



# Armenian National Committee of America

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## **ANCA Policy Memo: Armenian American Legislative Requests**

TO: Members of the U.S. Senate / Senate Staff  
FROM: Alex Galitsky, Policy Director | Tereza Yerimyan, Government Affairs Director  
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In light of Azerbaijan's ongoing occupation of sovereign Armenian territory, unlawful detention and abuse of Armenian POWs and political prisoners, destruction of Armenian cultural heritage, and attempts to delay and derail peace efforts, Armenian Americans and community allies urge U.S. Congressional leaders to support legislative efforts to hold Azerbaijan accountable for its aggression, and deter the threat of renewed military escalation in the South Caucasus.

### **Sign Letter Calling for the Release of Armenian Prisoners of War**

The ANCA urges members to support an upcoming bipartisan letter to Secretary of State Marco Rubio calling for the U.S. to pressure Azerbaijan to immediately release unlawfully detained Armenian POWs, civilian captives, and former Artsakh officials by imposing Global Magnitsky Sanctions against Azerbaijani officials responsible for war crimes.

To this day, Azerbaijan continues to arbitrarily detain at least 23 Armenian prisoners – captured during the 2020 Nagorno-Karabakh War, and during the ethnic cleansing of Artsakh in 2023. Armenian detainees have been subject to torture and abuse in custody, and denied legal due process. Azerbaijan has recently commenced sham trials against unlawfully detained Armenian POWs, and recently expelled the International Committee for the Red Cross (ICRC) – the only entity authorized to visit Armenian prisoners – jeopardizing the safety and wellbeing of detainees.

During his tenure in the U.S. Senate, Secretary Rubio led and supported efforts to hold Azerbaijan accountable for war crimes – including under the Global Magnitsky Act. In recent weeks, National Security Advisor Mike Waltz has called for Azerbaijan to immediately release Armenian detainees.

Global Magnitsky Sanctions represent a powerful tool to leverage the release of Armenian prisoners, and ensure Azerbaijani officials are held accountable for gross human rights violations. For more information, contact Dan Ohlstein in Senator Ed Markey's (D-MA) office: ([Dan\\_Ohlstein@markey.senate.gov](mailto:Dan_Ohlstein@markey.senate.gov)).

### **Sign Letter Supporting a Just, Durable and Dignified Peace in the South Caucasus**

On March 13th, Armenia and Azerbaijan concluded negotiations on the terms of a peace agreement. The agreement includes provisions requiring Armenia to withdraw its legal petitions against Azerbaijan before the International Court of Justice (ICJ), and the removal of European and third-

party border monitors. Additionally, Azerbaijan has imposed preconditions on ratifying an agreement not previously discussed during negotiations – demanding the dissolution of the OSCE Minsk Group, and changes to Armenia’s constitution. Furthermore, the peace agreement includes no provisions for the release of unlawfully detained Armenian prisoners of war and civilian captives.

In the weeks since the conclusion of negotiations, Azerbaijan continuously accused Armenia of ceasefire violations – claims Azerbaijan has previously used as a false pretext for military escalation.

The ANCA’s position is that a just, durable, and dignified peace is not possible in the absence of accountability, tangible security guarantees for Armenia, and a pathway to the safe and secure return of Armenians to Nagorno-Karabakh – as is their right under international law.

The ANCA urges members to support U.S. engagement in the Armenia-Azerbaijan peace process to prevent and deter Azerbaijan’s efforts to delay and derail a lasting peace through unreasonable preconditions, the threat and use of military force, and hostage diplomacy. Please contact Sari Cureton ([Sari\\_Cureton@peters.senate.gov](mailto:Sari_Cureton@peters.senate.gov)) for more information.

### **Co-Sponsor the Armenian Genocide Education Act**

The bipartisan “Armenian Genocide Education Act” would allocate \$10 million over 5 years to the Library of Congress to support public education on the Armenian Genocide. Genocide denial, if not challenged, will lead to renewed crimes against humanity. The international community’s failure to prevent Azerbaijan’s genocide of Nagorno-Karabakh’s (Artsakh) entire indigenous Armenian population in September, 2023 underscores the need to invest in genocide education and prevention.

### **Public Statements**

In addition to co-sponsorship and support for the above legislative, Armenian Americans urge members to issue public statements on the following:

**Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day:** As we approach the 110th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide on April 24th, 2025 – Armenian Americans urge members to issue public statements commemorating this crime against humanity, and highlighting the recent genocidal ethnic cleansing of Nagorno-Karabakh’s Armenian population.

**Release of Armenian Prisoners of War:** In light of Azerbaijan’s ongoing detention and sham trials of Armenian prisoners of war, Armenian American urge members to issue public statements calling for the immediate and unconditional release of unlawfully detained Armenian captives.

