

104TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. CON. RES. 183

Condemning the recent rash of arson against African-American churches across the United States, pledging to assist law enforcement authorities in apprehending the persons responsible for such acts of arson, supporting bipartisan legislation which would facilitate the prosecution of arsonists and create more severe penalties for arson against houses of worship, and encouraging the people of the United States to work in their communities to prevent future acts of arson against African-American churches.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 11, 1996

Mrs. CLAYTON (for herself, Mr. BONIOR, Mr. RICHARDSON, Ms. DELAURO, Mr. KING, Mr. PAYNE of New Jersey, Mr. SANDERS, Mr. WARD, Mr. FRAZER, Mr. FORD, Mr. BROWDER, Mr. NORWOOD, 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, Mrs. MYRICK, 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. JACKSON-LEE of Texas, 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, Mr. TALENT, 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, and Mr. BARRETT of Wisconsin) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Condemning the recent rash of arson against African-American churches across the United States, pledging to assist law enforcement authorities in apprehending the persons responsible for such acts of arson, supporting bipartisan legislation which would facilitate the prosecution of arsonists and create more severe penalties for arson against houses of worship, and encouraging the people of the United States to work in their communities to prevent future acts of arson against African-American churches.

Whereas more than 30 African-American churches have caught fire during the past 15 months under suspicious circumstances;

Whereas officials at the Departments of Justice and the Treasury believe that racial hostility was the driving force behind many of such acts of arson;

Whereas 2 men with connections to the Christian Knights of the Ku Klux Klan have been arrested in South Carolina for 2 of the church burnings in that State;

Whereas President Clinton has initiated a four-step plan to respond to the recent rash of arson against African-American churches, including the creation of a task force comprised of members of the Departments of Justice and the Treasury and more than 200 law enforcement officials;

Whereas, on June 15, 1996, members of the congregation of the Mount Zion AME church in Greeleyville, South Carolina will be joined by other members of the Greeleyville community in marching from the site where the old Mount Zion AME church was burned to the site of the

newly rebuilt Mount Zion AME church, representing the triumph of good over evil;

Whereas it is important for the Congress to speak out against the recent incidents of arson against African-American places of worship: Now, therefore, be it

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

3 (1) condemns the rash of arson against African-
4 American churches across the United States during the
5 past 18 months;

6 (2) pledges to take steps to assist law enforcement
7 authorities in apprehending the persons responsible for
8 these acts of arson;

9 (3) supports the bipartisan legislation introduced by
10 Representatives Conyers and Hyde, which would facilitate
11 the prosecution of the persons responsible for arson
12 against African-American churches and increase penalties
13 against arsonists who target houses of worship;

14 (4) encourages the people of the United States to
15 work within their own communities to prevent arson
16 against African-American houses of worship.

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