

Rep. Durhal offered the following concurrent resolution:

House Concurrent Resolution No. 46.

A concurrent resolution to memorialize the Congress and President Obama to use all means necessary to immediately stop the inhumane and illegal kidnapping of children in Haiti.

Whereas, The nightmare that has descended upon the people of Haiti with the earthquake and the subsequent efforts to bring order to the chaos has included countless disturbing situations. Of these, few are more wrenching than reports of some people taking advantage of the confusion to exploit children; and

Whereas, Stories of individuals gathering up homeless children or convincing parents to give up their children in the false hopes of a better life somewhere else indicate that such horrendous activities were a concern even before the earthquake. Orphanages in Haiti, including those that have claimed that title but have been fronts for criminal trafficking of children, have apparently long operated with chronic problems recognized by Haitian authorities and UNICEF officials; and

Whereas, In the utter disruption of the government following the quake, children are even more vulnerable to being taken. Determining which situations are legitimate efforts to rescue children and which are little more than criminal activities is made all the more difficult by the confusion and grief, the absence of communications, and the hundreds of thousands of dead and missing. The stories of children being taken away as orphans when they are not are most disturbing; and

Whereas, The United States, working with other governmental and charitable service groups from around the world, has taken on a leadership role in helping the Haitian government and its people recover from the horrors facing them. Among the challenges in the areas of logistics, nutrition, hygiene, and infrastructure rebuilding, no task can be more important than doing all we can to safeguard the children of this devastated country. We must do all we can to assure that children are protected from all manner of abuse; now, therefore, be it

Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate concurring), That we memorialize the Congress and President Obama to use all means necessary to immediately stop the inhumane and illegal kidnapping of children in Haiti, including those presumed to be orphaned, who are being used for slavery, prostitution, and human trafficking; and be it further

Resolved, That copies of this resolution be transmitted to the Office of the President of the United States, the President of the United States Senate, the Speaker of the United States House of Representatives, and the members of the Michigan congressional delegation.