

116TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. RES. 17

Expressing concern over the detention of Austin Tice, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JANUARY 3, 2019

Mr. GREEN of Texas submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Affairs, and in addition to the Permanent Select Committee on Intelligence (Permanent Select), for a period to be subsequently determined by the Speaker, in each case for consideration of such provisions as fall within the jurisdiction of the committee concerned

RESOLUTION

Expressing concern over the detention of Austin Tice, and
for other purposes.

Whereas Austin Tice is a 37-year-old veteran, having served in the Marine Corps as an infantry officer, a Georgetown law student, and a graduate of Georgetown University, from Houston, Texas;

Whereas Austin is an Eagle Scout, National Merit Scholarship finalist, and eldest of seven children;

Whereas Austin was a contributing freelance journalist to McClatchy Newspapers, the Washington Post and other media outlets and a recipient of the 2012 George Polk Award for War Reporting;

Whereas, in May 2012, Austin crossed the Turkey-Syria border to report on the intensifying conflict in Syria;

Whereas, on August 11, 2012, Austin celebrated his 31st birthday in Darayaa, Syria;

Whereas, on August 14, 2012, Austin departed for Beirut, Lebanon, was detained at a checkpoint near Damascus, Syria, and contact with family, friends, and colleagues ceased;

Whereas, in late September 2012, a video clip appeared on YouTube showing Austin blindfolded and being prodded up a hillside by masked militants;

Whereas in the more than 2,300 days since Austin's disappearance, no group has claimed responsibility for his capture;

Whereas the Syrian government has never acknowledged detaining Austin and has denied the same to Austin's parents;

Whereas officials of the United States believe Austin is alive and the government of Bashar al-Assad or a group affiliated with it is holding him;

Whereas Austin Tice's parents, Marc and Debra Tice, have been diligent in their efforts to find their son, repeatedly meeting with senior officials of the United States Government, the Syrian government, the United Nations, and many others;

Whereas the Tices have traveled to the Middle East multiple times, most recently in December 2018, seeking Austin's safe release, and Debra Tice spent four months living in Damascus, Syria, for the same purpose;

Whereas the Tices have partnered with Reporters Without Borders to launch campaigns with nearly 270 newspapers and media organizations, highlighting Austin’s case in their publications and on their websites;

Whereas institutions and organizations including Georgetown University, Georgetown Law Center, the National Press Club, the Committee to Protect Journalists, McClatchy, and the Washington Post have collaborated to raise and maintain public awareness of Austin’s detention; and

Whereas, on November 13, 2016, United States Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs, Robert C. O’Brien, said that the United States Government believes Austin Tice is alive: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the House of Representatives—

2 (1) expresses its ongoing concern regarding the
3 capture of Austin Tice near Damascus, Syria, in Au-
4 gust 2012, and his continuing detention;

5 (2) encourages the Department of State, the in-
6 telligence community, and the interagency Hostage
7 Recovery Fusion Cell to jointly continue investiga-
8 tions and to pursue all possible information regard-
9 ing Austin’s detention;

10 (3) encourages the Department of State and
11 the Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs
12 to engage directly with officials of the Syrian gov-
13 ernment to facilitate Austin’s safe release and re-
14 turn;

1 (4) encourages the Department of State to
2 work with foreign governments known to have diplo-
3 matic influence with the Government of Syria; and

4 (5) requests that the Department of State and
5 the intelligence community continue to work with
6 and inform Congress and the family of Austin Tice
7 regarding efforts to secure Austin's safe release and
8 return from detention in Syria.

