

110th Congress: 2007-2008

Afghanistan

- S. 147 - Afghan Women Empowerment Act of 2007

Bangladesh

- H Res 64-Journalism in Bangladesh

China

- H. Res. 821- Condemning Communist China's discrimination, harassment, imprisonment, torture, and execution of its prisoners of conscience

Iran

- H.Res.1310: Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Government of Iran's lack of protection for internationally recognized human rights creates poor conditions for religious freedom in the Islamic Republic of Iran

Pakistan

- H. Res 840 Calling for the Restoration of Human Rights and Rule of Law in Pakistan

Saudi Arabia

- H. CON. RES. 202 Noting the absence of human rights as a topic of discussion in the U.S.-Saudi Strategic Dialogue between the United States and Saudi Arabia, and urging the President to include this subject in working level discussions with Saudi counterparts
- H.R. 2986-Prohibit Aid to Saudi Arabia Act of 2007
- H. Con. Res. 194-Education Reform in Saudi Arabia
- H.R. 2976-Saudi Arabia Accountability Act of 2007
- H. Con. Res 262- Expressing the sense of Congress regarding Saudi Arabia's policies relating to religious practice and tolerance, including Saudi Arabia's commitment to revise Saudi textbooks to remove intolerant and violent references
- S. 2243 - A bill to strongly encourage the Government of Saudi Arabia to end its support for institutions that fund, train, incite, encourage, or in any other way aid and abet terrorism, to secure full Saudi cooperation in the investigation of terrorist incidents, to denounce Saudi sponsorship of extremist Wahhabi ideology, and for other purposes

Vietnam

- H. Res. 665-Endorsing reforms for freedom and democracy in Vietnam
 - H.R.4223- To establish the Congressional-Executive Commission on the Socialist Republic of Vietnam
- To establish the Congressional-Executive Commission on the Socialist Republic of Vietnam
- H.RES.1048: Condemning the detention of Dr. Nguyen Quoc Quan, a citizen of the United States, by the Government of Vietnam and expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States should remove permanent normal trade relations status with Vietnam unless Dr. Nguyen is released
 - H.Res.506-Human Rights and Trade
 - H.R. 3096-Vietnam Human Rights Act of 2007

- H.R. 2764 - FY 2008 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations

- H.R.1591- Making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes

Legislation Referencing USCIRF Recommendations

- H. R. 982- Advance Democracy Act

Afghanistan

S. 147 - Afghan Women Empowerment Act of 2007

The legislation seeks to give women in Afghanistan basic human rights and freedoms, such as the right to work, health care and education, that they have been denied under the resurgent Taliban regime. As Afghan women are often the victims of religious extremists, in order to ensure the protection of their civil liberties, the legislation finds that nongovernmental organizations should be enhanced and the Government of Afghanistan should honor its commitments under the International Covenant of Civil and Political Rights and other international compacts. The legislation expresses the sense of Congress that a stable and participatory democracy depends upon the reestablishment of rights for Afghan women and girls. Congress feels that US support for the Afghan Ministry of Women's Affairs and the Afghan Independent Human Rights Commission -- which were created to correct past human rights abuses -- will aid to secure institutions and arrangements that guarantee human rights. The legislation cites USCIRF with the following language: (6) According to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, the absence of clear protections for the right to freedom of religion or belief for individual Afghan citizens has resulted in a growing number of criminal prosecutions and other official actions against individuals, including women, for exercising their basic rights. Finally, the legislation states that reconstruction and other development assistance funds should be prioritized to women led NGOs and businesses. The legislation calls on the Government of Afghanistan to adhere to internationally understood rights of freedom of thought, conscience and religion or belief when administering those funds.

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Bangladesh

H Res 64-Journalism in Bangladesh: Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Government of Bangladesh should immediately drop all pending charges against Bangladeshi journalist Salah Uddin Shoaib Choudhury.

