

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 320

Calling for the immediate release of Eyvin Hernandez, a United States citizen and Los Angeles County public defender, who was wrongfully detained by the Venezuelan regime in March 2022.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JULY 27, 2023

Mr. PADILLA (for himself and Mrs. FEINSTEIN) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Foreign Relations

RESOLUTION

Calling for the immediate release of Eyvin Hernandez, a United States citizen and Los Angeles County public defender, who was wrongfully detained by the Venezuelan regime in March 2022.

Whereas, since 2006, Eyvin Hernandez has been a public defender for Los Angeles County, dedicating his career to representing the most vulnerable people in the county;

Whereas Eyvin Hernandez is a man of impeccable character and a beloved member of his community, admired by many who know him for his deep devotion to justice, respect for humanity, willingness to help others, patience, kindness, and intellect;

Whereas Eyvin Hernandez has volunteered his time to advocate for children in the juvenile justice system, to mentor

aspiring young lawyers through the Latina Lawyer Bar Association and the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA) Law Fellows Program, and to participate in the Los Angeles County Public Defender's Union, Local 148, where he previously served on the board of directors;

Whereas Eyvin Hernandez is an alumnus of the UCLA School of Law and of El Camino College, UCLA, where he majored in physics and mathematics;

Whereas Eyvin Hernandez's family immigrated to the United States when he was a toddler, fleeing the civil war in El Salvador and seeking a better life;

Whereas, on March 31, 2022, Eyvin Hernandez was captured by armed, masked men in the vicinity of the Colombia-Venezuela border, and, once his United States citizenship was discovered, was transferred to Venezuela and detained;

Whereas the Venezuelan regime charged Eyvin Hernandez with criminal association and conspiracy, which could lead to 16 years of imprisonment;

Whereas there has been no serious effort to provide legitimate evidence to corroborate those allegations nor to hold trial proceedings to adjudicate his case, highlighting the fabricated grounds for Eyvin Hernandez's detention;

Whereas Eyvin Hernandez was not included in the October 2022 prisoner exchange that allowed 7 Americans imprisoned in Venezuela to return home to the United States;

Whereas, on October 21, 2022, the Department of State designated Eyvin Hernandez as wrongfully detained;

Whereas, in June 2023, the Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs attempted to secure Eyvin Hernandez's release during a visit to Caracas;

Whereas, even in prison, Eyvin Hernandez has served as an advocate for his fellow detained Americans, translating their needs to the guards in Spanish and helping them articulate their cases to officials of the Department of State;

Whereas the Los Angeles County community, including Eyvin Hernandez's former mentees, colleagues, classmates, friends, and family, have created a coalition to advocate for his release, highlight the arbitrary and unjust nature of his detention, and continue fighting to bring him home; and

Whereas Eyvin Hernandez is a valued citizen of the city of Los Angeles, the State of California, and the United States: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) calls on the Venezuelan regime to immediately release Eyvin Hernandez from unjust imprisonment;

3 (2) urges all officials of the executive branch of
4 the United States, including President Joseph R.
5 Biden, Secretary of State Antony Blinken, National
6 Security Advisor Jake Sullivan, and Special Presidential Envoy for Hostage Affairs Roger Carstens,
7 to use all the tools at the disposal of the executive
8 branch to secure the immediate release of Eyvin
9 Hernandez;

10 (3) condemns the Venezuelan regime's continued use of detentions of citizens and lawful perma-

1 nent residents of the United States for political pur-
2 poses;

3 (4) expresses continued support for all citizens
4 and lawful permanent residents of the United States
5 wrongfully detained in Venezuela, along with all
6 other citizens and lawful permanent residents of the
7 United States wrongfully detained abroad; and

8 (5) expresses solidarity with and sympathy for
9 Eyvin Hernandez, his friends and family, and those
10 advocating for his immediate release, for the per-
11 sonal hardship experienced as a result of the arbi-
12 trary and baseless detention of their loved one.

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