

104TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

H. CON. RES. 187

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 14, 1996

Received

JUNE 20, 1996

Referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

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 expedi-

tious 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 congregation
5 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;

11 (4) the Congress condemns, in the strongest
12 possible terms, these abhorrent actions against freely
13 worshipping American citizens and the African-
14 American community in particular;

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

18 (6) the Congress fully supports the activities of
19 local law enforcement officials, the Department of
20 Justice, and the Department of the Treasury in investigating
21 these incidents;

1 (7) the Congress urges the United States Attor-
2 ney General and local prosecutors to seek the maxi-
3 mum penalty available under law to punish the per-
4 petrators of these craven acts;

5 (8) it is important that Congress enact appro-
6 priate legislation to ensure that Federal law enforce-
7 ment has the necessary tools to punish and deter
8 these shameful, vile acts, including the bipartisan
9 legislation introduced by Representatives Hyde and
10 Conyers which would facilitate the prosecution of
11 persons responsible for these acts;

12 (9) the President is urged to make the fullest
13 possible use of all available law enforcement re-
14 sources to bring the culprits in these crimes to jus-
15 tice;

16 (10) Congress encourages the people of the
17 United States to work within their own communities
18 to prevent arson against African-American or any
19 other house of worship; and

20 (11) Congress encourages American citizens to
21 observe a national week of prayer beginning June
22 16, 1996, and ending June 23, 1996, in their
23 churches, synagogues, mosques, and other places of
24 worship for racial harmony, religious tolerance and

1 respect for the civil and human rights of all Ameri-
2 cans.

Passed the House of Representatives June 13, 1996.

Attest: ROBIN H. CARLE,
Clerk.

By LINDA NAVE,
Deputy Clerk.