The legislation supports Mr. Choudhury who currently faces charges of sedition in Bangladesh for promoting interfaith dialogue between Muslims and Jews and his criticism of extremism. With the following language, the legislation cites USCIRF: Whereas members of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom visited with Mr. Choudhury on their trip to Bangladesh in February and March 2006; The legislation further references USCIRF with the following language: Whereas on October 6, 2006, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom wrote a letter to U.S. Assistant Secretary of State for South and Central Asian Affairs Richard A. Boucher calling on the United States Government to strengthen the 'voices of moderation' in countries like Bangladesh where the rule of law, democratic institutions, and respect for human rights are under assault by violent extremists; the Commission identified Mr. Choudhury as one of those voices that should not be silenced. The legislation calls on the government of Bangladesh to drop all charges against Mr. Choudhury and to stop its stifling of opposing voices with intimidation and acts of violence.

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China

H. Res. 821- Condemning Communist China's discrimination, harassment, imprisonment, torture, and execution of its prisoners of conscience.

With the following language the legislation cites USCIRF: Whereas according to the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom's ('USCIRF') 2007 Annual Report, 'All religious groups in China face some restrictions, monitoring, and surveillance, ... and religious freedom conditions deteriorated for communities not affiliated with one of the 7 government-approved religious organizations, ... and those closely associated with ethnic minority groups. Religious communities particularly targeted include ... 'underground' Roman Catholics, 'house church' Protestants, and various spiritual movements such as Falun Gon. The bill further references USCIRF with the following language: Whereas according to the USCIRF 2007 Annual Report, in Communist China, 'There continue to be reports that prominent religious leaders and laypersons alike are confined, tortured, 'disappeared', imprisoned, or subjected to other forms of ill treatment on account of their religion or belief'. The legislation finds that many religious leaders throughout China have been detained, imprisoned and tortured by the Communist Chinese Government. The House resolves to condemn China's discrimination, harassment, imprisonment and torture of its prisoners. The House calls upon China to cease discrimination against unregistered religious organizations and to release all of its prisoners of conscience. Finally the legislation calls upon Communist China to release information regarding prisoners and past executions, and with the following language mentions USCIRF: (5) calls upon Communist China to allow the USCIRF or international humanitarian organizations unrestricted access to current and former prisoners of conscience held in Communist China's jails, prison, administrative detention centers, and Laogai prison camp system; and.

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Iran

H.Res.1310: Expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the Government of Iran's lack of protection for internationally recognized human rights creates poor conditions for religious freedom in the Islamic Republic of Iran

Every year since 1999, the Department of State, following findings and recommendations of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom, has designated Iran a "Country of Particular Concern" (CPC) under the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 for the systematic, ongoing, and egregious violations of religious freedom. Iran is guilty of serious human rights violations of various minorities including women, Baha'is, Sufi Muslims, Evangelical Christians, and Jews such as unlawful harassment, detention, arrests, imprisonment, denial of the right to education, freedoms of movement, association, thought, and conscience. In its current state, the draft penal code is not consistent with the Government of Iran's international obligations and therefore should not enter into force, and if this draft penal code is passed, it would seriously endanger the lives of all Baha'is, Muslim dissidents, and converts from Islam. It is resolved that the House of Representatives calls on the Government of Iran to release all religious prisoners and to modify the draft penal code in order to respect the obligations under the international human rights conventions to which the Government of Iran is a party. The House calls on the U.N. Human rights Council to maintain careful oversight of human rights conditions in Iran, and supports the allocation of adequate funding for the promotion of democracy and human rights in the region, including initiatives to advance freedom of religion and promote the rule of law on behalf of religious minorities.

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Pakistan

H. Res 840 Calling for the Restoration of Human Rights and Rule of Law in Pakistan.

The legislation calls for an end to the suspension of the Pakistani Constitution and Supreme Court and the detention of prominent human rights defenders. Such actions have placed religious freedom, human rights and the advancement of democracy in Pakistan in grave danger. With the following language, the legislation cites USCIRF: Whereas according to recommendations by the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, the Government of Pakistan needs "to take much more serious efforts to combat Islamic extremism in that country, noting especially the current government's political alliance with Islamist political parties, which affords an inordinate amount of influence to these groups, and which, in turn, has had a strong negative impact on religious freedom in Pakistan. The legislation expresses the sense of the House that the government of Pakistan should immediately restore the rule of law, drop the charges against all human rights defenders and release those who have been detained or placed under house arrest. In order to ensure freedom of speech the government of Pakistan should restore independence to the media. In addition, the government of Pakistan should review all legislation to ensure respect for the international human rights, which Pakistan committed to uphold as a member of the United Nations Human Rights Council.

