

State of Vermont

House of Representatives



Montpelier, Vermont

Joint House Resolution

J.R.H. 8

Offered by Representatives Cole of Hartford, Logan of Burlington, Tomlinson of Winooski, Arsenault of Williston, Bos-Lun of Westminster, Casey of Montpelier, Chapin of East Montpelier, Cina of Burlington, Dodge of Essex, Donahue of Northfield, Duke of Burlington, Eastes of Guilford, Goldman of Rockingham, Headrick of Burlington, Holcombe of Norwich, Masland of Thetford, McCann of Montpelier, McGill of Bridport, Pouech of Hinesburg, Satcowitz of Randolph, and White of Bethel

Joint resolution condemning the January 3, 2026, U.S. military incursion in Venezuela and imploring that Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and his wife, Cilia Flores, be released from U.S. custody; that all U.S. military forces recently deployed in the Caribbean Sea and the eastern Pacific Ocean be withdrawn immediately; that Venezuelans be allowed to exercise their right to political self-determination on their own accord; and that the United States abandon any intentions or plans to repeat a similar intervention to disrupt or destroy the right to self-determination and political sovereignty of any other nation

Whereas, there are fundamental human rights, including the right for all nations peacefully and safely to enjoy and practice political self-determination, and this right belongs equally to the Venezuelans, contrary to the opinion of senior Trump administration official Stephen Miller, who stated in a CNN interview that international treaties enshrining a nation's right to independence and sovereignty are "international niceties," and

Whereas, in the early morning of January 3, 2026, with no prior congressional approval, U.S. military forces, relying in part on Central Intelligence Agency-provided information, seized Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and his wife, Cilia Flores, from their compound in Caracas, the nation's capital, and flew them to the United States, and

Whereas, Article I, Section 8 of the U.S. Constitution provides that "The Congress shall have power ... [t]o declare War, grant Letters of Marque and Reprisal, and make rules concerning Captives on Land and Water," and

Whereas, the alleged ocean shipping of illegal drugs to the United States, previously interdicted as a maritime law enforcement action, was President Trump's original explanation for the deployment of U.S. military forces in the Caribbean, the eastern Pacific, and in Caracas, Venezuela; but the American embargo on vessels transporting oil from Venezuela, combined with President Trump's subsequent actions to control the sale and distribution of Venezuelan oil, indicate that oil may well be the true motivation, and

Whereas, Venezuelan sources have indicated that as of January 5, 2026, about 80 persons are known to have perished as a result of the cover attacks that occurred simultaneously, and

Whereas, condemnation of the U.S. military action of January 3, 2026, is not intended to legitimize the leadership of President Nicolás Maduro, who, according to a broad international consensus, lost the 2024 Venezuelan national election and has governed his country illegitimately, but this situation absolutely does not justify or sanction American military intervention literally to seize its current leader and involuntarily transport him to the United States, and

Whereas, ironically, in December 2025, President Trump pardoned former Honduran President Juan Orlando Hernandez, who was serving a 45-year federal prison term on similar drug-related charges, and

Whereas, President Trump has stated that the United States will run Venezuela on an interim basis, and Stephen Miller echoed these comments in the CNN interview, stating “We set the terms and conditions ... [F]or them [the Venezuelans] to be able to run an economy, they need our permission. So the United States is in charge,” and

Whereas, their statements are reminiscent of the tragic consequences of American interventions in Iraq and Afghanistan, and the sordid history of prior U.S. interventions in the military or political affairs of other Latin American countries, and

Whereas, Russia could cite this incident as a justification for its actions in Ukraine, and similarly, China, for a possible future attempt to invade and annex Taiwan, and

Whereas, the entire Vermont Congressional Delegation has condemned this military attack on Venezuela, and Senator Sanders described Stephen Miller’s comments on CNN as describing imperialism, and

Whereas, President Trump has also threatened the sovereignty of the governments of Columbia, Cuba, Mexico, and Greenland; in the latter instance, it is an island under the jurisdiction of Denmark, a member of NATO, an organization consisting of America’s most closely aligned nations, *now therefore be it*

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly condemns the January 3, 2026, U.S. military incursion in Venezuela and implores that Venezuelan President Nicolás Maduro and his wife, Cilia Flores, be released from U.S. custody; that all U.S. military forces recently deployed in the Caribbean Sea and the eastern Pacific Ocean be withdrawn immediately; that Venezuelans be allowed to exercise their right to political self-determination on their own accord; and that the United States abandon any intentions or plans to repeat a similar military intervention to disrupt or destroy the right to self-determination and political sovereignty of any other nation, *and be it further*

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to U.S. President Donald J. Trump, U.S. Secretary of State Marco Rubio, U.S. Secretary of Defense Pete Hegseth, and the Vermont Congressional Delegation.