

104TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. CON. RES. 187

Expressing the sense of Congress with respect to recent church burnings.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 13, 1996

Mr. WATTS of Oklahoma (for himself, Mrs. CLAYTON, Mr. HYDE, Mr. LAUGHLIN, Mr. WICKER, Mr. LARGENT, Mr. BONILLA, Mrs. MYRICK, Mr. HALL of Texas, Mr. PETERSON of Minnesota, Mr. ENGLISH of Pennsylvania, Mr. HEINEMAN, Mr. NORWOOD, Mr. HUTCHINSON, Mr. CONDIT, Mr. BAESLER, Mr. WAMP, Mr. FIELDS of Texas, Mr. SOUDER, Mr. HILLEARY, Mr. ARCHER, Mr. TALENT, Ms. JACKSON LEE of Texas, Mr. GRAHAM, Mr. BONIOR, Mr. RICHARDSON, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. KING, Mr. PAYNE of New Jersey, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. WARD, Mr. FRAZER, Mr. FORD, Mr. BROWDER, Mr. HILLIARD, Mr. HINCHEY, Mr. OWENS, Mr. HALL of Ohio, Mr. FIELDS of Louisiana, Mr. MEEHAN, Mr. FROST, Mr. HASTINGS of Florida, Mrs. MALONEY, Mr. LANTOS, Mr. DELLUMS, Mr. FRANKS of Connecticut, Mr. WAXMAN, Mr. CLYBURN, Mr. ABERCROMBIE, Mr. FARR of California, Mr. JACKSON of Illinois, Mr. GILCHREST, Ms. NORTON, Ms. WOOLSEY, Ms. FURSE, Ms. ESHOO, Mr. PALLONE, Mrs. THURMAN, Mrs. KENNELLY, Mr. SHAYS, Mr. CLAY, Ms. KAPTUR, Mr. WATT of North Carolina, Mr. FOGLIETTA, Mr. THOMPSON, Mr. MILLER of California, Mr. LEWIS of Georgia, Ms. PELOSI, Ms. ROYBAL-ALLARD, Mr. WYNN, Mr. EDWARDS, Mr. CLEMENT, Mrs. SCHROEDER, Miss COLLINS of Michigan, Mr. RUSH, Mr. TORRICELLI, Mr. STOKES, Mr. ROSE, Mr. CUMMINGS, Mr. HEFNER, Mrs. MEEK of Florida, Mr. FLAKE, Ms. PRYCE, Mr. SERRANO, Mr. BISHOP, Mr. FATTAH, Ms. SLAUGHTER, Ms. RIVERS, Mr. NADLER, Mr. FRANK of Massachusetts, Ms. VELÁZQUEZ, Ms. WATERS, Mrs. COLLINS of Illinois, Mr. STARK, Mr. BARRETT of Wisconsin, Mr. SANFORD, Mr. ARMEY, Mr. ZELIFF, Mr. BAKER of California, Mr. STOCKMAN, Mr. PAXON, Mr. SHADEGG, Mr. ENSIGN, Mr. COBURN, Mr. TIAHRT, Mr. INGLIS of South Carolina, and Mr. ROEMER) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

JUNE 13, 1996

The Committee on the Judiciary discharged; considered and agreed to

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of Congress with respect to recent church burnings.

Whereas more than 30 African-American churches have been burned over the last 18 months;

Whereas arrests have been made in only 5 of the cases currently under investigation;

Whereas the African-American community deserves the full support of Congress in solving these cases in an expeditious manner and it is important for Congress to speak out against the recent incidents of arson; and

Whereas several measures which would expedite the investigation into these incidents and assist in the prosecution of individuals found guilty of involvement in these incidents are now pending before Congress: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring)*, That it is the sense of Congress that—

3 (1) attacks on places of worship because of the
4 race, color, denomination, or ethnicity of the con-
5 gregation undermine fundamental American ideals;

6 (2) these fires appear to be hate crimes and
7 also implicitly interfere with the First Amendment
8 rights and other civil rights of the victims;

9 (3) the arson of a place of worship is repulsive
10 to us as a society;

1 (4) the Congress condemns, in the strongest
2 possible terms, these abhorrent actions against freely
3 worshipping American citizens and the African-
4 American community in particular;

5 (5) the Congress sends its sincere condolences
6 to those individuals who have been affected by these
7 acts of cowardice;

8 (6) the Congress fully supports the activities of
9 local law enforcement officials, the Department of
10 Justice, and the Department of the Treasury in in-
11 vestigating these incidents;

12 (7) the Congress urges the United States Attor-
13 ney General and local prosecutors to seek the maxi-
14 mum penalty available under law to punish the per-
15 petrators of these craven acts;

16 (8) it is important that Congress enact appro-
17 priate legislation to ensure that Federal law enforce-
18 ment has the necessary tools to punish and deter
19 these shameful, vile acts, including the bipartisan
20 legislation introduced by Representatives Hyde and
21 Conyers which would facilitate the prosecution of
22 persons responsible for these acts;

23 (9) the President is urged to make the fullest
24 possible use of all available law enforcement re-

1 sources to bring the culprits in these crimes to jus-
2 tice;

3 (10) Congress encourages the people of the
4 United States to work within their own communities
5 to prevent arson against African-American or any
6 other house of worship; and

7 (11) Congress encourages American citizens to
8 observe a national week of prayer beginning June
9 16, 1996, and ending June 23, 1996, in their
10 churches, synagogues, mosques and other places of
11 worship for racial harmony, religious tolerance and
12 respect for the civil and human rights of all Ameri-
13 cans.

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