In Yemen, Iran-backed Houthi rebels have weaponized food aid, using it for military gains and personal profit, while millions of Yemenis continue to face famine-like conditions.

These atrocities must be condemned by all people of goodwill. The administration should impose severe penalties on those responsible, including through sanctions under the Global Magnitsky Human Rights Accountability Act.

Mr. Speaker, I thank Representatives JACOBS and MEIJER, Chairman MEEKS, and Ranking Member MCCAUL for introducing this measure and bringing it to the floor. An identical text unanimously passed the Senate in July.

Deliberately starving innocent civilians as a weapon of war must be condemned wherever it occurs. This resolution also condemns the acts of looting, diversion, or other denials of humanitarian access that impede the delivery of lifesaving assistance to populations who need it the most.

Finally, I take this moment to commend the humanitarians who put their lives at risk every day to get food to vulnerable children, women, and men who need it just to stay alive. Their efforts deserve our support, and so does this resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACOBS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, H. Res. 922 is an important piece of legislation to put this body on record as condemning the weaponization of hunger around the world and the impact conflict has on global food security.

As the world works together to alleviate multiple crises, this resolution serves as an important reminder of the cost of war and the need to hold perpetrators of starvation accountable.

Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues will join me and support this resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 922, "Condemning the use of hunger as a weapon of war and recognizing the effect of conflict on global food security and famine Act".

This resolution condemns the use of starvation of civilians as a weapon of warfare. It also calls on the U.S. government to prioritize diplomatic efforts to call out and address instances where hunger and intentional deprivation of food is being utilized as a weapon of war, including efforts to ensure that security operations do not undermine livelihoods of local populations to minimize civilian harm.

The United States has always been a nation that espouses human rights. That's a central tenet on which we were founded.

So when we see starvation being used as a weapon of warfare, it is reprehensible to us.

Global food insecurity is of great importance to me because, not only am I a longtime Member of the House Hunger Caucus, I represent the same Congressional District that had been represented by iconic leaders who fought to end hunger in the U.S. and globally.

I am proud to continue the historic legacy of Congresswoman Barbara Jordan, who was a champion for human dignity and fought for the rights of all people regardless of race, gender, heritage, or economic status, and Congressman MICKEY LELAND, who worked tirelessly to raise awareness of, and fight for, policies to end food insecurity around the globe and who, tragically, died in a plane crash while working to end world hunger on a relief mission in Ethiopia.

Starvation is a brutal and inhumane way to force someone to surrender. It's a slow and agonizing death, used by the immoral to gain leverage in a war of attrition and aggression.

Starvation tactics typically target innocent, vulnerable civilians who are not directly a party to the conflict; instead they are merely caught in the crossfire of conflict.

That is why we must adopt this legislation.

The United States government must prioritize diplomatic efforts to call out and address instances where hunger and intentional deprivation of food is being utilized as a weapon.

We must show the world that we do not condone this type of behavior and that we will not stand for it.

The United States should prioritize diplomatic efforts to call out and address instances where hunger and intentional deprivation of food is being utilized as a weapon.

We must do everything in our power to protect innocent civilians from this barbaric practice.

Starvation is a terrible thing. It's something that nobody should have to go through. And yet, there are people in this world who are starving right now as a consequence of war, or, perhaps worse, as a tool of warfare.

The people of Ethiopia's Tigre Province are being subjected to a truly vile and malicious use of food deprivation in this way. The region was already suffering from drought, and when compounded by forced starvation from denial of access to food as a weapon of war, the effect is heinous and the consequences are unforgiveable.

In Pakistan, food deprivation is compounded by the human toll from recent floods and other natural disasters. Using drought to strategically exacerbate starvation is unacceptable.

Russia's aggression against Ukraine is a global food insecurity tragedy on multiple levels. As Putin wages his war against the people of Ukraine, he uses food as a weapon by destroying the food production and transportation capacity of the country he invaded. At the same time, since Ukraine grows grains and crops that feed much of the world, Putin's devastation of Ukraine's food production infrastructure and takeovers of Ukrainian food exports cause food insecure populations of countless countries to suffer, especially in Africa.

Finally, I condemn the use of government blockades as a weapon of war to deliberately increase starvation.

