

S. RES. 154

At the request of Mrs. ERNST, her name was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 154, a resolution promoting awareness of motorcycle profiling and encouraging collaboration and communication with the motorcycle community and law enforcement officials to prevent instances of profiling.

S. RES. 214

At the request of Mrs. GILLIBRAND, the name of the Senator from Nevada (Ms. CORTEZ MASTO) was added as a cosponsor of S. Res. 214, a resolution designating June 19, 2017, as “Juneteenth Independence Day” in recognition of June 19, 1865, the date on which slavery legally came to an end in the United States.

STATEMENTS ON INTRODUCED BILLS AND JOINT RESOLUTIONS

By Mr. BOOKER (for himself, Ms. WARREN, Mr. DURBIN, and Ms. HARRIS):

S. 1524. A bill to improve the treatment of Federal prisoners who are primary caretaker parents, and for other purposes; to the Committee on the Judiciary.

Mr. BOOKER. Madam President, I rise to introduce the Dignity for Incarcerated Women Act (Dignity Act), a critical criminal justice reform bill that would provide much needed reforms to address the unique needs women face in Federal prisons. This legislation helps shed light on the unique challenges women face behind bars, which seldom receive the attention they deserve in our criminal justice reform efforts. It is time we begin to remedy the barriers incarcerated women face, and that’s what this bill would do. I thank Senators WARREN, DURBIN, and HARRIS for cosponsoring this bill, and I am proud to have their support.

America is truly exceptional when it comes to incarceration. The United States has 5 percent of the world’s population and 25 percent of the globe’s prison population. Since 1980, our Federal population has grown by nearly 80 percent.

But let’s look specifically at incarcerated women. Only 5 percent of the world’s female population live in the United States, but nearly 30 percent of the world’s incarcerated women are in our Nation—twice the percentage of China and four times as much as Russia. Since 1978, the number of women incarcerated in State and Federal prisons in the United States has increased by 716 percent, twice the growth rate of men. America currently has 110,000 women behind bars, and women account for a larger proportion of the prison population than ever before in our Nation’s history.

The numbers of women in our Federal prisons has seen substantial growth. Although women represent a small percentage of Federal prisoners, the proportion of women in the Federal system rose from 12.1 percent in fiscal

year 2009 to 13.3 percent in fiscal year 2013. Based on the most recent Sentencing Commission data, 9,400 women were in Federal prisons as of fiscal year 2013. In 2013, more than two-thirds of women in Federal prison were behind bars due to nonviolent drug, fraud, or immigration crimes and over 70 percent of women in Federal prisons had little or no prior criminal history.

An urgent need exists to address the unique challenges women face while behind bars. Women are often primary caretaker parents, meaning their incarceration impacts children. Incarcerated women face the unconscionable choice of either calling home to talk to their children or using commissary funds to buy sanitary napkins. Women in prison are frequently victims of trauma. According to data from Vera Institute of Justice, women in jails face high-levels of trauma: 86 percent experienced sexual violence, 77 percent report partner violence, and 60 percent were survivors of caregiver violence. These troubling statistics deserve our attention.

Today, I’m proud to introduce the Dignity Act, a comprehensive bill that would begin to remedy the unique challenges faced by women behind bars. The bill would require the Federal Bureau of Prisons (BOP) to consider the location of children when placing an incarcerated parent in a Federal prison, which helps alleviate the great distances children and other loved ones often have to travel to visit incarcerated parents.

The bill would mandate the BOP create more generous and uniform visitation hours for primary caretaker parents to provide more easy access to loved ones while a woman is behind bars. We know family visitation is a critical part of a successful reentry strategy, so this commonsense provision would help maintain family contact when parents are behind bars. As a result, this provision makes it less likely that returning citizens commit crimes, which would enhance public safety.

The Dignity Act would ban solitary confinement and shackling of pregnant women in Federal prison. Studies confirm serious psychological and physical harm are likely to occur when these harsh practices are used on pregnant women. It is time we ban the use of solitary and shackling on pregnant women and treat these women with the dignity and respect they deserve.

The bill would also require the BOP to provide parenting classes to primary caretaker parents, provide trauma-informed care to victims of trauma, and allow returning citizens to mentor incarcerated people. It would mandate the BOP train correctional officers in how to identify trauma victims in prison. This bill would help ensure people behind bars receive the critical programming they need to prepare for reentry into society.

The Dignity Act contains numerous other reforms. It would create an om-

budsman at the Department of Justice to look into abuses associated with solitary confinement, prisoner transportation, strip searches, and other civil rights abuses. The bill would require the BOP to eliminate prison phone rates and mandate all prisons be equipped with video conferencing, which the bill ensures would be made available free of charge to incarcerated people. The legislation would require the BOP to make certain health products available for free, such as sanitary napkins, toothpaste, and ibuprofen.

