

By Senator Flores

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Senate Memorial

A memorial to the Congress of the United States and the President of the United States, urging them to grant temporary protected status to Venezuelans in the United States.

WHEREAS, Venezuela is enduring an unprecedented economic, humanitarian, security, and refugee crisis, consisting of extreme food and medicine shortages, severe infant and child malnutrition, rampant crime, and government-sponsored repression, and

WHEREAS, Venezuela's economic crisis continues unabated, and the International Monetary Fund estimates that the annual inflation in Venezuela reached almost 265,000 percent in July 2019, and

WHEREAS, in 2017, the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights reported the deaths of 124 persons in Venezuela which could be attributed to violations of the right to freedom of peaceful assembly, and, in July 2019, the office reported the deaths of 66 persons during protests between January and May 2019, 52 of which were attributable to government security forces or pro-government armed groups, and

WHEREAS, from September 2017 through April 2018, a review of pharmacies in five major cities in Venezuela showed a shortage of nearly 85 percent of medicine essential to treat four of the most recurrent causes of morbidity in the country, including diarrhea, respiratory tract infections, diabetes, and high blood pressure, and

WHEREAS, according to the Office of the United Nations High

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30 Commissioner for Human Rights, Venezuelan intelligence and
31 security forces have increasingly used arbitrary arrests and
32 detentions to repress and intimidate civil society, political
33 opponents, and voices of dissent, and

34 WHEREAS, in the June 2018 report published by the Office of
35 the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, Zeid
36 Ra'ad Al Hussein, the United Nations High Commissioner for Human
37 Rights, stated, "The failure to hold security forces accountable
38 for such serious human rights violations suggests that the rule
39 of law is virtually absent in Venezuela," and

40 WHEREAS, according to United Nations figures, more than
41 four million Venezuelans have fled the country, the largest
42 exodus in the recent history of Latin America and the Caribbean,
43 and

44 WHEREAS, by early 2018, more than half of all Venezuelans
45 had lost between 19 and 24 pounds, and today 90 percent of all
46 Venezuelans do not have enough money to buy food and 60 percent
47 live in extreme poverty, and

48 WHEREAS, the minimum monthly wage in 2017 bought only 12
49 percent of one Venezuelan's basic food needs, and by 2018,
50 approximately 5,000 people per day were leaving Venezuela in
51 search of food, and

52 WHEREAS, the people of Venezuela are facing a dire need for
53 temporary protected status, NOW, THEREFORE,

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

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57 That Venezuela is in a humanitarian crisis, and the
58 Legislature of the State of Florida condemns Venezuelan

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59 President Nicolás Maduro's authoritarian steps to undermine
60 democratic institutions and urges the Congress of the United
61 States and the President of the United States to grant temporary
62 protected status to Venezuelans in the United States.

63 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of State dispatch
64 copies of this memorial to the President of the United States,
65 to the President of the United States Senate, to the Speaker of
66 the United States House of Representatives, and to each member
67 of the Florida delegation to the United States Congress.