

As Introduced

**130th General Assembly
Regular Session
2013-2014**

S. C. R. No. 41

Senators Tavares, Turner

**Cosponsors: Senators Schiavoni, Gentile, Cafaro, Seitz, Jones, Hughes,
Manning, Brown, Smith, Sawyer**

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

To condemn the terrorist group Boko Haram for its attacks on civilians, including the abduction of female students, and to urge the President and Congress to continue providing assistance in locating the students.

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE STATE OF OHIO (THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING):

WHEREAS, On the night of April 14, 2014, 276 female students, most of them between the ages of 15 and 18, were abducted by the terrorist group Boko Haram from the Government Girls Secondary School, a boarding school located in the northeastern province of Borno in the Federal Republic of Nigeria; and

WHEREAS, All public secondary schools in Borno were closed in March 2014 because of the increased number of attacks over the past year that have killed hundreds of students, but the young women at the Government Girls Secondary School were recalled to take their final exams. Boko Haram burned down several buildings before opening fire on soldiers and police who were guarding the Government Girls Secondary School and subsequently forced the students into trucks; and

WHEREAS, According to local officials in Borno, 53 students were able to flee their captors while the rest remain in captivity. Reports suggest the abducted girls have been sold by Boko Haram to Islamist militants as brides for the equivalent of \$12 each; and

WHEREAS, Boko Haram, which loosely translates from the Hausa language to mean "Western education is sin," is known to oppose the education of girls. Boko Haram has previously kidnapped girls for use as cooks and sex slaves and claims responsibility for the kidnapping in Borno on April 14, 2014; and

WHEREAS, On April 14, 2014, hours before the kidnapping in Borno, and on May 2, 2014, Boko Haram bombed bus stations in Abuja, Nigeria, killing at least 94 people and wounding over 160, making it the deadliest set of attacks ever in Nigeria's capital city; and

WHEREAS, Late on May 5, 2014, suspected Boko Haram gunmen kidnapped an additional eight girls, ranging in age from 12 to 15, from a village in northeast Nigeria; and

WHEREAS, The United States Department of State designated Boko Haram as a Foreign Terrorist Organization in November 2013, recognizing the threat posed by the group's large scale and indiscriminate attacks on civilians, including women and children; and

WHEREAS, Reports estimate that more than 500 students and 100 teachers have been killed by Boko Haram and that Boko Haram has destroyed approximately 500 schools in northern Nigeria, leaving more than 15,000 students without access to education; and

WHEREAS, Boko Haram has targeted schools, mosques, churches, villages, agricultural centers, and government facilities in an armed campaign to create an Islamic state in northern Nigeria, prompting the President of Nigeria to declare a state of emergency

in three of the country's northeastern provinces in May 2013; and 50

WHEREAS, Human rights groups indicate that the Nigerian state 51
security forces should improve efforts to protect civilians during 52
offensive operations against Boko Haram. According to 53
nongovernmental organizations, more than 1,500 people have been 54
killed in attacks by Boko Haram or reprisals by the Nigerian 55
security forces this year alone and almost 4,000 people have been 56
killed in Boko Haram attacks since 2011; and 57

WHEREAS, The enrollment, retention, and completion of 58
education for girls in Nigeria remains a major challenge. 59
According to the United Nations Children's Emergency Fund, some 60
4,700,000 children of primary school age are still not enrolled in 61
school in Nigeria, with attendance rates lowest in the north; and 62

WHEREAS, Studies have found that school children in Nigeria, 63
particularly those in the northern provinces, are at a 64
disadvantage in their education, with 37% of primary school-age 65
girls in the rural northeast not attending school and 30% of boys 66
not attending school; and 67

WHEREAS, Women and girls must be allowed to attend school 68
without fear of violence and unjust treatment in order to take 69
their rightful place as equal citizens of and contributors to 70
society; now therefore be it 71

RESOLVED, That we, the members of the 130th General Assembly 72
of the State of Ohio: 73

-- Condemn Boko Haram for its violent attacks on civilian 74
targets, including schools, mosques, churches, villages, and 75
agricultural centers in Nigeria, and for its abduction of female 76
students; 77

-- Urge the President of the United States and Congress to 78
continue to assist the government of Nigeria in the search for the 79
abducted girls and encourage the government of Nigeria to work 80

with the United States and the governments of other concerned 81
countries to resolve this tragic situation; 82

-- Express strong support for the people of Nigeria, 83
especially the parents and families of the girls abducted by Boko 84
Haram in Borno, and call for the girls' immediate safe return; 85

-- Encourage the government of Nigeria to strengthen efforts 86
to protect children seeking to obtain an education and to hold 87
those who conduct violent attacks accountable; 88

-- Commend efforts by the United States government to hold 89
terrorist organizations, such as Boko Haram, accountable; 90

-- Recognize that every individual, regardless of gender, 91
should have the opportunity to pursue an education without fear of 92
discrimination; and 93

-- Encourage the United States Department of State and the 94
United States Agency for International Development to continue 95
supporting initiatives that promote the human rights of women and 96
girls in Nigeria; and be it further 97

RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the Senate send duly 98
authenticated copies of this resolution to the President and 99
Secretary of State of the United States, the Speaker and Clerk of 100
the United States House of Representatives, the President Pro 101
Tempore and Secretary of the United States Senate, the members of 102
the Ohio Congressional delegation, and the news media of Ohio. 103