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Saudi Arabia

H. CON. RES. 202 Noting the absence of human rights as a topic of discussion in the U.S.-Saudi Strategic Dialogue between the United States and Saudi Arabia, and urging the President to include this subject in working level discussions with Saudi counterparts.

The legislation notes the absence of a discussion of human rights in the U.S.-Saudi Strategic Dialogue despite the fact that the United States Department of State's Human Rights Report on Saudi Arabia in 2007 found severe human rights abuses, including the infliction of severe pain by judicially-sanctioned corporal punishments; arbitrary arrest and detention; denial of fair public trials; exemption from the rule of law and lack of judicial independence; arbitrary interference with privacy, family, home, and correspondence; significant restriction of civil liberties such as freedoms of speech and press, including the Internet; assembly; association and movement, and minimal political rights, including the right to peacefully change the government. In addition, Freedom House has rated Saudi Arabia as a 'Not Free' country for the past 34 years, and has consistently cited it as one of the 8 worst regimes in the world for its severe restrictions on civil liberties and political rights, including a ban on political parties, tight government control over domestic media outlets, absence of religious freedom, academic freedom, or judicial independence and widespread discrimination against women. The legislation cites USCIRF with the following language: Whereas the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom listed Saudi Arabia as a 'Country of Particular Concern' in its 2007 report because there is no legal recognition or protection of religious freedom, it is severely restricted in practice; the government limits the practice of all but the officially sanctioned version of Islam and prohibits the public practice of other religions, including non-Muslim religions and Shi'a and Sufi sect " The legislation calls upon the President and the Secretary of State to expand the Strategic Dialogue and establish a new working group to address human rights.

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H.R. 2986-Prohibit Aid to Saudi Arabia Act of 2007

The legislation cites USCIRF with the following language: (11) The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom has reported that Saudi Arabian Government-funded textbooks used both in Saudi Arabia and also in North

American Islamic schools and mosques have been found to encourage incitement to violence against non-Muslims. Additionally, the legislation prohibits funds appropriated for foreign operations, export financing, and related programs to be obligated or expended for Saudi Arabia. This includes direct loans, credits, insurance, and guarantees of the US Export-Import Bank.

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H. Con. Res. 194-Education Reform in Saudi Arabia

Expressing the sense of Congress regarding the failure of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the Palestinian Authority to properly implement education reforms aimed at reducing the cultural roots of terrorism.

The legislation cites USIRF with the following language: Whereas the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom has reported that Saudi Arabian Government-funded textbooks used both in Saudi Arabia and also in North American Islamic schools and mosques have been found to encourage incitement to violence against non-Muslims; The legislation expresses the disappointment of Congress with the slow pace of education reform in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia and the sense that continual delay of reform implementations should not be accepted. The legislation urges Saudi Arabia to reform its textbooks and educational curriculum in a manner that promotes tolerance and peaceful coexistence with others, develops civil society, encourage functionality in the global economy; and immediately reform the curriculum which Saudi embassies are distributing internationally, specifically the textbooks distributed to Saudi schools, including those within the US.

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H.R. 2976-Saudi Arabia Accountability Act of 2007

To halt Saudi support for institutions that fund, train, incite, encourage, or in any other way aid and abet terrorism, and to secure full Saudi cooperation in the investigation of terrorist incidents, and for other purposes.

