

SENATE No. 2406

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

PRESENTED BY:

Edward J. Kennedy

To the Honorable Senate and House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of Massachusetts in General Court assembled:

The undersigned legislators and/or citizens respectfully petition for the adoption of the accompanying resolution:

Resolutions condemning political oppression and encouraging free and fair elections in Cambodia.

PETITION OF:

NAME:	DISTRICT/ADDRESS:
<i>Edward J. Kennedy</i>	<i>First Middlesex</i>
<i>Vanna Howard</i>	<i>17th Middlesex</i>

SENATE No. 2406

By Mr. Kennedy, a petition (accompanied by resolutions, Senate, No. 2406) of Edward J. Kennedy and Vanna Howard for legislation to condemn political oppression and encouraging free and fair elections in Cambodia. Veterans and Federal Affairs.

The Commonwealth of Massachusetts

**In the One Hundred and Ninety-Second General Court
(2021-2022)**

Resolutions condemning political oppression and encouraging free and fair elections in Cambodia.

1 WHEREAS free and fair elections are a vital component of a democratic state in the
2 protection of the liberty and human rights of its citizenship; and

3 WHEREAS the Paris Peace Accords of 1991 sought to resolve political conflict and
4 turmoil in Cambodia by setting forth the right to self-determination of its people through free and
5 fair elections; and

6 WHEREAS significant expenditures in the form of international aid have been made in
7 order to promote a pluralistic, multi-party democratic system in Cambodia; and

8 WHEREAS Prime Minister Hun Sen has been in power in Cambodia since 1985 and has
9 consolidated authority over the nation’s government, granting control of every state agency and
10 security apparatus to the ruling Cambodia People’s Party (CPP); and

11 WHEREAS each of the five elections held in Cambodia for the office of Prime Minister
12 since 1991 have been marked by fraud, voter intimidation, and the misuse of legal mechanisms

13 by the government to suppress support for opposition candidates and parties, and have thereby
14 not been free nor fair; and

15 WHEREAS the government of Cambodia has engaged in oppressive tactics aimed at
16 limiting conditions that are intrinsic to a democratic state including the restriction of its media
17 environment by ordering radio stations to cease operations and by arresting journalists; and

18 WHEREAS in efforts to repress viable political challenges, the government of Cambodia
19 has dissolved the Cambodia National Rescue Party (CNRP), and has arrested said party's
20 President, Kem Sokha, on politically motivated charges; and

21 WHEREAS the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has been enriched by its significant
22 population of Cambodian American people, many of whom entered the United States as refugees
23 or as asylum seekers escaping genocide and from conditions that demonstrate the humanitarian
24 hardships posed by the absence of democracy; and

25 WHEREAS the United States has a responsibility to take action in order to prevent the
26 undermining of democracy around the globe;

27 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature calls upon the Congress, the
28 President and the Vice President of the United States to support and enact legislation imposing
29 sanctions on the government of Cambodia in order to promote democracy and prevent the further
30 erosion of human rights in the nation, including the Cambodia Democracy Act of 2019 and the
31 Cambodian Trade Act of 2019; and

32 THEREFORE, BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature transmit copies of
33 this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United States, to the Speaker of the

- 34 House of Representatives, to the Majority Leader of the Senate, and to each Senator and
- 35 Representative from Massachusetts in the Congress of the United States.