Government blockades are nothing more than collective punishment, and they're a violation of the human rights of the people who are suffering under them.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. JACOBS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 922, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

CONDEMNING THE GOVERNMENT OF IRAN'S STATE-SPONSORED PERSECUTION OF ITS BAHA'I MINORITY AND ITS CONTINUED VIOLATION OF THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND THE INTERNATIONAL COVENANT ON CIVIL AND POLITICAL RIGHTS

Ms. JACOBS of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and agree to the resolution (H. Res. 744) condemning the Government of Iran's state-sponsored persecution of its Baha'i minority and its continued violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the resolution.

The text of the resolution is as follows:

H. RES. 744

Whereas in 1982, 1984, 1988, 1990, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1996, 2000, 2004, 2006, 2008, 2009, 2012, 2013, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, and 2020, Congress declared that it deplored the religious persecution by the Government of Iran of the Baha'i community and would hold the Government of Iran responsible for upholding the rights of all Iranian nationals, including members of the Baha'i faith;

Whereas since 1979, Iranian authorities have killed or executed more than 200 Baha'i leaders, and more than 10,000 have been dismissed from government and university jobs;

Whereas the Baha'i International Community documented a more than 50-percent increase in hate propaganda directed against the Baha'is in the 12-month period ending in August 2020, compared to prior years, with more than 9,500 such articles, videos, or web pages appearing in Iranian government-controlled or government-sponsored media;

Whereas, on December 16, 2021, the United Nations General Assembly adopted a resolution (A/C.3/76/L.28) criticizing Iran for human rights abuses and calling on Iran to carry out wide-ranging reforms, including—

(1) "ceasing use of the death penalty and commuting the sentences for child offenders on death row";

(2) "ensuring that no one is subjected to torture or other cruel, inhumane or degrading treatment";

(3) "ceasing the widespread and systematic use of arbitrary arrests and detention";

(4) "releasing persons detained for the exercise of their human rights and fundamental freedoms";

(5) "improving conditions inside prisons";

(6) "eliminating discrimination against women and girls"; and

(7) "eliminating discrimination against ethnic, linguistic, and other minorities";

Whereas in the 2022 Annual Report of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom issued in April 2022, it is reported that the Government of Iran—

(1) "arrested scores of Baha'is across Iran, many of whom were held incommunicado or taken to undisclosed locations";

(2) "sent Ministry of Intelligence agents to search the home of a Baha'i citizen and confiscated her belongings";

(3) ''continued to deny university education to Baha'is on account of their faith'';

(4) ''closed six Baha'i businesses'';

(5) ''demolished the homes of three Baha'is without warning'';

(6) ''announced the auction of thirteen Baha'i farms''; and

(7) ''continued to deny Baha'is the right to bury their deceased in empty plots at the Golestan Javid cemetery outside Tehran which the community has used for decades. Instead, Baha'is are being forced to use the Khaveran mass grave site where victims of the 1988 prison massacres are buried'';

Whereas the Iran section of the Department of State's 2021 Report on International Religious Freedom issued in June 2022 provides, in part—

(1) ''Security forces in Shiraz and Mazandaran Province conducted multiple arrests of Baha'is in their homes or workplaces in the last week of September without providing reasons or charges.'';

(2) ''Authorities continued to confiscate Baha'i properties as part of an ongoing state-led campaign of economic persecution against Baha'is. Authorities issued an order in April denying Baha'is permission to bury their dead in empty plots at the Tehran-area cemetery designated for Baha'is, forcing them to bury them at a mass grave site.'';

(3) ''Authorities reportedly continued to deny the Baha'i, Sabean-Mandaean, and Yarsani religious communities, as well as members of other unrecognized religious minority groups, access to education and government employment unless they declared themselves as belonging to one of the country's recognized religions on their application forms.''; and

(4) ''Government officials continued to disseminate anti-Baha'i and antisemitic messages using traditional and social media.'';

Whereas, on July 4, 2022, the Baha'i International Community noted ''The Iranian government's systematic campaign to persecute the Baha'i religious minority accelerated again this past week with the arrest, court hearing or imprisonment of at least 18 more Baha'i citizens across the country, bringing the June total to 44 people. Hundreds of others, meanwhile, also await summonses to court or to prison.'';

