



State of New York

Executive Chamber

Proclamation

Whereas, the Empire State is proud to be the site of efforts to recognize important historical milestones that enable New Yorkers and Americans of diverse backgrounds to appreciate the context of our chiefly-immigrant population's resettlement here; as a State whose people have gone well beyond simply learning from one another – to where they empathize with, assist and truly accept others – New York has a unique role in America's promise to welcome the needy masses; and

Whereas, Armenian-Americans are one group of immigrants whose history in their historic homeland caused them to see America as that great refuge for weary but determined pioneers on a quest for a life renewed; the event most closely associated with Armenians' existence as a mostly diasporic community worldwide and with their arrival on American shores is the Armenian Genocide of 1915-23; during this awful atrocity, 1.5 million Armenian men, women and children were killed by agents of the Ottoman Empire, under whose authority most Armenians lived; ample incontrovertible evidence— which helped scholars adopt the term "genocide" – reveals that the perpetrators of these crimes acted with stated intent, indeed were organized and used some of the cruelest methods ever employed against humankind; and

Whereas, the challenges Armenians face because of the Genocide include not only dealing with the loss of life but also the confiscation of two thirds of the Armenians' ancestral land and the near-destruction of the rich Armenian culture and language; following their forced expulsion from familiar territories, Armenians made their way to relief agencies in the Middle East, to Europe and in many instances, to the United States; here in New York, despite this tremendous setback for their people, Armenians have progressed to where they occupy positions of leadership in many areas of endeavor; and

Whereas, for Armenian-Americans, recognition of their genocide is the number one cause for young and old alike, and it is an issue which transcends other divergent views and persuasions Armenians may have; sadly, more often than ever, an insidious attempt to cover up details of the Genocide is in full swing in many areas of thought and learning; this occurs wherever Armenians – and even international scholars – exercise their free expression to tell the story; the cover-up and pressure to coerce individuals, legislatures and even global organizations to stop the use of the term "genocide" not only contradicts documented historical facts archived in places such as the United States Library of Congress, it is in the opinion of dwindling Genocide survivors another attack on their person; and

Whereas, just as New York has a proud legacy of responding to the plight of suffering peoples the world over, it has a wonderful record of involvement in ameliorating the suffering caused by the Armenian Genocide of 1915-23; much of the money raised to support efforts of organizations such as Near East Relief was collected here in New York; much of the raising of awareness on the issue of the Genocide during its occurrence is illustrated in the spoken words of President Theodore Roosevelt and then-Ambassador from the U.S. to Constantinople Henry Morgenthau, and over 145 articles on the Armenian Genocide were printed in *The New York Times* in 1915 alone; it is fitting that all New Yorkers stand in solidarity with custodians of truth by joining their Armenian-American neighbors in acknowledging the 91st anniversary of the onset of the Genocide;

Now, Therefore, I, George E. Pataki, Governor of the State of New York, do hereby proclaim April 24, 2006 as

ARMENIAN MARTYRS 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 nineteenth
day of April in the year two thousand six.

Governor

Secretary to the Governor