

By: Reynolds

H.R. No. 1330

R E S O L U T I O N

1 WHEREAS, The State of Texas supports the protection of human
2 rights, democratic principles, and equal justice for all people,
3 and opposes all discrimination, including discrimination based on
4 religion and ethno-nationalism; and

5 WHEREAS, The nation of India was founded as a secular
6 republic in which members of all regional cultures, castes,
7 linguistic groups, and religious faiths are welcome, and India and
8 the United States share common values of democracy, the rule of law,
9 and the protection of human rights and liberty; however, the ruling
10 Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government of India's prime minister,
11 Narendra Modi, has promoted the suppression of free press, the
12 silencing of political dissent, governance through increasingly
13 divisive policies, and overt discrimination and violence against
14 religious minorities; and

15 WHEREAS, In 2002, Narendra Modi was chief minister of the
16 Indian state of Gujarat, and he failed to quell the monthslong
17 lynching of more than 1,000 Muslims, mass rapes of Muslim women, and
18 the destruction of 20,000 Muslim-owned homes and businesses as well
19 as 360 Muslim places of worship; his complicity and involvement in
20 the 2002 Gujarat pogrom prompted the U.S. State Department to deny
21 him entry into the United States from 2005 until his election as
22 India's prime minister in 2014; and

23 WHEREAS, On August 5, 2019, the BJP-led government revoked
24 Article 370 of the Indian Constitution, which granted special

1 semiautonomous status to the former Indian state of Jammu and
2 Kashmir, which was the only Muslim-majority state in the nation; in
3 revoking the article, the government implemented mass detentions
4 and imposed wide-ranging restrictions on communications and press
5 freedoms; and

6 WHEREAS, On December 11, 2019, the Indian government passed
7 the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA); under the guise of helping
8 refugees fleeing religious persecution from neighboring countries,
9 the act blatantly discriminates against Muslim Indians by favoring
10 Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi, and Christian immigrants, while
11 specifically excluding Muslim people; the CAA is the first instance
12 of religion being used as a criterion for Indian citizenship in the
13 history of the nation; and

14 WHEREAS, BJP president Amit Shah has expressed support for
15 the nationwide expansion of the National Register of Citizens
16 (NRC); however, many Indians lack documentation to prove
17 citizenship, such as birth certificates, and the NRC expansion
18 could strip hundreds of millions of people of their citizenship
19 with no option to be re-naturalized; this would disproportionately
20 affect Muslims, oppressed castes, women, and indigenous
21 communities; in addition, when combined with an expansion of the
22 NRC, the CAA will allow for the disenfranchisement of India's
23 largest religious minority community and create a situation where
24 individuals could be deprived of citizenship if they are a Muslim
25 without documents; in 2019, India's government began building vast
26 detention camps to house individuals who are unable to provide
27 documentation of citizenship and who are unable to apply for

1 refugee status or asylum under CAA; and

2 WHEREAS, From 2019 through 2021, public protests in India
3 against CAA, NRC, and anti-farmer legislation have been met by
4 consistent and indiscriminate governmental repression, including
5 the firing of live ammunition at demonstrators, mass arrests, and
6 the imposition of restrictions on telecommunications and free
7 press; in 2021, several Indian states ruled by the BJP passed laws
8 to regulate religious conversions, making interreligious marriages
9 between Muslim men and Hindu women punishable by imprisonment if
10 the government determines that the marriage involved a fraudulent
11 conversion; and

12 WHEREAS, In September 2019, a "Howdy, Modi!" rally was held
13 in Houston, featuring Indian prime minister Narendra Modi, in what
14 the *Washington Post* ominously reported was "the largest-ever
15 gathering with a foreign political leader in the United States,"
16 demonstrating the growing threat of the BJP's influence around the
17 world; and

18 WHEREAS, In its 2020 report, the U.S. Commission on
19 International Religious Freedom recommended that India be
20 designated as a "Country of Particular Concern" (CPC), stating that
21 the country is "engaging in and tolerating systematic, ongoing, and
22 egregious religious freedom violations"; in September 2020,
23 Amnesty International halted all work in India due to the
24 "heavy-handed tactics that Indian civil society has become
25 increasingly familiar with--part of the government's drive to
26 silence critical voices and stoke a climate of fear"; in its 2020
27 Democracy Index, the Economist Intelligence Unit decreased India's

1 global ranking, citing "democratic backsliding" by authorities and
2 "crackdowns" on civil liberties as well as stating that the
3 Narendra Modi-led government had "introduced a religious element to
4 the conceptualization of Indian citizenship, a step that many
5 critics see as undermining the secular basis of the Indian state";
6 and

7 WHEREAS, In its 2021 World Report, Human Rights Watch stated
8 that "the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP)-led government increasingly
9 harassed, arrested, and prosecuted rights defenders, activists,
10 journalists, students, academics, and others critical of the
11 government or its policies . . . [a]ttacks continued against
12 minorities, especially Muslims, even as authorities failed to take
13 action against BJP leaders who vilified Muslims and BJP supporters
14 who engaged in violence"; in its 2021 Freedom in the World Report,
15 Freedom House downgraded India from "Free" to a "Partly Free"
16 country, finding that "harassment of journalists and other
17 government critics has increased under Prime Minister Narendra Modi
18 and his Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), as have
19 religiously motivated attacks against non-Hindus"; and

20 WHEREAS, All people deserve to live without fear or
21 intimidation in practice of their faith, and it is important to join
22 in the outcry against the anti-Muslim actions of the BJP-led
23 government in India; now, therefore, be it

24 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the 87th Texas
25 Legislature hereby condemn rising ethno-nationalism and the
26 suppression of democratic principles in India; and, be it further

27 RESOLVED, That the Texas House of Representatives express

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1 solidarity with the Indian-American community regardless of
2 religious, linguistic, and cultural identification, and affirm
3 support for the protection of human rights, democratic principles,
4 and equal justice for all people in Texas and beyond.