



State of New York

Executive Chamber

Proclamation

Whereas, the Empire State acknowledges events in history that have changed the course of the world and which have had a meaningful impact on our own Nation's ethnic, cultural and religious landscape; as a global leader in basic human and social rights, our State and its citizens have a prominent role in highlighting humanitarian concerns and important lessons that can be derived from mankind's past transgressions; and

Whereas, the Armenian Genocide of 1915-23 marks a tragic episode that resulted in the loss of an estimated 1.5 million lives and nearly extinguished the entire Armenian population; this campaign, organized by the ruling Ottoman authorities under whose imperial authority most Armenians lived, sought to deliberately exterminate Armenians by employing cruel and inhumane tactics; as they occurred, the atrocities committed against Armenian civilians were widely noticed but unchecked by the world community; and

Whereas, many of New York and the Nation's Armenian citizens who arrived in the early 1900's came here seeking freedom as survivors of the 20th century's first genocide; from the arrival of the first Armenians to our shores, the community has been a fruitful and noteworthy presence, however, greater effort at acknowledging the circumstances of their bittersweet trek to this country can help us understand the Armenian community far better; and

Whereas, the final result of the Armenian Genocide was the near extermination of the Armenian people, the loss of the majority of their ancestral lands, and the dispersal of deeply scarred survivors of this extreme crime against people; today Armenians throughout their diaspora struggle to preserve the rich language, cultural and religious traditions of their homeland – a proud democratic republic free of decades of Soviet influence and oppression, but which occupies only a small part of its original territory; and

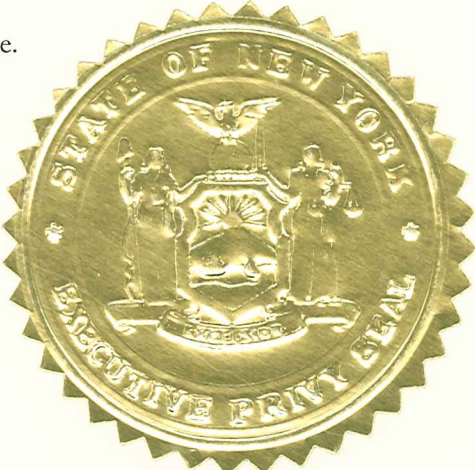
Whereas, denial of the Armenian Genocide is an injustice to the people of Armenia and their history; as progress for full recognition of the Genocide follows a steady pace toward global realization, every human being who acknowledges this historical fact is part of a growing community of people who treasure the truth and who respect other cultures, religions and races; and

Whereas, during the 88th anniversary of the onset of the Armenian Genocide, as the number of actual survivors diminishes with the passage of time, it is fitting that people worldwide join the Armenian-American community as it observes what is commonly referred to as Martyrs' Day; likewise, the citizens of New York State share in the solemn commemoration of this tragedy and join with many religious, communal and philanthropic organizations as they honor the sacrifices and memory of their noble Armenian ancestors;

Now, Therefore, I, George E. Pataki, Governor of the State of New York, do hereby proclaim April 24, 2003 as

ARMENIAN REMEMBRANCE DAY

in the Empire State.



G i v e n under my hand and the Privy Seal of the State at
the Capitol in the City of Albany this eighteenth day
of April in the year two thousand three.

Governor

Secretary to the Governor