

STATE OF MICHIGAN

Governor James J. Blanchard

Hereby issues this Executive Declaration

in Observance of

APRIL 24, 1986

AS

ARMENIAN MARTYRS DAY

The year 1986 marks the 71st anniversary of the genocide of the Armenian people perpetrated by the government of the Turkish Ottoman Empire in 1915 during World War I. More than 1,500,000 Armenians were massacred or starved and many more were forced to flee from their homeland.

The Armenians are an ancient people, having settled in the vicinity of Mount Ararat in the seventh century B.C. The Armenian Apostolic church was established in the fourth century A.D., making Armenia one of the first Christian nations. Armenians have always believed in the principles of freedom of conscience and religion.

Today, as free people of the United States, Armenians continue to join in the pursuit of liberty, freedom and peace with other nations. As a community, they have contributed to our quality of life in every profession, the arts, religion, and government.

We have learned a lasting lesson from the genocide of the Armenian people. They did not die in vain, but rather serve as a continual source of direction and purpose for all who struggle for humanity and equal rights. The time has come for all people regardless of color, creed, or ethnic origin to exercise a moral conscience by assisting those who need help.

Therefore, I, James J. Blanchard, Governor of the State of Michigan, do hereby declare April 24, 1986, as ARMENIAN MARTYRS DAY in Michigan. I urge all citizens to join with me in a moment of reflection for the Armenian people who lost their lives and to join in a steadfast commitment to work for the peace and harmony of our world for future generations.

Given under my hand on this thirteenth day of March in the year of Our Lord one thousand nine hundred and eighty-six and of the Commonwealth one hundred fiftieth.

James J. Blanchard
GOVERNOR