The legislation cites USCIRF with the following language: (12) The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom has reported that Saudi Arabian Government-funded textbooks used both in Saudi Arabia and also in North American Islamic schools and mosques have been found to encourage incitement to violence against non-Muslims. This legislation expresses the sense of Congress that the government of Saudi Arabia must cooperate fully with the US in the investigation of terror groups and individuals; close permanently all organizations in Saudi Arabia that fund, train, encourage, or in any way aid terrorism anywhere in the world; end funding for terror organizations outside Saudi Arabia; and block funding from private Saudi citizens and entities to Saudi based or offshore terror organizations. Furthermore, the legislation calls upon the President to prohibit certain exports to Saudi Arabia and to restrict travel of certain Saudi

diplomats if the President cannot certify to the appropriate congressional committees that the government of Saudi Arabia is fully cooperating with the United States in investigating and preventing terrorist attacks; has closed permanently all Saudi-based terror organizations; has ended funding for any offshore terror organization; and has made all efforts to block funding from private Saudi citizens and entities to offshore terror organizations.

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H. Con. Res 262- Expressing the sense of Congress regarding Saudi Arabia's policies relating to religious practice and tolerance, including Saudi Arabia's commitment to revise Saudi textbooks to remove intolerant and violent references.

This legislation expresses the Congress's concern over Saudi Arabia's policies on religious freedom and tolerance, particularly Saudi textbooks that encourage intolerance and violence towards non-Muslims or hatred towards other religious groups. As a result of bilateral discussions in 2006, the Saudi government confirmed that it was 'pursuing and will continue to pursue [policies] for the purpose of promoting greater freedom for religious practice and increased tolerance for religious groups'. However, the extent of these efforts was questioned by Commissioners who traveled to Saudi Arabia. The legislation references this USCIRF trip with the following language: Whereas members of United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USCIRF) traveled to Saudi Arabia in May and June of 2007, and found that the Government of Saudi Arabia has made insubstantial progress toward implementing its July 2006 policies relating to religious practice and tolerance, and has not been transparent in the implementation of such policies; The legislation further cites USCIRF findings with the following language: Whereas USCIRF found that the Government of Saudi Arabia permits the public practice of only one interpretation of Islam in Saudi Arabia and requires public behavior to conform to this interpretation, thereby violating standards of universal human rights and resulting in discrimination and human rights violations against members of indigenous Muslim communities who follow other interpretations of Islam, such as Shi'as, Ismailis, and nonconforming Sunnis. Since the Saudi government has failed to provide Congress and Secretary of State with a complete set of current texts books for review or its content, with the following language the legislation cites the USCIRF recommendation: Whereas USCIRF has recommended that the Secretary of State open diplomatic talks with the Government of Saudi Arabia in order to obtain official Saudi textbooks used at the ISA; and The legislation further mentions the USCIRF recommendation with the following language: Whereas USCIRF recommends that the ISA should be closed until the official Saudi textbooks used at the ISA are made available for comprehensive public examination and are found to be consistent with the Government of Saudi Arabia's commitment to revise such textbooks to remove intolerant and violent references: Now, therefore, be it It is the sense of Congress that the Secretary of State should provide a report within 90 days of the discussions detailing the results. If the textbooks are obtained and violent information is found, the report should explain what steps the Secretary plans to take in response. And if the textbooks are not obtained, the report should explain what actions the Secretary plans to take to close down the ISA on the grounds that significant concern still remains on whether intolerance and violence is being taught at the ISA which have an adverse effect on the security of the United States.

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S. 2243 - A bill to strongly encourage the Government of Saudi Arabia to end its support for institutions that fund, train,

incite, encourage, or in any other way aid and abet terrorism, to secure full Saudi cooperation in the investigation of terrorist incidents, to denounce Saudi sponsorship of extremist Wahhabi ideology, and for other purposes.

The legislation strongly encourages the Government of Saudi Arabia to end its support for institutions that fund, train, incite, encourage, or in any other way aid and abet terrorism, to secure full Saudi cooperation in the investigation of terrorist incidents, and to denounce Saudi sponsorship of extremist Wahhabi ideology. The legislation cites the USCIRF findings with the following language: 7) A Fall 2007 United States Commission on International Religious Freedom report stated 'Due to insufficient information provided by the Saudi government, the Commission could not verify that a formal mechanism exists within the Saudi government to review thoroughly and revise educational texts and other materials sent outside of Saudi Arabia. It appears that the Saudi government has made little or no progress on efforts to halt the exportation of extremist ideology outside the Kingdom.'. The legislation calls on the Government of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia to permanently close all charities, schools, or other organizations or institutions that fund, train, incite, encourage, or in any other way aid and abet terrorism anywhere in the world. The legislation also calls on the Government of Saudi Arabia to provide complete, unrestricted, and unobstructed cooperation to the United States. The legislation requires that a report be submitted no later than 6 months after the date of the enactment of this Act, which would describe the progress made by the Government of Saudi Arabia.