Whereas, on July 21, 2022, the Baha'i International Community announced ''More than 20 Baha'is in Shiraz, Tehran, Yazd and Bojnourd, have been arrested, jailed or subjected to home searches and business closures since the beginning of July. Last month 44 Baha'is were arrested, arraigned or imprisoned, suggesting an escalating crisis in the Iranian government's systematic campaign against the country's largest non-Muslim religious minority. . .'';

Whereas Iran is a member of the United Nations and a signatory to both the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, among other international human rights treaties, without reservation;

Whereas section 105 of the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (22 U.S.C. 8514) authorizes the President to impose sanctions on individuals who are ''responsible for or complicit in, or responsible for ordering, controlling, or otherwise directing, the commission of serious human rights abuses against citizens of Iran or their family members on or after June 12, 2009''; and

Whereas the Iran Threat Reduction and Syria Human Rights Act of 2012 (Public Law 112–158) amends and expands the authorities established under the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act of 2010 (Public Law 111–195) to sanction Iranian human rights abusers: Now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the House of Representatives—

(1) condemns the Government of Iran's state-sponsored persecution of its Baha'i minority and its continued violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR) and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR);

(2) calls on the Government of Iran—

(A) to immediately release the imprisoned or detained Baha'is and all other prisoners held solely on account of their religion;

(B) to end its state-sponsored campaign of hate propaganda against the Baha'is; and

(C) to reverse state-imposed policies denying Baha'is and members of other religious minorities equal opportunities to higher education, earning a livelihood, due process under the law, and the free exercise of religious practices;

(3) calls on the President and the Secretary of State, in cooperation with responsible nations, to immediately condemn the Government of Iran's continued violation of human rights, and demand the immediate release of prisoners held solely on account of their religion; and

(4) urges the President and the Secretary of State to utilize available authorities to impose sanctions on officials of the Government of Iran and other individuals directly responsible for serious human rights abuses, including abuses against the Baha'i community of Iran.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to the rule, the gentlewoman from California (Ms. JACOBS) and the gentlewoman from California (Mrs. KIM) each will control 20 minutes.

The Chair recognizes the gentlewoman from California (Ms. JACOBS).

GENERAL LEAVE

Ms. JACOBS of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days in which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on H. Res. 744, as amended.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentlewoman from California (Ms. JACOBS)?

There was no objection.

Ms. JACOBS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I rise today in strong support of H. Res. 744.

I thank Ted Deutch, an esteemed former Member of this House and the former chairman of the House Foreign Affairs Committee's Middle East, North Africa, and Global Counterterrorism Subcommittee, for reintroducing this important legislation that has passed the House multiple times.

I know that every member of our committee hopes the Iranian Government will immediately cease the abuse of its own people and specifically end its longtime persecution of the Baha'i people.

The last several years have been especially difficult for Iran's Baha'i community, as the regime in Tehran has ramped up its persecution of the community.

The resolution before us today calls on the Iranian Government to release all Baha'i prisoners, end its campaign of state-sponsored persecution, and stop discriminatory policies against the Baha'i community.

As many of us know, those who practice the Baha'i faith have been persecuted in Iran since the religion's founding but have suffered the most acute harassment since the Iranian revolution in 1979.

Hundreds of Baha'is have been executed and tortured. To this day, Iran denies Baha'is access to higher education, government jobs, and permits to work in 25 professions, and Iran subjects them to arbitrary harassment, arrest, and imprisonment.

Mr. Speaker, it is long past time for this religious persecution to end, so I strongly urge all Members to vote in support of this critical resolution.

Mr. Speaker, I reserve the balance of my time.

Mrs. KIM of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of this bipartisan measure that condemns Iran's state-sponsored persecution of its Baha'i minority and calls for the release of all religious prisoners in Iran.

In recent months, the Iranian regime has responded to the Iranian people's peaceful demands for change with violent suppression. The world has been a witness to that brutality.

Sadly, Iran's Baha'i community is very familiar with the regime's cruelty. For years, the Baha'i have been subjected to a campaign of state-sponsored persecution. Baha'is across Iran face arbitrary arrest, forced disappearance, property expropriation, and economic discrimination every day.

