

As Introduced

**134th General Assembly
Regular Session
2021-2022**

H. R. No. 103

Representative Gross

**Cosponsors: Representatives Ferguson, Riedel, Carruthers, Seitz, Hoops,
Brinkman, Hall, Merrin, Stephens, Wiggam, McClain, Fowler Arthur, Plummer,
Zeltwanger, Dean, Carfagna, Abrams, Kick**

A RESOLUTION

Expressing solidarity with the Cuban people in 1
their demands for freedom and respect for basic 2
human rights. 3

**BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE STATE OF
OHIO:**

WHEREAS, The communist dictatorship in Cuba has been 4
responsible for numerous atrocities including the extrajudicial 5
assassinations of innocent civilians and activists by firing 6
squad and other brutal methods, including the Tugboat Massacre 7
of 1994 and the Brothers to the Rescue Shoot-Down of 1996; and 8

WHEREAS, In the notorious Black Spring of 2003, the regime 9
engaged in brutal violence to attack independent journalists, 10
human rights activists, and others who dared to expose the 11
realities of totalitarian Cuba which was roundly condemned by 12
international human rights groups; and 13

WHEREAS, Human rights activists such as Pedro Luis Boitel, 14
Juan Wilfredo Soto Garcia, leader of the Ladies in White, Laura 15
Pollan, Orlando Zapata Tamayo, Wilman Willar Mendoza, Oswaldo 16
Paya, Harold Cepero, Armando Sosa Fortuny, and Yosvany Arostegui 17

Armenteros died under suspicious circumstances, some while in 18
state custody; and 19

WHEREAS, The United States Department of State's 2020 20
Country Report on Human Rights Practices in Cuba states, 21
"Significant human rights issues included: unlawful or arbitrary 22
killings, including extrajudicial killings, by the government; 23
forced disappearance by the government; torture and cruel, 24
inhuman, and degrading treatment of political dissidents, 25
detainees, and prisoners by security forces; harsh and life- 26
threatening prison conditions; arbitrary arrests and detentions; 27
political prisoners; significant problems with the independence 28
of the judiciary; and arbitrary or unlawful interference with 29
privacy. Freedom of the press functionally did not exist. 30
Criminal libel laws were used against persons who criticized 31
government leadership. The government engaged in censorship and 32
internet site blocking, and there were severe limitations on 33
academic and cultural freedom. There were severe restrictions on 34
the right of peaceful assembly and denial of freedom of 35
association, including refusal to recognize independent 36
associations. There were severe restrictions on religious 37
freedom. There were restrictions on internal and external 38
freedom of movement. Citizens were unable to change their 39
government through free and fair elections. Political 40
participation was restricted to members of the ruling party. 41
There was official corruption; trafficking in persons, including 42
compulsory labor; and outlawing of independent trade unions."; 43
and 44

WHEREAS, The United States Department of State's 2021 45
Trafficking in Persons Report lists Cuba as a Tier 3 country, 46
the lowest possible rating, stating that "there was a government 47
policy or government pattern to profit from labor export 48
programs with strong indications of forced labor, particularly 49
its foreign medical missions program," and that the regime's 50

exploitative policies toward the program participants include 51
withholding passports, keeping most of the professionals' 52
salaries, preventing access to contract terms, and threatening 53
the professionals' families; and 54

WHEREAS, In January 2019, Secretary General Luis Almagro of 55
the Organization of American States stated that, "The Cuban 56
dictatorship has failed in access to rights and equity, its 57
productive system has failed, its financial management has 58
failed, its management of the economy has failed and the only 59
way to melt away its social deficiencies is to push its people 60
into exile; it is a system that is incapable of giving dignified 61
and honest work to its people, that is unable to open its youth 62
to enterprise, unable to generate a competitive productive 63
system and unable to achieve solutions for the simplest 64
financial issues"; and 65