Other reforms in the bill would preclude correctional officers of the opposite gender of the incarcerated individual from conducting strip searches or entering a restroom of the opposite gender. The bill has a common-sense exception for when an incarcerated woman’s health is in danger and for other exigent circumstances. The bill would require the BOP to allow primary caretaker parents access to the Residential Drug Abuse Program, a critical drug treatment program, even if they fail to admit to having a substance abuse disorder prior to their incarceration. Finally, the Dignity Act would require the BOP to create a pilot program for overnight visits for incarcerated parents and children.

The legislation has broad support from organizations like the National Council for Incarcerated and Formerly Incarcerated Women and Girls, the ACLU, the Leadership Conference on Civil and Human Rights, and the Lawyers’ Committee for Civil Rights Under Law.

The Dignity Act would provide critical reforms to address challenges women behind bars face. Again, I thank Senators WARREN, DURBIN, and HARRIS for their leadership. I am proud to introduce this important criminal justice reform bill, and I urge my colleagues to support its speedy passage.

SUBMITTED RESOLUTIONS

SENATE RESOLUTION 217—WELCOMING PRIME MINISTER YOUSSEF CHAHED OF THE TUNISIAN REPUBLIC ON HIS FIRST OFFICIAL VISIT TO THE UNITED STATES, CONGRATULATING THE PEOPLE OF THE TUNISIAN REPUBLIC ON THEIR EMBRACE OF DEMOCRACY AFTER DECADES OF DICTATORSHIP, AND ENCOURAGING FUTURE REFORMS

Mr. CARDIN (for himself, Mr. RUBIO, Mr. COONS, Mr. Kaine, Mr. MURPHY, Mr. MARKEY, Mr. BOOKER, Mr. MENENDEZ, Ms. BALDWIN, Mr. PERDUE, Mr. COTTON, and Mr. MCCAIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 217

Whereas, on December 17, 2010, Mohammad Bouazizi, a young fruit vendor in Sidi Bouzid, set himself on fire to protest his unjust treatment by the regime of Tunisian

President Zine al Abidine Ben Ali, and in his death inspired the “Jasmine Revolution” in the Tunisian Republic and popular revolutions across the Arab world of citizens demanding transparency, reform, and representation;

Whereas, on January 14, 2011, the peaceful mass protests of the Jasmine Revolution successfully brought to an end the authoritarian rule of President Ben Ali;

Whereas, in the aftermath of Ben Ali’s resignation, Tunisians initiated a peaceful, consensus-based, inclusive, and civilian-directed transition to democracy;

Whereas, on January 26, 2014, the Tunisian Republic adopted its first constitution drafted by a democratically elected governing body, formally ending a period of transitional governments;

Whereas the new constitution of the Tunisian Republic enshrines gender equality through enumerated rights and responsibilities, protects the rights of minorities, and specifically outlaws religiously motivated violence;

Whereas, on October 26, 2014, the Tunisian Republic held its first parliamentary elections under the new constitution, which the international community praised as free and fair;

Whereas, on December 31, 2014, after winning free and fair presidential elections, Beiji Caid Essebsi was inaugurated as the first freely elected President of the Tunisian Republic;

Whereas, on October 9, 2015, the Norwegian Nobel Committee awarded the Tunisian National Dialogue Quartet, a coalition of four civil society organizations, the 2015 Nobel Peace Prize for the coalition’s work in building on the promise of the 2011 Jasmine Revolution and ensuring the transition of the Tunisian Republic into a democracy did not descend into violence;

Whereas President Essebsi, Prime Minister Chahed, and other political leaders of the Tunisian Republic have formed a national unity government to work in the national interest of the Tunisian Republic;

Whereas the political evolution of the Tunisian Republic stands as a model for citizens of other states aspiring to establish the institutions of democracy after a history of autocratic rule;

Whereas, on March 18, 2015, a terrorist attack on the Bardo National Museum killed 21 people;

Whereas, on July 26, 2015, a terrorist attack on a beach in the town of Sousse left 38 people, including 30 British nationals, dead, and dealt a blow to tourism in the Tunisian Republic, an important industry upon which the economy of the Tunisian Republic depends;

Whereas a terrorist attack on November 24, 2015, on the Presidential Guard of the Tunisian Republic killed 12 people;

Whereas, in the aftermath of these attacks, citizens and leaders of the Tunisian Republic have reaffirmed their commitment to dialogue, pluralism, and democracy;

Whereas the Tunisian Republic continues to face serious threats to its security from violent extremist groups operating within the Tunisian Republic as well as in neighboring countries;

Whereas, in July 2015, the United States designated the Tunisian Republic as a major non-NATO ally;

Whereas the Government of the Tunisian Republic, as a member of the Global Coalition to Counter the Islamic State of Iraq and Syria (ISIS), is seeking to reduce the significant number of Tunisian citizens who become foreign fighters for ISIS;

Whereas the Tunisian Republic faces economic challenges, including high inflation

and high unemployment, especially among young Tunisians;

Whereas Prime Minister Chahed has committed to combating corruption and facilitating necessary economic reforms for the prosperity of the people of the Tunisian Republic;

