
SENATE JOINT MEMORIAL 8012

State of Washington

65th Legislature

2017 Regular Session

By Senators Liiias, Pedersen, Fain, Rivers, Walsh, Ranker, Chase, Hasegawa, Darneille, Conway, Saldaña, Hunt, Billig, Nelson, Rolfes, McCoy, Palumbo, Cleveland, Wellman, Takko, Kuderer, Mullet, Frockt, Van De Wege, Hobbs, Keiser, and Carlyle

1 TO THE HONORABLE DONALD J. TRUMP, PRESIDENT OF THE UNITED STATES,
2 AND TO THE PRESIDENT OF THE SENATE AND THE SPEAKER OF THE HOUSE OF
3 REPRESENTATIVES, AND TO THE SECRETARY OF STATE OF THE UNITED STATES,
4 AND TO THE UNITED STATES AMBASSADOR TO THE UNITED NATIONS, AND TO THE
5 MEMBERS OF THE WASHINGTON STATE CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION:

6 We, your Memorialists, the Senate and House of Representatives of
7 the State of Washington, in legislative session assembled,
8 respectfully represent and petition as follows:

9 WHEREAS, Credible reports by news publications and human rights
10 organizations have recently surfaced describing the detention,
11 torture, and killing of suspected gay and bisexual men by law
12 enforcement and security forces in the Chechen Republic; and

13 WHEREAS, It is estimated that up to one hundred men have been
14 abducted and detained at a de facto concentration camp as part of a
15 state-sanctioned operation to silence the voices of a repressed
16 community within Chechen society; and

17 WHEREAS, Both victims and witnesses to this coordinated effort
18 have described state-sanctioned torture and beatings, which are
19 believed to have led to the death of at least three victims; and

20 WHEREAS, This extrajudicial apprehension and interrogation of
21 citizens is carried out by law enforcement with the consent of the
22 head of the Chechen government, Ramzan Kadyrov, who has repeatedly

1 denied the very existence of lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender
2 (LGBT) persons in Chechnya; and

3 WHEREAS, The United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights
4 and experts from the United Nations have condemned the actions and
5 statements of authorities in the region, observing that such
6 persecution and violence violate international human rights laws; and

7 WHEREAS, Chechen officials have denied these reports and made
8 statements inciting hatred based on sexual orientation or gender
9 identity and encouraging violence against LGBT individuals by their
10 families and community members; and

11 WHEREAS, The Russian government has not publicly condemned these
12 actions, but has instead deflected responsibility to local law
13 enforcement and asked that official complaints of abuse be filed
14 through the same civil authorities responsible for encouraging
15 violence; and

16 WHEREAS, It is the moral obligation of the United States to "work
17 aggressively to advance human rights for everyone," in the words of
18 Secretary of State Rex Tillerson at his confirmation hearing;

19 NOW, THEREFORE, Your Memorialists respectfully pray that
20 peaceable action be taken by the diplomatic bodies of the federal
21 government in collaboration with the international community on
22 behalf of the victims of the persecution in Chechnya to: (1) End the
23 state-sanctioned detention of and violence against LGBT individuals,
24 and (2) provide asylum to LGBT individuals seeking safety.

25 BE IT RESOLVED, That copies of this Memorial be immediately
26 transmitted to the Honorable Donald J. Trump, President of the United
27 States, the Secretary of State of the United States, the United
28 States Ambassador to the United Nations, the President of the United
29 States Senate, the Speaker of the House of Representatives, and each
30 member of Congress from the State of Washington.

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