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Vietnam

H. Res. 665-Endorsing reforms for freedom and democracy in Vietnam

Endorsing reforms for freedom and democracy in Vietnam.

The legislation refers to Senate Joint Resolution 168, signed into law on May 25, 1994, which urged Vietnam to restore basic human rights, release all political prisoners, abolish the single-party system, allow for all political organizations to function without governmental pressure, and announce a timetable to hold free and fair elections. The legislation specifically mentions the following religions whose spiritual leaders support the call for democracy and protection of human rights in Vietnam: Buddhism, Catholicism, Protestant religions, Hoa Hao, and Cao Dai. With the following language: the legislation cites USCIRF Whereas because of systematic, egregious, and ongoing abuses of religious freedom, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom recommends the addition of Vietnam to the countries of particular concern list. The legislation calls for drastic action to be taken in Vietnam, including but not limited to: stop the Communist Party's control in government affairs, open up the borders to foreign media, allow for the media's right to free speech regarding the government, let the National Assembly break free from the Communist Party control and organize free and fair elections. The House calls for these changes in addition to those recommended by Dr. Nguyen Dan Que, who is a leading voice for freedom in Vietnam. He announced a "9-point road map to democracy" plan in March 2005. The House urges the United States government to find a peaceful way to bring democracy to Vietnam.

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H.R.4223- To establish the Congressional-Executive Commission on the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

To establish the Congressional-Executive Commission on the Socialist Republic of Vietnam

The legislation establishes the Congressional Executive Commission on the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. With the following language, the legislation cites USCIRF I (18) A specific mechanism to address Vietnam's progress on human rights, the rule of law, and religious freedom issues in an in-depth manner, focusing on vulnerabilities and areas of particular concern identified by the most recent annual Department of State's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for Vietnam, the Trafficking in Persons Report, and the annual report of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, including progress in Vietnam's Central and Northwest Highlands, would serve as a valuable resource to complement existing United States Government efforts to address these issues and inform future efforts, reinforcing and strengthening the outcome of these efforts. The Congressional Executive Commission should monitor the Socialist Republic of Vietnam protection of human rights such as; the right to engage in free expression, the right to assembly, religious freedom, the right to liberty of movement, the right to be a criminal defendant, the right to be free from torture, the protection of internationally recognized worker rights, freedom from incarceration, freedom from arbitrary arrest, and the right to a fair and public hearing. The Commission should compile and maintain lists of persons believed to be imprisoned, detained, or placed under house arrest, or tortured. Additionally, the Commission should monitor developments in the rule of law and encourage the development of programs and activities of the United States Government and private organizations with a view toward increasing the interchange of people and ideas between the United States and the Socialist Republic of Vietnam. The legislation urges coordination with USCIRF with the following language, (2) COORDINATION- The report required to be issued under paragraph (1) shall be developed in coordination with the findings of the most recent annual Department of State's Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for Vietnam, the Trafficking in Persons Report, and the annual report of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom. The Commission is to consist of two members of the House of Representatives, two members of the Senate, a representative from the Department of State, one representative from the Department of Commerce, and a representative from the Department of Labor.

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H.RES.1048: Condemning the detention of Dr. Nguyen Quoc Quan, a citizen of the United States, by the Government of Vietnam, and expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States should remove permanent normal trade relations status with Vietnam unless Dr. Nguyen is released

On November 17, 2007, pro-democracy advocate Nguyen Quoc Quan was arrested by the Government of Vietnam for exercising his free speech rights, as guaranteed by Article 69 of the Constitution of Vietnam. With the following language, the legislation cites USCIRF; Whereas, despite ongoing human rights violations, on November 13, 2006, Vietnam was removed as a Country of Particular Concern (CPC), as a precondition to the extension of permanent normal trade

relations to Vietnam, but against the recommendation of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom; The legislation calls for the release of Dr. Nguyen Quoc Quan and other political detainees and strongly condemns the ongoing human rights abuses in Vietnam. The legislation calls on the United States to re-designate Vietnam pursuant to the USCIRF recommendation with the following language a Country of Particular Concern: A) re-designate Vietnam as a Country of Particular Concern, pursuant to the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998, and the 2007 recommendation of the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. The legislation demands that the Government of Vietnam comply with internationally recognized standards for basic freedoms and human rights.

