

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 242

Expressing the sense of Congress regarding the education curriculum in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 14, 2003

Mr. DAVIS of Florida (for himself, Mr. BEREUTER, Mr. WEXLER, Mr. KING of New York, Mr. DEUTSCH, Mr. McDERMOTT, Mr. MATSUI, Mr. BERMAN, Mr. SKELTON, Mr. GREENWOOD, Mr. SHIMKUS, Mr. CROWLEY, Mr. HOEFFEL, Mr. ENGEL, Mr. BROWN of Ohio, Mr. SMITH of Washington, Mrs. JO ANN DAVIS of Virginia, Mrs. LOWEY, Mr. DELAHUNT, Mr. SCHIFF, Mr. KIND, and Mr. NADLER) submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on International Relations

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of Congress regarding the education curriculum in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.

Whereas the terrorist attacks on the United States on September 11, 2001, were carried out by 19 hijackers, including 15 Saudi Arabian nationals;

Whereas the Government of Saudi Arabia controls and regulates all forms of education in public and private schools at all levels;

Whereas Islamic religious education is compulsory in public and private schools at all levels in Saudi Arabia;

Whereas the religious curriculum is written, monitored, and taught by followers of the Wahhabi interpretation of Islam, the only religion the Government of Saudi Arabia allows to be taught;

Whereas rote memorization of religious texts continues to be a central feature of much of the educational system of Saudi Arabia, leaving thousands of students unprepared to function in the global economy of the 21st century;

Whereas the Government of Saudi Arabia has tolerated elements within its education system that promote and encourage extremism;

Whereas some textbooks in Saudi Arabian schools foster a combination of intolerance, ignorance, and anti-Semitic, anti-American, and anti-Western views;

Whereas these intolerant views instilled in students make them prime recruiting targets of extremist groups;

Whereas extremism endangers the stability of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, the Middle East region, and threatens global security;

Whereas the events of September 11, 2001, have created an urgent need to promote moderate voices in the Islamic world as an effective way to combat extremism;

Whereas in November 2002 and again in January 2003, Crown Prince Abdullah urged all Muslims to reject extremism and conduct themselves in a tolerant and moderate manner; and

Whereas the Government of Saudi Arabia is continuing to review its education curriculum: Now, therefore, be it

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

1 (1) calls on the Government of Saudi Arabia to
2 ensure that its review of its education curriculum is
3 thorough, objective, and public;

4 (2) urges the Government of Saudi Arabia to
5 reform its education curriculum in a manner that
6 promotes tolerance, develops civil society, and en-
7 courages functionality in the global economy;

8 (3) expresses extreme disappointment with the
9 slow pace of education reform in the Kingdom of
10 Saudi Arabia;

11 (4) applauds the public statements by Crown
12 Prince Abdullah and urges him to implement policies
13 that are consistent with his statements;

14 (5) urges the Department of State and other
15 appropriate Federal agencies to work closely with
16 the Government of Saudi Arabia on any efforts to
17 address the issues related to education curriculum,
18 textbooks, and teacher training;

19 (6) supports expanding and creating more cul-
20 tural, academic, visitor, and other exchanges be-
21 tween the United States and Saudi Arabia, subject
22 to appropriate security checks; and

23 (7) requests the United States Representative
24 to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and
25 Cultural Organization (UNESCO) to encourage the

- 1 organization to examine the educational system in
- 2 Saudi Arabia and monitor the progress of the efforts
- 3 to reform the education curriculum.