The regime's deplorable treatment of the Baha'i shows how the Ayatollah denies Iranians access to basic human rights.

Persecution based on religious belief is abhorrent and warrants condemnation in the strongest possible terms. This resolution is a reminder of Congress' continued commitment to promoting and protecting human rights in Iran, including freedom of worship and belief.

Mr. Speaker, I thank our former colleague, Ted Deutch, for his longtime work to support the Baha'i in Iran and for his original authorship of this bipartisan measure.

The House of Representatives will continue to work tirelessly to protect and defend the human rights of the Iranian people.

Mr. Speaker, I urge all Members to support this legislation, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACOBS of California. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself the balance of my time.

Mr. Speaker, the Baha'i people of Iran have suffered enough at the hands of Iran's regime since the revolution. The brutality of Iran's Government has unfortunately been on display now for weeks for the entire world to see.

This body will always defend human rights in Iran and around the world, and we stand in solidarity with the people of Iran who are calling for justice, dignity, and respect. Women, Life, Freedom.

Mr. Speaker, I hope my colleagues will join me and support this resolution, and I yield back the balance of my time.

Ms. JACKSON LEE. Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of H. Res. 744—Condemning the Government of Iran's state-sponsored persecution of its Baha'i minority and its continued violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

This resolution condemns Iran's state-sponsored persecution of its Baha'i minority and its continued violation of the international covenants on human rights.

Further, the resolution calls on Iran to immediately release all imprisoned or detained Baha'is, and it urges the President and the Department of State to impose sanctions on Iranian officials and others who are responsible for serious human rights abuses, including abuses against Iran's Baha'i community.

Persecution of religious minorities in Iran is rampant. For over 40 years, the Government of Iran has persecuted members of the Baha'i faith, killing over 200 Baha'i leaders, dismissing more than 10,000 from their government and university jobs, and using intimidation and violence to target them as enemies of the state.

The Iranian regime routinely arrests Baha'is and imposes lengthy prison sentences. Between 50 and 100 Baha'is were reported to be in prisons in Iran during 2020, despite the widespread prevalence of COVID–19.

Since 31 July 2022, Ministry of Intelligence agents have raided and confiscated dozens of Baha'i properties and arrested at least 30 members of the Baha'i community on account of their faith in various cities throughout Iran.

Iranian state-sponsored propaganda encourages citizens to avoid all dealings with Baha'is citing that they ''create anxiety in the minds of the public and those of the Iranian officials.''

The onslaught against the Baha'i community is yet another example of the Iranian government's brutal and degrading treatment of minorities and women and is a vivid reminder of the regime's extremist and intolerant foundation.

Iranians from all socioeconomic backgrounds are desperate for a democratic government that respects the universal rights of all humans, basic respect for human rights, and the rule of law.

The arrest and murder of Mahsa Amini, a 22-year-old woman arrested by ''morality police'' in Tehran on September 13, 2022, for allegedly violating Iran's strict rules requiring women to cover their hair with a hijab, or headscarf, sparked massive protests around Iran and the world.

For the past two months, since the day of Mahsa Amini's funeral, women and men have taken to the streets, risking their lives for a free and democratic Iran.

Since the protests started in September, more than 350 protesters have been killed, and thousands have been arrested.

Two weeks ago, an Iranian court issued the first death sentence linked to the protests, convicting an unnamed person of ''enmity against God'' and ''spreading corruption on Earth.'' Three more people have since been sentenced to death on the same charges, according to the Iranian government.

We are presented with evidence everyday of Iranians putting their lives at risk in pursuit of a better tomorrow.

To all the Iranian women, men, children, and protestors who are leading the fight for democracy, I say loud and clear that I stand with you.

The United States Congress will always support a democratic movement in Iran. We support the organized and peaceful resistance by women, students, and youth against this extremist regime.

Let us remain dedicated to advocating for a democratic secular government in Iran founded on universal respect for human rights, religious tolerance, and equality among all citizens.

I urge all my colleagues to support H. Res. 744—Condemning the Government of Iran's state-sponsored persecution of its Baha'i minority and its continued violation of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights and the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights.

