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## AJR-16 Anti-LGBT Actions in the Chechen Republic. (2017-2018)

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### Assembly Joint Resolution No. 16

#### CHAPTER 163

Relative to Condemnation of Anti-LGBT Actions in the Chechen Republic.

[ Filed with Secretary of State September 19, 2017. ]

#### LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AJR 16, Low. Anti-LGBT Actions in the Chechen Republic.

This measure would urge the President and the Congress of the United States to condemn the government-sanctioned persecution, torture, and murder of gay men in the Chechen Republic, join in solidarity with all lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) Russians in their fight for their lives, dignity, and respect, and take action to encourage the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, consistent with existing federal protocols, to grant asylum and refugee status for individuals fleeing persecution, including individuals fleeing persecution due to their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity.

Fiscal Committee: no

WHEREAS, It is the duty of all governments, democratically elected or otherwise, to ensure that human and civil rights, such as the freedom of assembly and expression, as well as freedom from physical violence at the hands of the state, are afforded to all individuals; and

WHEREAS, When a government targets minority groups for persecution, abuse, and murder, that government is committing crimes against humanity; and

WHEREAS, On April 4, 2017, the Russian news outlet Novaya Gazeta first reported that gay men in the Chechen Republic are being arrested by police, and sent to de facto concentration camps; and

WHEREAS, The men sent to these concentration camps are reported to have been tortured to get the names of other gay men for further arrests, and three of these men have reportedly died at the hands of the police; and

WHEREAS, Chechen President Ramzan Kadyrov, often using Instagram, has actively chosen to erase the existence of gay Chechens in public commentary by claiming they do not exist, and at the same time implying families would murder them in honor killings if gay men were in Chechnya; and

WHEREAS, The United States Ambassador to the United Nations called upon authorities to investigate these allegations; and

WHEREAS, California has historically been at the forefront of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender (LGBT), and sexual and gender minority social justice and human and civil rights issues; and

WHEREAS, California has become the beacon of hope for so many LGBT people fleeing hostility, persecution, and violence in the United States and across the world; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of California, jointly, That the Legislature urges the President and the Congress of the United States to condemn the government-sanctioned persecution, torture, and murder of gay men in the Chechen Republic, and join in solidarity with all LGBT Russians in their fight for their lives, dignity, and respect; and be it further

Resolved, That the Legislature urges the President and the Congress of the United States to take action to encourage the United States Citizenship and Immigration Services, consistent with existing federal protocols, to grant asylum and refugee status for individuals fleeing persecution, including individuals fleeing persecution due to their actual or perceived sexual orientation or gender identity; and be it further

Resolved, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the House of Representatives, to the Majority Leader of the Senate, to each Senator and Representative from California in the Congress of the United States, to the Governor, and to the author for appropriate distribution.