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H.Res.506-Human Rights and Trade

Condemning ongoing human rights abuses in Vietnam, and expressing the sense of the House of Representatives that the United States should remove permanent normal trade relations status with Vietnam unless all political and religious prisoners are released and significant and immediate human rights reforms are made by the Government of Vietnam.

The legislation calls for the United States to cease permanent normal trade relations status with Vietnam unless all political and religious prisoners are released and significant and immediate human rights reforms are made by the Government of Vietnam. This legislation expresses concern for the indigenous Degar Montagnard people who have suffered decades of persecution by the Vietnamese government for practicing Christianity or standing up for their human rights. The legislation states that Vietnam was removed as a Country of Particular Concern (CPC), as a precondition to the extension of permanent normal trade relations to Vietnam, against the recommendation of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom. With the following language the legislation cites USCIRF: Whereas, despite ongoing human rights violations, on November 13, 2006, Vietnam was removed as a Country of Particular Concern (CPC), as a precondition to the extension of permanent normal trade relations to Vietnam, but against the recommendation of the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom; The bill further cites USCIRF with the following language: Whereas the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom's 2007 Annual Report states, '[S]ince [Vietnam] joined the World Trade Organization (WTO), the government of Vietnam has initiated a crackdown on human rights defenders and advocates for the freedoms of speech, association, and assembly, including many religious leaders who previously were the leading advocates for religious freedom in Vietnam'; and

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H.R. 3096-Vietnam Human Rights Act of 2007

To promote freedom and democracy in Vietnam

The legislation prohibits U.S. non-humanitarian assistance as of FY2008 to the government of Vietnam unless the President certifies to Congress that: (1) the government of Vietnam has made substantial progress respecting the release of political and religious prisoners, respecting religious freedoms and the rights of minorities, and respecting to access to U.S. refugee programs; and (2) neither any government of Vietnam official nor entity was complicit in a severe form of trafficking in persons (or the government of Vietnam took appropriate steps to end such complicity). Additionally, the legislation declares it is U.S. policy: (1) to take such measures as are necessary to overcome the jamming of Radio Free Asia by the government of Vietnam; and (2) that educational and cultural exchange programs with Vietnam should promote progress toward freedom and democracy. Furthermore, this legislation states that it is U.S. policy to offer refugee resettlement to Vietnam nationals (including members of the Montagnard ethnic minority groups) who are eligible for the Humanitarian Resettlement program, the Orderly Departure program, the Resettlement Opportunities for Vietnamese Returnees program, the American Homecoming Act of 1988, or any other U.S. refugee program, and who were deemed ineligible for reasons of administrative error or certain circumstances beyond their control. Finally, with the following language, the legislation cites USCIRF: (b) Contacts With Other Organizations- In preparing the report under subsection (a), the Secretary shall, as appropriate, seek out and maintain contacts with nongovernmental organizations and human rights advocates (including Vietnamese-Americans and human rights advocates in Vietnam), including receiving reports and updates from such organizations and evaluating such reports. The Secretary shall also seek to consult with the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom for appropriate sections of the report.

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Appropriations

H.R. 2764 - FY 2008 State and Foreign Operations Appropriations

Making appropriations for the Department of State, foreign operations, and related programs for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2008, and for other purposes.

From the House Report:

"The Committee commends the Commission on its efforts to promote international religious freedom in consultation with the Department of State, independent human rights groups, and other non-governmental organizations, religious leaders, academics, policy experts, the Intelligence Community, and government agencies.

