

House Memorial

A memorial to the United States Department of State,
 urging the United States Secretary of State to
 redesignate the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia
 (FARC) as a Foreign Terrorist Organization pursuant to
 section 219 of the Immigration and Nationality Act, as
 amended.

WHEREAS, Colombia is among the oldest standing democracies
 in Latin America, and

WHEREAS, the United States established diplomatic relations
 with Colombia in 1822, and

WHEREAS, Colombia is a constitutional republic where the
 people of Colombia hold the power and elect representatives to
 exercise that power, and

WHEREAS, in October 1997, the United States Department of
 State designated the Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia
 (FARC) as a Foreign Terrorist Organization, and

WHEREAS, after many years of violence and armed conflict,
 Colombia is now the United States' strongest ally in Latin
 America, and

WHEREAS, with the support of the United States through Plan
 Colombia and the State of Florida, Colombia has transformed from
 a volatile and near-failed state in 2001 into a stable and
 prosperous democracy with a growing free market, and

26 WHEREAS, May 15, 2023, will mark the 11-year anniversary of
 27 the effective date of the United States-Colombia Trade Promotion
 28 Agreement, which has supported economic growth and employment
 29 opportunities in Colombia, the United States, and the State of
 30 Florida, and

31 WHEREAS, the State of Florida is responsible for roughly 25
 32 percent of all trade between the United States and Colombia, and

33 WHEREAS, the United States, the State of Florida, and
 34 Colombia have a shared commitment to promoting security,
 35 prosperity, human rights, and democracy in Colombia and across
 36 the Western Hemisphere, and

37 WHEREAS, in recent years, the Colombian government has
 38 taken courageous steps to enforce the law, stop drug
 39 traffickers, and rein in foreign terrorist organizations like
 40 the National Liberation Army (ELN) and FARC, and

41 WHEREAS, the State of Florida continues to support the
 42 Colombian people in their efforts to preserve peace, support
 43 human rights defenders, promote greater educational
 44 opportunities, increase public and private investments, and
 45 respect human rights and the rule of law, and

46 WHEREAS, the United States maintains a strong commitment to
 47 cooperating with Colombia to investigate, arrest, and prosecute
 48 members of transnational criminal organizations and to dismantle
 49 terrorist groups like the ELN, FARC, and Hezbollah, whose
 50 illicit activities, specifically narcotrafficking, for many

51 | years devastated Colombia and other Western Hemisphere
 52 | countries, and

53 | WHEREAS, Colombia has been an essential partner to the
 54 | United States in continuing efforts to support the courageous
 55 | people of Venezuela in their fight for freedom, democracy, and
 56 | economic prosperity against the dictatorship of Nicolás Maduro,
 57 | and

58 | WHEREAS, enemies of freedom, such as the communist regime
 59 | in Cuba and the Maduro regime in Venezuela, exploit and abuse
 60 | vulnerable individuals and perpetrate human rights abuses, such
 61 | as torture, arbitrary killings, and imprisonment, while also
 62 | promoting violent unrest, vandalism, and destruction of property
 63 | against individuals simply asking to be heard, and

64 | WHEREAS, in December 2021, the Biden Administration revoked
 65 | the designation of the FARC as a Foreign Terrorist Organization,
 66 | and

67 | WHEREAS, the FARC has murdered, tortured, and kidnapped
 68 | innocent Colombians and Americans, including kidnap victims and
 69 | United States citizens Marc D. Gonsalves, Thomas R. Howes, and
 70 | Keith Stansell, as well as American Thomas Janis, who was
 71 | murdered, and has committed other crimes and gross violations of
 72 | human rights, and

73 | WHEREAS, the FARC subvert democratic institutions and those
 74 | who defend them, and

75 | WHEREAS, the FARC has committed and supported acts of

76 | terrorism and continues to do so, and

77 | WHEREAS, the Colombian electorate in 2016 defeated a
78 | referendum that would have enacted a deal with the FARC, and

79 | WHEREAS, the Colombian government later ratified an
80 | agreement with the FARC without the approval of the electorate,
81 | NOW, THEREFORE,

82 |
83 | Be It Resolved by the Legislature of the State of Florida:

84 |
85 | That the Florida Legislature declares its firm commitment
86 | to Colombia, a longstanding ally of the United States in Latin
87 | America, and opposes the Biden Administration's revocation of
88 | the FARC's designation as a Foreign Terrorist Organization.

89 | BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Florida Legislature urges
90 | the United States Secretary of State to redesignate the FARC as
91 | a Foreign Terrorist Organization.

92 | BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of State dispatch
93 | copies of this memorial to the President of the United States,
94 | the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the
95 | United States House of Representatives, the United States
96 | Secretary of State, and each member of the Florida delegation to
97 | the United States Congress.