
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 287 Session of
2017

INTRODUCED BY BERNSTINE, METCALFE, SACCONI, BAKER, SOLOMON,
BIZZARRO, DIGIROLAMO, RYAN, READSHAW, NELSON, KAUFFMAN,
MILLARD, TOEPEL, V. BROWN, WARD AND SAYLOR, APRIL 25, 2017

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, APRIL 25, 2017

A RESOLUTION

1 Condemning the Syrian government's chemical weapons attack on
2 Khan Sheikhoun, Syria, and President Bashar al-Assad for
3 Syria's ongoing and historical use of chemical weapons
4 against the Syrian people; and urging the Congress of the
5 United States to consider and approve an authorization for
6 the use of military force to allow for additional military
7 action in Syria for the purpose of deterring further use of
8 chemical weapons in Syria and the world.

9 WHEREAS, On April 4, 2017, chemical weapons were used in an
10 attack that killed dozens of people, including children in Khan
11 Sheikhoun in Syria's Idlib province; and

12 WHEREAS, Initial reports suggest that the attack involved a
13 chemical nerve agent and autopsies on Syrians who died after
14 being brought to Turkey for treatment suggest sarin was used in
15 the attack; and

16 WHEREAS, The World Health Organization confirmed that some
17 survivors had symptoms consistent with exposure to a category of
18 chemicals that includes nerve agents; and

19 WHEREAS, The Hague-based Organisation for the Prohibition of
20 Chemical Weapons reports that it is in the process of gathering

1 and analyzing information on the attack from all available
2 sources; and

3 WHEREAS, On April 5, 2017, the United Nations Security
4 Council called an emergency meeting to discuss the chemical
5 weapons attack in Idlib province; and

6 WHEREAS, The reported use of chemical weapons in Idlib
7 province, if confirmed, would constitute the largest single
8 attack in Syria since 2013, the United Nations High
9 Representative for Disarmament Affairs told the United Nations
10 Security Council on April 5; and

11 WHEREAS, Syria has a history of using chemical weapons on its
12 citizens. An investigation by the United Nations and the
13 Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons found that
14 Syrian government forces were responsible for three chlorine gas
15 attacks in 2014 and 2015; and

16 WHEREAS, On April 6, 2017, two destroyers, the U.S.S. Porter
17 and the U.S.S. Ross, fired 59 Tomahawk missiles at the airfield
18 in Syria from which the Assad regime is believed to have
19 conducted the April 4 chemical weapons attack; and

20 WHEREAS, On April 6, 2017, subsequent to the targeted air
21 strikes the President of the United States delivered a statement
22 to the American people in which the President decried the
23 barbaric nature of the attacks on Syrian civilians, including
24 children; and

25 WHEREAS, The military action, the President said, is in the
26 "vital national security interest of the United States to
27 prevent and deter the spread and use of deadly chemical
28 weapons"; and

29 WHEREAS, The President added: "There can be no dispute that
30 Syria used banned chemical weapons, violated its obligations

1 under the Chemical Weapons Convention and ignored the urging of
2 the UN Security Council"; and

3 WHEREAS, Subsequent to the April 6 air strikes, there has
4 been public debate, as well as debate among members of the
5 Congress, regarding a possible authorization for the use of
6 military force to take additional military action against Syria;
7 and

8 WHEREAS, There is some disagreement among members of the
9 Congress as to whether additional military action should be
10 taken against Syria at this time; and

11 WHEREAS, A number of members of the Congress have opened the
12 door for a possible authorization for the the use of military
13 force, should the President bring such a proposal to the
14 Congress; and

15 WHEREAS, Chemical weapons are considered weapons of mass
16 destruction and their use in warfare is outlawed under the
17 Convention on the Prohibition of the Development, Production,
18 Stockpiling and Use of Chemical Weapons and on their
19 Destruction, also known as the Chemical Weapons Convention; and

20 WHEREAS, The use of chemical weapons is considered morally
21 reprehensible given the extreme suffering that chemical weapons
22 can inflict on individuals who are exposed to them; therefore be
23 it

24 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the
25 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania condemn the Syrian government's
26 chemical weapons attack on Khan Sheikhoun, Syria, and President
27 Bashar al-Assad for Syria's ongoing and historical use of
28 chemical weapons against the Syrian people; and be it further

29 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the
30 Commonwealth of Pennsylvania urge the Congress of the United

1 States to consider and approve an authorization for the use of
2 military force to allow for additional military action in Syria
3 for the purpose of deterring further use of chemical weapons in
4 Syria and the world; and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to
6 the President of the United States and to members of
7 Pennsylvania's Congressional Delegation.