The Commission, established pursuant to the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998, conducts independent reviews and reporting of facts and circumstances of violations of religious freedom abroad and recommends options for United States policies with respect to foreign countries engaging in or tolerating violations of religious freedom.

The Committee commends the Commission for its work related to Saudi Arabia and urges the Commission to closely monitor and report on steps taken by the Saudi Government to implement the religious freedom reforms announced by the Department of State in July, 2006 following bilateral discussions between the two countries."

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H.R.1591- Making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes.

Making emergency supplemental appropriations for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007, and for other purposes

The legislation makes emergency supplemental funds available for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2007. The legislation mentions USCIRF with the following language: For an additional amount for 'Diplomatic and Consular Programs', \$870,658,000, to remain available until September 30, 2008, of which \$96,500,000 for World Wide Security Upgrades is available until expended: Provided, That of the funds appropriated under this heading, not more than \$20,000,000 shall be made available for public diplomacy programs: Provided further, That prior to the obligation of funds pursuant to the previous proviso, the Secretary of State shall submit a report to the Committees on Appropriations describing a comprehensive public diplomacy strategy, with goals and expected results, for fiscal years 2007 and 2008: Provided further, That of the amount available under this heading, \$258,000 shall be transferred to, and merged with, funds available in fiscal year 2007 for expenses for the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom: Provided further, That 20 percent of the amount available for Iraq operations shall not be obligated until the Committees on Appropriations receive and approve a detailed plan for expenditure, prepared by the Secretary of State, and submitted within 60 days after the date of enactment of this Act: Provided further, That within 15 days of enactment of this Act, the Office of Management and Budget shall apportion \$15,000,000 from amounts appropriated or otherwise made available by chapter 8 of title II of division B of Public Law 109-148 under the heading 'Emergencies in the Diplomatic and Consular Service' for emergency evacuations: Provided further, That of the amount made available under this heading for Iraq, not to exceed \$20,000,000 may be transferred to, and merged with, funds in the 'Emergencies in the Diplomatic and Consular Service' appropriations account, to be available only for terrorism rewards.

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Legislation Referencing USCIRF Recommendations

H. R. 982- Advance Democracy Act

Advance Democratic Values, Address Non-democratic Countries, and Enhance Democracy Act of 2007

This legislation seeks to establish within the Bureau of Democracy, Human Rights, and Labor of the Department of State an office that shall both work to facilitate the transition to democracy in non democratic countries, as determined by the Secretary, as well as to promote and strengthen the development of democracy in foreign countries where a transition to democracy is in its early stages. The office will also assist nongovernmental organizations, individuals and movements that are committed to the peaceful promotion of democracy and to fundamental rights and freedoms. Furthermore, this legislation expresses the sense of Congress that the promotion of democracy in foreign countries would be best achieved by an Assistant Secretary of State for Democracy, Human Rights and Labor who would help establish a Democracy Fellowship Program within the Department of State. Moreover, an internet site established and maintained by the Assistant Secretary that contains information concerning the narratives and histories of significant democratic movements in foreign countries, narratives relating to the establishment of and respect for fundamental freedoms and major human rights reports by the U.S. Government should, according to this legislation, be actualized. Additionally, Chiefs of missions in non democratic or democratic transition countries should, according to this legislation, develop program planning and material support to nongovernmental organizations and individuals that commit to such values as issuing public condemnation of severe violations of internationally recognized human rights and violations of religious freedom, political repression and government tolerated or condoned trafficking in persons. This legislation also suggests that the content of training for Foreign Service officers should include materials regarding the protection of internationally recognized human rights. Also, this legislation specifies that The Director of the National Foreign Affairs Training Center of the Foreign Service Institute of the Department of State shall consult with nongovernmental organizations dedicated to the protection and promotion of such rights, as well as with the U.S. Commission on International Religious Freedom. Finally, Congress finds that democracy assistance can include the promotion of the rule of law and improving the independence of the media and judiciary. The legislation expresses the sense of Congress that the Secretary and the Administrator of USAID should, in consultation with appropriate congressional committees, develop guidelines and other acquisition mechanisms for diplomatic and consular missions in order to actualize democracy assistance programs.

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