Whereas the United States Government is committed to continuing a strong economic partnership with the Tunisian Republic as the Government of the Tunisian Republic undertakes reforms to transform its economy to meet the aspirations of all citizens of the Tunisian Republic;

Whereas it is the interest of the United States, and consistent with the values of the United States, to support the aspirations of the people of the Tunisian Republic in developing a pluralist democracy and transparent, effective institutions;

Whereas the Governments and people of the United States and the Tunisian Republic have enjoyed friendly relations for more than 200 years;

Whereas, in accordance with the U.S.–Tunisia Strategic Partnership, both countries are dedicated to working together to promote economic development and business opportunities in the Tunisian Republic, education for the advancement of long-term development in the Tunisian Republic, and increased security cooperation to address common threats in the Tunisian Republic and across the region; and

Whereas the United States Government should provide a level of funding to strongly assist and reinforce the promising transition of the Tunisian Republic into a democratic, stable, and prosperous nation: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Senate—

(1) welcomes Prime Minister Chahed on his first official visit to the United States;

(2) commends the political leaders of the Tunisian Republic for their willingness to compromise and work together in the national interest and form a national unity government;

(3) reaffirms the commitment of the United States Government to the Tunisian Republic, including a commitment to provide appropriate levels of assistance, in support of the ongoing transition of the Tunisian Republic to an inclusive, prosperous, and secure democracy;

(4) condemns all acts of terrorism, and extends condolences to the families of victims of terrorism and to the people and Government of the Tunisian Republic.

(5) commends the people and Government of the Tunisian Republic for their resilience in the face of terrorist attacks and their enduring commitment to a free, democratic, and peaceful Tunisian Republic;

(6) encourages Prime Minister Chahed and the parliament of the Tunisian Republic to work together to accelerate economic reforms and anti-corruption measures;

(7) looks forward to the continued implementation of the 2014 constitution of the Tunisian Republic, including the new protections of civil liberties;

(8) urges the authorities of the Tunisian Republic to continue to make every effort to prevent the continued flow of Tunisian jihadist “foreign fighters” to Syria and Iraq;

(9) calls on the neighbors and partners of the Tunisian Republic to work in concert with the Government of the Tunisian Republic to counter terrorist threats, secure borders, and support the democratic transition of the Tunisian Republic;

(10) strongly urges the Government of the Tunisian Republic to cease support for all resolutions and other measures that discriminate against or otherwise target Israel in the United Nations Education, Science,

and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and other United Nations organizations; and

(11) reaffirms the historic and continuing friendship between the people of the United States and the people of the Tunisian Republic.

SENATE RESOLUTION 218—CELEBRATING AND REAFFIRMING THE STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP BETWEEN THE UNITED STATES AND ROMANIA ON THE TWENTIETH ANNIVERSARY OF ITS INCEPTION

Mr. JOHNSON (for himself and Mr. MURPHY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations:

S. RES. 218

Whereas, in 1997, the Governments of the United States and Romania embarked upon a strategic partnership rooted in our mutual embrace of popular sovereignty, individual rights, free markets, and the rule of law, and our commitment to transatlantic security and prosperity;

Whereas the Government of Romania has striven to advance security and democratic principles in Southeast Europe, and has participated actively in building a Europe whole, free, and at peace;

Whereas the strategic partnership between the United States and Romania has helped forge durable economic and cultural bonds between our two countries;

Whereas the Government of Romania recently announced that it will raise defense spending to two percent of its gross domestic product (GDP) in 2017 in order to meet the minimum level of defense expenditures pledged at the 2014 NATO Wales Summit;

Whereas NATO’s first “Aegis Ashore” missile defense installation became operational on May 12, 2016, at Deveselu Base in Romania, representing a significant increase in NATO’s capacity to defend against ballistic missile threats outside the Euro-Atlantic zone;

Whereas the Romanian Armed Forces have supported NATO and United States operations in Iraq, Afghanistan, and other theaters for over a decade, contributing more than 30,000 total combat and support personnel to those missions;

Whereas Romania maintains the fifth largest contingent in NATO’s Resolute Support Mission in Afghanistan, with over 600 troops helping to train, advise, and assist the Afghan National Defense and Security Forces (ANDSF) and Afghan security institutions;

Whereas Romania is a member of the Global Coalition to Defeat ISIS and has deployed military trainers to Iraq to train Iraqi Security Forces and provided humanitarian assistance to the people of Iraq and Syria;

Whereas the people and Governments of the United States and Romania share a common interest in deepening our economic relationship through increased bilateral trade and investment and projecting economic stability and prosperity across Southeast Europe;

Whereas, in October 2017, Romania will host the tenth annual United States Commercial Service Trade Winds Forum and Trade Mission, helping United States companies explore new opportunities in Romania and across Southeast Europe;

Whereas the Governments of the United States and Romania are working closely together to develop an ambitious bilateral economic, trade, and investment agenda, including through a record attendance this year by Romanian companies to the United States SelectUSA Summit;