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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 541

Offered January 8, 2003

Prefiled November 26, 2002

Expressing the sense of the General Assembly regarding the persecution of practitioners of Falun Gong by the government of the People's Republic of China.

Patrons—Baskerville, Abbitt, Alexander, Almand, Armstrong, Barlow, Black, Bolvin, Callahan, Councill, Crittenden, Darner, Devolites, Dillard, Gear, Hargrove, Johnson, Keister, Landes, Marshall, R.G., Melvin, Miles, Moran, Petersen, Plum, Pollard, Rollison, Scott, Shuler, Stump, Watts, Welch and Woodrum; Senators: Byrne, Howell, Lambert, Lucas, Martin, Reynolds, Ticer, Wagner and Whipple

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, Falun Gong, also called Falun Dafa, is a self-improvement practice rooted in ancient Chinese culture that promotes the principles of truthfulness, compassion, and tolerance; and

WHEREAS, Falun Gong practitioners use gentle exercises and meditation to achieve the goals of a pure heart, a balanced mind, and an energized body; and

WHEREAS, despite the peaceful, positive, and nonpolitical goals of Falun Gong, the government of the People's Republic of China has for several years brutally and systematically killed, tortured, and illegally detained those who practice Falun Gong; and

WHEREAS, the actions of the Chinese government have been universally condemned by, among others, the President of the United States, the United States Department of State, the United States Congress, and the political leaders of many U.S. states and dozens of local governments; and

WHEREAS, Falun Gong has been welcomed and celebrated by proclamations and resolutions from localities in New Zealand, Australia, France, Canada, and many other countries; and

WHEREAS, in Virginia, the cities of Winchester, Chesapeake, and Charlottesville and the Counties of Fairfax and Loudoun have proclaimed Falun Dafa Week; and

WHEREAS, in addition to the ongoing suppression of Falun Gong practitioners in the People's Republic of China, reputable media outlets have reported incidents of persecution and harassment of Falun Gong practitioners on United States soil; and

WHEREAS, by resolution, the International Association of Official Human Rights Agencies, on August 1, 2002, condemned the extremely brutal persecution of Falun Gong by the government of the People's Republic of China; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby urge the government of the People's Republic of China to end the senseless and illegal persecution of practitioners of the Falun Gong or Falun Dafa movement; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates transmit a copy of this resolution to the Honorable Yang Jiechi, Ambassador of the People's Republic of China, so that he may be apprised of the sense of the General Assembly of Virginia in this matter.

INTRODUCED

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