



# Resolution

## ADVOCATING FOR INTERNATIONAL RELIGIOUS FREEDOM

---

---

- WHEREAS** Religious liberty and the exercise of legitimate free speech are both being imperiled around the world, and recent events of unrest and violence in the Middle East are particularly troubling;
- WHEREAS** National Religious Broadcasters and other organizations have spotlighted the ongoing and brutal imprisonment of Pastor Saeed Abedini, an American citizen imprisoned for his faith in one of Iran's most notorious prisons. Pastor Abedini was arrested by Iranian authorities in September 2012 for allegedly being a threat to Iran's national security and has been subjected to severe interrogations, periods of solitary confinement, and physical assault;
- WHEREAS** The U.S. Senate Foreign Relations Committee recently approved bipartisan legislation, *The Near East and South Central Asia Religious Freedom Act* (S.653), introduced by U.S. Senator Roy Blunt (R-MO) to create a special envoy at the State Department focusing specifically on the situations facing religious minorities in those areas of the world;
- WHEREAS** The U.S. House of Representatives voted 402-22 in September 2013 in favor of similar legislation (H.R. 301) authored by Congressman Frank Wolf (R-VA), who is a longtime hero for Christians and other persecuted minorities worldwide and has announced his retirement from Congress at the end of this session;
- THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the National Religious Broadcasters urges the President and the Secretary of State to actively advocate to the international community the principles of the First Amendment of the U.S. Constitution and to urge the adoption of similar standards in the rest of the world; calls on the President and the Secretary of State to secure the immediate release of Pastor Saeed Abedini and to advocate on behalf of other Christians similarly persecuted for their faith; prays for the comfort and re-unification of the Abedini family; honors Congressman Frank Wolf's decades of leadership on Capitol Hill on behalf of international religious freedom; and calls on the Congress to move to final passage *The Near East and South Central Asia Religious Freedom Act*.