

HM 1625

2007

1 House Memorial

2 A memorial to the United States Government, requesting the
3 United States Government to grant deferred enforced
4 departure immigration status to Venezuelan nationals
5 seeking political asylum in the United States and
6 requesting the Bureau of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration
7 Services to grant and expedite work authorization permits
8 to Venezuelan nationals presently in the United States who
9 are requesting asylum to avoid political persecution.

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11 WHEREAS, today the government of President Hugo Chavez in
12 Venezuela is persecuting the citizens of Venezuela for their
13 political views, seizing private property, and systematically
14 eliminating the freedoms of the Venezuelan people, and

15 WHEREAS, in addition to these transgressions against the
16 citizens of Venezuela, President Hugo Chavez has sought to
17 silence peaceful opposition to his government by placing heavy
18 restrictions and penalties on media outlets that still permit
19 criticism of the government, and

20 WHEREAS, in an effort to secure his personal rule, oppress
21 Venezuelan freedoms, and establish himself as dictator, Hugo
22 Chavez dissolved the democratically elected Venezuelan
23 legislature to establish a congress under his control,
24 manipulated elections, seized control of the National Electoral
25 Council, nationalized private industry, abandoned private
26 property rights, and generally assumed control over Venezuela's
27 government and its institutions, and

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28 WHEREAS, as President Chavez's rule of Venezuela becomes
29 increasingly autocratic, promotes hate and anti-American and
30 communist ideology, and is supportive of nations that sponsor
31 terrorism, it is imperative that the United States reach out to
32 the members of the Venezuelan community in this country who fear
33 persecution from Hugo Chavez for speaking out against his
34 regime, and

35 WHEREAS, "deferred enforced departure" is a humanitarian
36 designation similar to "temporary protected status" that enables
37 the United States Government to delay the deportation of groups
38 of individuals who would otherwise be placed in danger if they
39 were to be deported to a country in which there is instability
40 for political or other reasons, and

41 WHEREAS, first used in 1990 and used five times since then,
42 deferred enforced departure status is designated by the
43 President and is generally granted to specific foreign nationals
44 for 12 or 18 months, during which time persons are allowed to
45 work in the United States if they obtain employment
46 authorization, and

47 WHEREAS, the United States has long followed the principle
48 that it will not return a foreign national to a country where
49 his or her life or freedom would be threatened as a result of
50 political persecution, and

51 WHEREAS, because thousands of Venezuelan nationals are
52 seeking refuge in the United States and within this state in
53 order to escape political persecution, it is consistent with the
54 founding principles of our nation and the character of our state
55 that they be provided sanctuary and protection, NOW, THEREFORE,

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57 Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

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59 That the United States Government is requested to grant
60 "deferred enforced departure" immigration status to Venezuelan
61 nationals seeking political asylum in the United States who
62 would be placed in danger as a result of political persecution
63 and the Bureau of U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
64 should grant and expedite work authorization permits to
65 Venezuelan nationals presently in the United States who are
66 requesting asylum to avoid political persecution by the
67 government of Venezuelan dictator Hugo Chavez.

68

69 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that copies of this memorial be
70 dispatched to the President of the United States, to the
71 President of the United States Senate, to the Speaker of the
72 United States House of Representatives, and to each member of
the of the Florida delegation to the United States Congress.