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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 1997

HOUSE RESOLUTION

**DECLARING APRIL 24TH, 1997 AS A DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR THE
ARMENIAN GENOCIDE OF 1915-1923**

Introduced By: Representatives Simonian and Bramley

Date Introduced: April 24, 1997

Referred To: Read and Passed

WHEREAS, At the outbreak of World War I, the young Turk regime of the Ottoman Empire, led by Toloat Pasha, decided to deport the entire Armenian population of about 1.5 million people to Syria and Mesopotamia planning to exterminate them by driving all Armenians, regardless of age or condition of health, to the totally barren Der-El-Zor region of what is now Syria; and

WHEREAS, The Armenians were rounded up, brutally driven from their homes and their land, separated from their families, robbed of everything they owned and stripped of possessions they carried with them, and on a death march to Der-El-Zor, more than a million died of starvation or were killed; and

WHEREAS, Thousands of Christian Armenians were tortured and murdered for refusing to accept Islam as their religion, and the atrocities inflicted upon them in concentration camps and on death marches to Der-El-Zor resemble those suffered by the victims of the Holocaust in World War II; and

WHEREAS, The massacre of Armenians who escaped deportation and remained in Turkey was called the "most colossal crime of all ages" by the American examining military mission's report to the U.S. Congress; and a telegram sent by U.S. Ambassador Henry Morgenthau to the Secretary of State, Morgenthau warned that "a

campaign of race extermination is in progress under a pretext of reprisal against rebellion"; and

WHEREAS, An estimated 1.5 million people of Armenian ancestry perished in the genocide perpetrated by the governments of the Ottoman Empire from 1915-1923; and

WHEREAS, Many Armenians emigrated to the United States, where they and their descendents have contributed much to the economic and cultural vitality in our society, and kept alive the memory of their friends and relatives who perished during the systematic campaign of extermination; and

WHEREAS, Modern Turkey continues to deny and distort the facts of the Genocide and honors the perpetrators of that crime against humanity as national heroes; and

WHEREAS, The continued denial of the Armenian Genocide by the present-day Turkish Government deprives the Armenian people of the right to their own history; and

WHEREAS, The Armenian People have not received reparations for their losses; and

WHEREAS, Ancestral Armenian lands have not been returned to the Armenian People; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island hereby commemorates this 82nd anniversary of the Armenian Genocide on April 24, 1997 and urges the citizenry of Rhode Island to do the same; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the State of Rhode Island calls on the President of the United States to obtain from the present Turkish Government an acknowledgement of the Genocide perpetrated against the Armenians from 1915-1923; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and he hereby is authorized and directed to transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to the President of the United States, the members of the Rhode Island Congressional Delegation, the Armenian National Committee of Rhode Island, and the Armenian Martyrs Memorial Committee of Rhode Island.