

113TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 311

Calling on the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to strongly oppose Russia's discriminatory law against the freedom of expression for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) persons and to obtain written assurance that host countries of the Olympic Games will uphold all international human rights and civil rights obligations for all persons observing or participating in the Games regardless of race, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity, and for other purposes.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

NOVEMBER 21, 2013

Mr. MERKLEY (for himself, Mrs. BOXER, Mrs. FEINSTEIN, and Mr. MURPHY) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on Commerce, Science, and Transportation

RESOLUTION

Calling on the International Olympic Committee (IOC) to strongly oppose Russia's discriminatory law against the freedom of expression for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) persons and to obtain written assurance that host countries of the Olympic Games will uphold all international human rights and civil rights obligations for all persons observing or participating in the Games regardless of race, sex, sexual orientation, or gender identity, and for other purposes.

Whereas the goal of the Olympic movement is to contribute to building a peaceful and better world by educating

youth through sport practiced in accordance with Olympism and its values;

Whereas the role of the International Olympic Committee (IOC), according to the Olympic Charter, is to cooperate with the competent public or private organizations and authorities in the endeavor to place sport at the service of humanity and thereby promote peace;

Whereas, under the Olympic Charter, any form of discrimination against a person is deemed incompatible with belonging to the Olympic movement and the IOC is to act explicitly against any form of discrimination affecting the Olympic movement;

Whereas, in February 2014, the city of Sochi in the Krasnodar region of the Russian Federation will host the 22nd Winter Olympic Games;

Whereas, on June 30, 2013, President Vladimir Putin of Russian signed into law a bill that allows the Government of the Russian Federation to arrest gay or “pro-gay” foreigners prior to being deported from the country;

Whereas the Krasnodar region of Russia, where the city of Sochi is located, and 10 other regions have adopted similar laws banning “homosexual propaganda”;

Whereas several media outlets recently reported of homophobic violence occurring in Russia resulting in the deaths of Russian citizens;

Whereas authorities in Russia have refused to register the nongovernmental organization that would set up a Pride House in Sochi, which would work to combat homophobia in sport and promote lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgendered (LGBT) individuals’ rights during the

Olympic Games in Russia, as the Pride House did during the 2010 Winter Olympics in Vancouver;

Whereas the presence of a Pride House would be the expression of human rights and have the mission of celebrating diversity and inclusiveness through sport and raising awareness of LGBT discrimination and criminalization;

Whereas the IOC has said that they have received assurances from the highest levels of the Government of the Russian Federation that Olympic athletes and visitors will not be affected by Russia's discriminatory law, but the Minister of Sports in Russia has suggested that athletes will not be exempt;

Whereas the Department of State has a clear and consistent policy of championing the protection of human rights of LGBT individuals worldwide, including by opposing any legislation that singles out people for discriminatory treatment due to their sexual orientation and by encouraging countries to repeal or reform laws that punish or criminalize LGBT status;

Whereas Russia has obligated itself to respect and enforce the right to be free from discrimination and the right to freedom of assembly, association, and expression under the European Convention of Human Rights, the United Nations International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights, and the human dimension commitments of the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe; and

Whereas the IOC recently stated, "The International Olympic Committee is clear that sport is a human right and should be available to all regardless of race, sex or sexual orientation. The Games themselves should be open to all,

free of discrimination, and that applies to spectators, officials, media and of course athletes. We oppose in the strongest terms any move that would jeopardize this principle.”: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) calls on the International Olympic Com-
3 mittee (IOC) to strongly oppose Russia’s discrimina-
4 tory law as inconsistent with Russia’s international
5 obligations and with the value of the Olympic move-
6 ment;

7 (2) calls on the IOC to insist, as a condition of
8 holding the planned Olympic Games in Sochi, that
9 the Government of the Russian Federation provide
10 unconditional assurance that no athlete, coach, offi-
11 cial, spectator, or anyone otherwise involved or affili-
12 ated with the Olympic Games will be harassed,
13 fined, detained, or otherwise have their human
14 rights, including their right to free expression, vio-
15 lated due to their actual or perceived sexual orienta-
16 tion or gender identity or expression of support for
17 LGBT human rights;

18 (3) urges the IOC to insist that vendors and
19 contractors have LGBT nondiscrimination policies in
20 place for the 2014 Winter Olympics in Sochi and for
21 all future Olympic Games or other Olympic events;

1 (4) urges the IOC to call on the Russian Fed-
2 eration to allow a Pride House that has the mission
3 of celebrating diversity and inclusiveness through
4 sport and raising awareness of LGBT discrimination
5 and criminalization;

6 (5) urges the IOC to amend its charter to state
7 that discrimination based on sexual orientation and
8 gender identity is not compatible with the Olympic
9 Games; and

10 (6) urges the congressionally chartered United
11 States Olympic Committee to intervene and assist
12 the IOC in establishing the objectives as laid out by
13 this resolution.

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