

# FLORIDA HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

## BILL ANALYSIS

*This bill analysis was prepared by nonpartisan committee staff and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.*

**BILL #:** [HR 761](#)

**TITLE:** Persecution of Christians in Nigeria

**SPONSOR(S):** Daniels and Plakon

**COMPANION BILL:** None

**LINKED BILLS:** None

**RELATED BILLS:** None

### Committee References

[Judiciary](#)

18 Y, 0 N

[State Affairs](#)



## SUMMARY

### Effect of the Bill:

The resolution condemns the ongoing persecution of Christians in Nigeria and calls for Nigeria's redesignation as a Country of Particular Concern.

### Fiscal or Economic Impact:

None.

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## ANALYSIS

### **EFFECT OF THE BILL:**

The resolution condemns the ongoing persecution of Christians in Nigeria and calls for Nigeria's redesignation as a [Country of Particular Concern](#).

Resolutions are not subject to action by the Governor and do not have the effect of law.

## RELEVANT INFORMATION

### **SUBJECT OVERVIEW:**

#### Boko Haram

Boko Haram is an Islamic sectarian movement, founded in 2002 in northeastern Nigeria.<sup>1</sup> Since 2009, the group has carried out assassinations and large-scale acts of violence in Nigeria. Boko Haram's attacks have occurred primarily in Nigeria's northeast, north-central, and central states and often focus on police, military, and government targets, as well as Christian churches and schools.<sup>2</sup>

#### Widespread Violence

Estimates vary regarding the levels of reported violence against Christians in Nigeria. According to one report, between July 2009 and April 2024, approximately 52,250 Christians were killed in the country for nonviolently professing their faith.<sup>3</sup> Another report found that just under 53,000 civilians have been killed in targeted political

<sup>1</sup> Britannica Editors, *Boko Haram*, Britannica (Jan. 21, 2026), <https://www.britannica.com/topic/Boko-Haram> (last visited Feb. 5, 2026).

<sup>2</sup> *Id.*

<sup>3</sup> Babalola Dawodu, *5,068 Citizens Massacred for Being Christians in Nigeria in 2022, 1,041 Slaughtered In First 100 Days of 2023*, International Society for Civil Liberties and Rule of Law, <https://intersociety-ng.org/5068-citizens-massacred-for-being-christians-in-nigeria-in-2022-1041-slaughtered-in-first-100-days-of-2023/> (last visited Feb. 5, 2026).

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violence since 2009.<sup>4</sup> Additionally, one report indicates that approximately 19,000 churches have been attacked or destroyed since 2009,<sup>5</sup> and another estimates that 5 million Christians have been displaced within the country.<sup>6</sup>

### Country of Particular Concern

Under the International Religious Freedom Act (IRFA) of 1998, the President of the United States must annually review the status of religious freedom in every country and designate any nation whose government engages in or tolerates “particularly severe violations of religious freedom” as a Country of Particular Concern.<sup>7</sup> The law defines particularly severe violations as “systematic, ongoing, egregious violations of religious freedom,” including violations such as:

- Torture;
- Prolonged detention without charges;
- Forced disappearance; or
- Other flagrant denial of life, liberty, or security of persons.

On October 31, 2025, President Trump designated Nigeria as a Country of Particular Concern.<sup>8</sup>

### U.S. Strike in Nigeria

On December 25, 2025, U.S. forces launched airstrikes against ISIS in Nigeria. President Trump stated that the strike was a consequence for the militant group’s killing of Christians.<sup>9</sup> A Pentagon official reported the agency worked with the Nigerian government to carry out the strikes.<sup>10</sup>

## BILL HISTORY

COMMITTEE REFERENCE	ACTION	DATE	STAFF DIRECTOR/ POLICY CHIEF	ANALYSIS PREPARED BY
<a href="#">Judiciary Committee</a>	18 Y, 0 N	1/27/2026	Kramer	Fronczak
<a href="#">State Affairs Committee</a>			Williamson	Villa

<sup>4</sup> Olarinke Alo, Chiamaka Enendu, Ijeoma Ndukwe, *Are Christians Being Persecuted as Trump Claims?*, BBC News (December 26, 2025), <https://www.bbc.com/news/articles/cgqlzdkdeeqjo> (last visited Feb. 5, 2026) (noting that Acled’s estimations are more conservative and that from 2020 to Sept. 2025, about 21,000 civilians were killed in abductions, attacks, sexual violence and the use of explosives. Acled identified 384 incidents from 2020 to Sept. 2025 that specifically targeted Christians, resulting in 317 deaths).

<sup>5</sup> Chinonso Alozie, *Herdsman Attacks: 20,300 killed in South East, 19,000 Churches, 3,000 Christian Schools Destroyed- Inter-Society Alleges*, Vanguard (Apr. 21, 2025) <https://www.vanguardngr.com/2025/04/herdsman-attacks-20300-killed-in-south-east-19000-churches-3000-christian-schools-destroyed-inter-society-alleges/> (last visited Feb. 5, 2026).

<sup>6</sup> Madeline Kearns, *As Christians Are Slaughtered, the World Looks Away*, The Free Press (Jun. 26, 2025), <https://www.thefp.com/p/christians-slaughtered-in-nigeria> (last visited Feb. 5, 2026) (citing a 2003 Vatican Report).

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Department of State, *Countries of Particular Concern, Special Watch List Countries, Entities of Particular Concern*, <https://www.state.gov/countries-of-particular-concern-special-watch-list-countries-entities-of-particular-concern> (last visited Feb. 5, 2026).

<sup>8</sup> *Id.* The United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, an independent, bipartisan agency within the legislative branch that monitors religious freedom worldwide and makes policy recommendations, has recommended that Nigeria be designated a country of concern since 2009 due to its egregious violations of religious freedom. *See* United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, *Naming of Nigeria as a Country of Particular Concern is an Important Step to Advance Religious Freedom*, <https://www.uscirf.gov/news-room/releases-statements/naming-nigeria-country-particular-concern-important-step-advance> (last visited Feb. 5, 2026).

<sup>9</sup> Gregory Svirnovskiy, *US forces launch Christmas strike on ISIS in Nigeria, Trump says*, Politico (Dec. 25, 2026), <https://www.politico.com/news/2025/12/25/trump-nigeria-christmas-strike-00706646> (last visited Feb. 5, 2026).

<sup>10</sup> *Id.*