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Senator Sean J. O'Brien
Ohio Senate
3rd District

Sponsor Testimony: Senate Concurrent Resolution (SCR) 6
Senate Judiciary Committee
October 3rd, 2017

Chairman Bacon, Vice Chair Dolan, Ranking Member Thomas, and members of the Senate Judiciary Committee, thank you for allowing me to present sponsor testimony today on SCR 6. This concurrent resolution, if passed, would encourage the US government to compel the nation of Brazil to extradite Claudia Hoerig, formerly a resident of my district, to answer for the murder of her husband, Major Karl Hoerig. Also included in SCR 6 is a request for the US to terminate foreign aid payments to Brazil if Claudia Hoerig is not extradited.

On March 12th, 2007, Major Karl Hoerig was found shot in the back of the head in his home in Newton Falls, OH. Investigators determined that he had been killed approximately three days earlier. According to those investigators, three days before his body was found – around the time of the alleged murder – his wife Claudia Hoerig, a Brazilian citizen, emptied his bank account, wired cash to relatives living in Brazil, and purchased a Smith & Wesson .357 revolver – the same caliber weapon used to kill Major Hoerig. She then used Major Hoerig's status as a commercial airline pilot to book a plane ticket and flee to Brazil. Needless to say, she is considered the prime suspect in the investigation into Major Hoerig's murder.

Despite having still not been extradited to the US, Ms. Hoerig has since been arrested by Brazilian authorities and has had her Brazilian citizenship revoked. The Supreme Federal Court of Brazil voted 4-1 during the last week of March to extradite Ms. Hoerig but, much like extraditions involving US nationals, the Brazilian executive branch has the final say in whether extradition proceeds. Additionally, there may still be opportunities to appeal her case even after it is out of the Brazilian court system. Still, it is hoped that SCR 6, though not legally binding, will add to an already massive outcry from local, state, and federal lawmakers for justice, and spur quicker action on behalf of both the US and Brazilian governments.

The saga involving Ms. Hoerig has gone on for far too long, but we should continue to do all we can to bring her back to the US to answer for her crimes. The evidence of her involvement in the murder of Major Hoerig is overwhelming, and I'm hopeful that with SCR 6 we can help provide closure to his family and friends after more than 10 years spent trying to bring Claudia to justice.

Chairman Bacon and members of the committee, thank you again for allowing me to provide sponsor testimony on SCR 6 here today, and I would be more than happy to answer any questions you may have at this time.