WHEREAS, The Independent Trade Union Association of Cuba 66
(Asociación Sindical Independiente de Cuba, or "ASIC") has filed 67
complaints with the International Labour Organization (ILO) 68
condemning violations of fundamental labor rights such as 69
freedom of assembly and repression against labor activist Ivan 70
Hernandez Carrillo, and in response, the ILO provided 71
recommendations on March 24, 2021, to address these human rights 72
abuses; and 73

WHEREAS, Freedom House rates Cuba as "Not Free" in both of 74
its 2021 reports "Freedom in the World" and "Freedom on the 75
Net," and further summarizes that, "Cuba is a one-party 76
communist state that outlaws political pluralism, suppresses 77
dissent, and severely restricts basic civil liberties"; and 78

WHEREAS, The United States has long supported the Cuban 79
people with policies that limit hard currency to their 80
oppressors while providing democracy-building support to civil 81
society activists, permitting virtually unlimited donations of 82

food, medicines, and other necessities through acts such as the 83
Radio Broadcasting to Cuba Act, the Television Broadcasting to 84
Cuba Act, the Cuban Democracy Act of 1992, the Cuban Liberty and 85
Democratic Solidarity (LIBERTAD) Act of 1996, and the Trade 86
Sanctions Reform and Export Enhancement Act of 2000, as well as 87
executive orders and regulations; and 88

WHEREAS, Numerous activists in Cuba such as members of the 89
Patriotic Union of Cuba, the San Isidro Movement, the Christian 90
Liberation Movement, ASIC, the Ladies in White, the Orlando 91
Zapata Tamayo National Resistance Front, religious 92
organizations, exile groups, and many others are demanding 93
freedom for the Cuban people; and 94

WHEREAS, The regime in Cuba has responded to protests with 95
shutting down internet access, acts of repudiation, arbitrary 96
arrests, and intimidation; and 97

WHEREAS, The Cuban dictatorship has employed so-called 98
"Committees for the Defense of the Revolution" to force 99
neighbors to spy and turn against each other, which has spread 100
distrust and fear among the Cuban people, and an environment 101
that is deleterious to a strong social fabric and thriving civil 102
society; and 103

WHEREAS, On July 11, 2021, thousands of courageous 104
protesters gathered throughout the island, in every province, to 105
demand "libertad," human rights, and to express their opposition 106
to the Cuban dictatorship; and 107

WHEREAS, The regime once again reacted to the July 11 108
protests with violence, arbitrary arrests, often by plain 109
clothes state security operatives, forced disappearances, 110
shutting down internet access, and calling on its supporters to 111
harass protesters; and 112

WHEREAS, Since Fidel Castro illegitimately and violently 113

seized power, hundreds of thousands of Cuban nationals have fled 114
communist oppression; now therefore be it 115

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the State of 116
Ohio calls for the release of all political prisoners and for 117
the end of acts of repression, arbitrary imprisonments, torture, 118
and other human rights abuses against the Cuban people; honors 119
the courageous Cuban people for daring to stand up to the Cuban 120
regime and demanding respect for fundamental freedoms, such as 121
freedom of expression and assembly; recognizes the brave pro- 122
democracy and human rights activists, including independent 123
journalists, artists, labor leaders, and religious leaders, who 124
have been persecuted throughout decades of communist tyranny; 125
urges other democracies and regional and multilateral 126
organizations to affirm that violence against the unarmed people 127
of Cuba will not be tolerated, and that human rights abusers 128
will be held accountable for their crimes; expresses solidarity 129
with the long-suffering Cuban people in their demands for a 130
genuine democratic transition; and calls on the international 131
community to stand with those struggling for freedom in Cuba by 132
condemning repression and expressing unequivocal support for 133
their rights to self-governance, human rights, and basic 134
liberties; and be it further 135

RESOLVED, That the Clerk of the House of Representatives 136
transmit duly authenticated copies of this resolution to each of 137
the United States Senators and members of the United States 138
House of Representatives from the State of Ohio, to the 139
President of the United States, and to the news media of Ohio. 140