

By Senator Farmer

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Senate Resolution

A resolution reaffirming Florida as a welcoming state, expressing the Senate's solidarity with Florida's South Asian community, regardless of religion and caste, and opposing India's National Register of Citizens and Citizenship Amendment Act.

WHEREAS, the Senate supports democratic rights for all peoples, and opposes discrimination based on religion, ethnicity, and nationality, and

WHEREAS, the far-right Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) government of Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has been criticized for promoting violence against religious minorities, silencing dissent, and actions that earned the prime minister the nickname "the Butcher of Gujarat," a reference to the 2002 massacre that occurred while Prime Minister Modi was chief minister of the state of Gujarat, in which an estimated 2,000 people were killed in anti-Muslim violence and many Muslim women were targeted for rape and other forms of sexual violence, and

WHEREAS, on December 11, 2019, the Indian parliament passed the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA), which the BJP government claims will help refugees fleeing religious persecution from neighboring countries, but which in actuality blatantly discriminates, allowing the National Register of Citizens (NRC) to be updated for citizenship based on religion, favoring Hindu, Buddhist, Jain, Parsi, and Christian immigrants, while excluding Muslim people, and

WHEREAS, the CAA is the first instance of religion being used as a criterion for Indian citizenship, and

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30 WHEREAS, in August 2019, Prime Minister Modi's government  
31 published an updated NRC, requiring nearly 2 million people in  
32 the northeastern state of Assam to document their Indian  
33 citizenship or face detention at mass prison and detention camps  
34 that the Indian government has begun to build and fill, and

35 WHEREAS, most Indians lack documentation, such as birth  
36 certificates, to prove citizenship, and a nationwide expansion  
37 of the NRC could strip hundreds of millions of people, a  
38 disproportionate number of whom are Muslims, oppressed castes,  
39 women, members of the indigenous and LGBT communities, of their  
40 citizenship rights with no option to be renaturalized, and

41 WHEREAS, the *New York Times* reported on December 22, 2019,  
42 that the Indian home minister, Amit Shah, had vowed in speeches  
43 to expand the checks used in Assam to other states and to then  
44 use the citizenship law to purge India of "infiltrators" and  
45 "termites," and

46 WHEREAS, protests in India against the CAA and the NRC in  
47 December 2019 faced repression, with reports that, in the state  
48 of Uttar Pradesh, police fatally fired live ammunition at  
49 demonstrators and arrested thousands, and, in cities such as  
50 Bijnor, Muzaffarnagar, Meerut, Ghaziabad, Bulandshahr, Aligarh,  
51 Sambhal, Firozabad, and Rampur, police smashed Muslim homes, and

52 WHEREAS, on January 8, 2020, people across India  
53 demonstrated against the policies of the Modi government, with  
54 protests against the CAA and NRC held in conjunction with a 1-  
55 day strike called by 10 trade unions opposing privatization and  
56 neoliberalism and with strikes and demonstrations in rural  
57 communities against the oppression and exploitation of farmers,  
58 showing that a united movement of working people has the

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59 potential power to resist and defeat authoritarianism, and

60 WHEREAS, this general strike in India was the largest  
61 strike in the history of the world, with an estimated 250  
62 million workers, farmers, and rural laborers stopping work and  
63 joining protests against poverty, exploitation, discrimination,  
64 and authoritarianism, and

65 WHEREAS, the Indian American Muslim Council, API Chaya,  
66 Tasveer, Seattle South Asians Building Accountability and  
67 Healing, the Ambedkar Periyar Study Circle, and thousands of  
68 activists and organizers have spoken out in this state against  
69 the CAA and the NRC, and

70 WHEREAS, the Senate believes that the CAA and the NRC are  
71 inconsistent with Florida's position as a welcoming state for  
72 people of all castes and religions from South Asian communities,  
73 NOW, THEREFORE,

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75 Be It Resolved by the Senate of the State of Florida:

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77 That Florida's position as a welcoming state for people of  
78 all castes and religions from South Asian communities is  
79 reaffirmed, as is this state's solidarity with members of its  
80 South Asian community.

81 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Senate opposes India's  
82 National Register of Citizens and the Citizenship Amendment Act  
83 and finds these policies to be discriminatory to Muslims,  
84 oppressed castes, women, and indigenous and LGBT people and  
85 urges the United States Congress to support legislation  
86 censuring the Republic of India for adopting these policies and  
87 to call for the Parliament of India to uphold the Indian

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88 Constitution by repealing the Citizenship Amendment Act,  
89 stopping the National Register of Citizens, and taking steps  
90 toward helping refugees by ratifying various United Nations  
91 treaties on refugees.