

## HOUSE RESOLUTION NO.315

Rep. Manoogian offered the following resolution:

1       A resolution to call upon the Russian Federation to respect  
2 the human and legal rights of and to immediately release two-time  
3 Olympic gold medalist and American professional basketball player  
4 Brittney Griner from detention in the Russian Federation and urge  
5 President Joe Biden to make her safe return to the United States a  
6 priority for his Administration.

7       Whereas, On February 17, 2022, American professional  
8 basketball player Brittney Griner, a U.S. citizen, two-time Olympic  
9 gold medalist for Team USA, NCAA Champion for Baylor University,  
10 and seven-time WNBA All Star center for the Phoenix Mercury, was  
11 detained at the Sheremetyevo airport near Moscow, Russia, as she  
12 attempted to board a flight while playing for the Russian  
13 professional basketball team, UMMC Ekaterinburg, a team she has

1 led to four Euroleague Titles and seven Russian League  
2 Championships during the WNBA offseason; and

3       Whereas, The Russian Federation failed to announce their  
4 detention of Brittney Griner until March 5, 2022, more than two  
5 weeks after the Russian Federal Customs Service had detained her.  
6 American consular officials were unable to see her until April 27,  
7 2022, more than two months after her detention; and

8       Whereas, Brittney Griner has been detained for nearly three  
9 months, and a Russian court extended her detention by one month and  
10 has denied appeals from her legal team to have her transferred to  
11 house arrest; and

12       Whereas, There have been multiple reports by U.S. authorities  
13 that Brittney Griner has been denied consular assistance, which is  
14 an essential component of normal diplomatic relations between two  
15 nation states; and

16       Whereas, On May 2, 2022, the United States Department of State  
17 emailed a statement to ESPN stating that they have determined that  
18 the Russian Federation has wrongfully detained Brittney Griner; and

19       Whereas, The WNBA issued a statement saying that Brittney  
20 Griner "has the WNBA's full support and our main priority is her  
21 swift and safe return to the United States." This season, the WNBA  
22 has emblazoned the league's 12 basketball courts with Brittney  
23 Griner's initials and her number, 42; and

24       Whereas, The State Department is monitoring the situation, but  
25 more can be done to secure Brittney Griner's release. She is a  
26 global sport icon who engages the world as a track II diplomat  
27 through her leadership on and off the court with Team USA at the  
28 Olympic Games and in FIBA. She uses the game of basketball both in  
29 the United States as a WNBA star for the Phoenix Mercury and abroad

1 to promote inclusion and understanding. It is morally unacceptable  
2 that Brittney Griner is being used by the Russian government as a  
3 political pawn; now, therefore, be it

4 Resolved by the House of Representatives, That we call upon  
5 the Russian Federation to immediately release two-time Olympic gold  
6 medalist and American professional basketball player Brittney  
7 Griner; and be it further

8 Resolved, That we urge the Russian Federation to provide  
9 consular access to Brittney Griner while she remains in detention;  
10 and be it further

11 Resolved, That we urge the Russian Federation to respect the  
12 human rights of Brittney Griner; and be it further

13 Resolved, That we urge President Joe Biden to make Brittney  
14 Griner's safe return a top priority for his Administration; and be  
15 it further

16 Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the  
17 President of the United States, the United States Secretary of  
18 State, and the Griner family.