

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION condemning Boko Haram for its violent attacks, particularly the indiscriminate targeting of civilians, especially women and girls, and the use of children as fighters and suicide bombers

WHEREAS, Nigeria is Africa's largest economy, largest oil producer, and most populous African country; and

WHEREAS, According to the 2013 Census, there are 299,310 Nigerians residing in the United States; and

WHEREAS, According to the Migration Policy Institute from 2015 on the Nigerian Diaspora in the United States, New York State is home to about 25,000 first generation Nigerians, and about 35,000 Nigerians live in New York City; and

WHEREAS, Nigeria has significant promise, yet faces serious social, economic and security changes, and as a result has been scarred by ethnic, geographic, and religious conflict; and

WHEREAS, Boko Haram, often translated as "Western education is forbidden," a small Sunni Islamic sect emerged in Nigeria 10 years ago, and has pledged its allegiance to the Islamic State, advocates a strict interpretation and implementation of Islamic Law; and

WHEREAS, In the town of Chibok, on the night of April 14-15, 2014, Boko Haram kidnapped 276 school girls from the Government Secondary School, and parents who were certain that they would see their children again, continue to mourn their disappearance; and

WHEREAS, When the girls were first kidnapped, concerned people from around the world rallied around the hashtag BringBackOurGirls, and the families of the girls at the Bring Back Our Girls headquarters in Abuja continue to march and rally everyday even as these other voices have faded; and

WHEREAS, Under the auspices of the Nigerian head of state, Muhammadu Buhari, efforts had been made to rescue the girls, with the assistance of allies; as of this writing it has been 775 days and they have not been returned; and

WHEREAS, The Honorable Frederica Wilson, representing the 24th District of Florida, introduced House Resolution 147, supporting efforts to bring an end to violence perpetuated by Boko Haram, and urging the Government of Nigeria to conduct transparent, peaceful, and credible elections; she has gathered her colleagues in the United States Congress every Wednesday asking them to wear red to remind the world that the majority of the Chibok school girls are still missing, and must be brought back home; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to condemn Boko Haram for its violent attacks, particularly the indiscriminate targeting of civilians, especially women and girls, and the use of children as fighters and suicide bombers; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause further to stand with the people of Nigeria in their right to live free from fear or intimidation by state or non-state actors, regardless of their ethnic, religious, or regional affiliation; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause further to urge the Government of Nigeria to prioritize the security and well-being of Nigerians vulnerable to Boko Haram attacks, as well as urge the Government of Nigeria to implement a comprehensive, civilian focused response to defeat Boko Haram that addresses political, economic and social grievances of citizens in the north, recognizing security forces are intended to protect the safety and security of all citizens equally.