We must consistently demonstrate to the Iranian people and the entire world that we stand with them in solidarity for the atrocious injustices being committed by the Iranian Government, to give voice to the oppressed support human rights, and freedom in Iran, because freedom is a universal right.

I will always champion global democracy stand against human rights violations, and never shy away from speaking truth to power in the presence of oppression.

May the Iranian people soon enjoy all the rights and benefits of freedom and democracy.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The question is on the motion offered by the gentlewoman from California (Ms. JACOBS) that the House suspend the rules and agree to the resolution, H. Res. 744, as amended.

The question was taken.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. In the opinion of the Chair, two-thirds being in the affirmative, the ayes have it.

Mr. BIGGS. Mr. Speaker, on that I demand the yeas and nays.

The yeas and nays were ordered.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Pursuant to clause 8 of rule XX, further proceedings on this motion will be postponed.

□ 1630

UYGHUR POLICY ACT OF 2021

Ms. JACOBS of California. Mr. Speaker, I move to suspend the rules and pass the bill (H.R. 4785) to support the human rights of Uyghurs and members of other minority groups residing in the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region and safeguard their distinct identity, and for other purposes, as amended.

The Clerk read the title of the bill.

The text of the bill is as follows:

H.R. 4785

Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,

SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.

This Act may be cited as the ''Uyghur Policy Act of 2021''.

SEC. 2. FINDINGS.

Congress finds the following:

(1) The People's Republic of China (PRC) continues to repress the distinct Islamic, Turkic identity of Uyghurs and members of other minority groups of the Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region (XUAR) in northwestern China and other areas of their habitual residence.

(2) Uyghurs, and other predominantly Muslim ethnic minorities historically making up the majority of the XUAR population, have maintained throughout their history a distinct religious and cultural identity.

(3) Human rights, including freedom of religion or belief, and respect for the Uyghurs' unique Muslim identity are legitimate interests of the international community.

(4) The People's Republic of China has ratified the International Covenant on Economic, Social, and Cultural Rights and is thereby bound by its provisions. The PRC has also signed the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights. Article One of both covenants state that all peoples have the right to self-determination.

(5) An official campaign to encourage Han Chinese migration into the XUAR has placed immense pressure on those who seek to preserve the ethnic, cultural, religious, and linguistic traditions of the Uyghur people. Chinese authorities have supported an influx of Han Chinese economic immigrants into the XUAR, implemented discrimination against Uyghurs in hiring practices, and provided unequal access to healthcare services.

(6) The authorities of the People's Republic of China have manipulated the strategic objectives of the international war on terror to mask their increasing cultural and religious oppression of the Muslim population residing in the XUAR.

(7) Following unrest in the region, in 2014, Chinese authorities launched their ''Strike Hard against Violent Extremism'' campaign, in which dubious allegations of widespread extremist activity were used as justification for gross human rights violations committed against members of the Uyghur community in the XUAR.

(8) PRC authorities have made use of the legal system as a tool of repression, including for the imposition of arbitrary detentions and for torture against members of the Uyghur community and other populations.

(9) Uyghurs and Kazakhs who have secured citizenship or permanent residency outside of the PRC have attested to repeated threats, harassment, and surveillance by PRC officials.

(10) Reporting from international news organizations has found that over the past decade, family members of Uyghurs living outside of the PRC have gone missing or been detained to force Uyghur expatriates to return to the PRC or silence their dissent.

(11) Credible evidence from human rights organizations, think tanks, and journalists confirms that more than 1,000,000 Uyghurs and members of other Muslim ethnic minority groups have been imprisoned in ''political reeducation'' centers.

(12) Independent accounts from former detainees of ''political reeducation'' centers describe inhumane conditions and treatment including forced political indoctrination, torture, beatings, rape, forced sterilization, and food deprivation. Former detainees also confirmed that they were told by guards the only way to secure release was to demonstrate sufficient political loyalty to the PRC Government and the Chinese Communist Party.

(13) Popular discourse surrounding the ongoing atrocities in the XUAR and advocacy efforts to assist Uyghurs remains muted in most Muslim majority nations around the world.

(14) Both Secretary of State Antony Blinken and Former Secretary of State Michael Pompeo have stated that the PRC government has committed genocide and crimes