

By Senator Rodriguez

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Senate Resolution

A resolution condemning the oppression of the Nicaraguan people under President Daniel Ortega.

WHEREAS, Daniel Ortega was first elected President of Nicaragua in 1984, losing a bid for reelection in 1990 and subsequent bids for the presidency in 1996 and 2001, and

WHEREAS, running on a platform of peace and reconciliation, Daniel Ortega was again elected President of Nicaragua in 2006 and soon after his inauguration paid an official visit to Iran to meet with Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad, and

WHEREAS, during that visit Daniel Ortega hailed the "twin revolutions" of Iran and Nicaragua in the "struggle against imperialism," and praised the current Cuban administration as "brothers in our fight against imperialist scum," while celebrating dictators with a record of human rights abuses, such as President Recep Erdoğan of Turkey, and

WHEREAS, in July 2009, Daniel Ortega suggested that he would like to see the Nicaraguan Constitution amended so that he could run again for president and a judicial decision issued by the Supreme Court of Justice of Nicaragua the following October effectively opened the door to his candidacy, and

WHEREAS, Daniel Ortega was reelected president on November 6, 2011, with the Supreme Electoral Council reporting that he had received 63 percent of the vote, and his reelection was confirmed on November 16, 2011, and

WHEREAS, Daniel Ortega signed a deal giving rights to a large amount of Nicaragua's land to a Chinese company for 50 years with an additional 50-year option, which would destroy

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30 indigenous communities and Nicaragua's environmental diversity
31 and invite a foreign power to run the largest potential business
32 in Nicaragua without involving local workers, and

33 WHEREAS, Daniel Ortega cut pensions for retirees and those
34 currently in the workforce and, as part of a broad culture of
35 suppression of the Nicaraguan people in 2013, cracked down on
36 students' free speech, and

37 WHEREAS, in January 2014, the National Assembly approved
38 constitutional amendments that abolished term limits for the
39 presidency, allowing a president to run for an unlimited number
40 of 5-year terms, and other constitutional reform that gave the
41 president sole power to appoint military and police commanders,
42 and

43 WHEREAS, Daniel Ortega closely aligned himself with the
44 late Venezuelan President Hugo Chávez and many view them as
45 being cut from the same destructive and authoritarian
46 ideological cloth, and

47 WHEREAS, in 2018, using governmental and paramilitary
48 forces, Daniel Ortega launched a violent crackdown on unarmed
49 protesters, many of them students and younger Nicaraguans,
50 inflicting abuses that included beating captured protestors
51 during arrests and in detention, at times denying them urgent
52 medical attention; raping detainees, including the use of metal
53 tubes and firearms; waterboarding; electric shock; acid burns;
54 mock executions; forced nudity; removal of fingernails; and, in
55 some cases, forcing detainees to record self-incriminating
56 confessions, and

57 WHEREAS, the Nicaraguan government has targeted reporters
58 and raided the offices of independent media outlets, filed

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59 criminal charges against journalists, canceled the legal
60 registration of nine civil society organizations, and expelled
61 foreign journalists and international human rights monitors from
62 the country, and

63 WHEREAS, like Hugo Chávez in Venezuela, Daniel Ortega has
64 manipulated election laws; eliminated checks and balances in
65 Nicaragua's government by controlling the national police; co-
66 opted the National Assembly and the Supreme Court of Nicaragua;
67 curtailed freedom of expression; and quashed opposition leaders
68 and other critics, NOW, THEREFORE,

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

71

72 That the Florida Senate condemns the oppression of the
73 Nicaraguan people under President Daniel Ortega.