:

6 “(e) REPORT ON APPOINTMENT OF SPECIAL
7 ENVOY.—Not later than 180 days after the date of the
8 enactment of this subsection and annually thereafter
9 through 2028 if the position of Special Envoy remains va-
10 cant, the Secretary of State shall submit a report to the
11 appropriate congressional committees that describes the
12 efforts being taken to appoint the Special Envoy.”.

13 **SEC. 7. SENSE OF CONGRESS REGARDING KOREAN-AMER-**
14 **ICAN DIVIDED FAMILIES.**

15 It is the sense of Congress that—

16 (1) the United States and North Korea should
17 begin the process of reuniting Korean-American di-
18 vided family members with their immediate relatives
19 through ways such as—

20 (A) identifying divided families in the
21 United States and North Korea who are willing
22 and able to participate in a pilot program for
23 family reunions;

24 (B) finding matches for members of such
25 families through organizations such as the Red
26 Cross; and

1 (C) working with the Government of South
2 Korea to include American citizens in inter-Ko-
3 rean video reunions;

4 (2) the institution of family is inalienable and
5 the restoration of contact between divided families
6 whether physically, literarily, or virtually is an ur-
7 gent need; and

8 (3) the United States and North Korea should
9 pursue reunions as a humanitarian priority of imme-
10 diate concern.

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