

2013 -- H 6034

=====
LC02411
=====

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2013

H O U S E R E S O L U T I O N

DESIGNATING APRIL 24TH, 2013, AS "RHODE ISLAND REMEMBRANCE OF THE
ARMENIAN GENOCIDE OF 1915-1923"

Introduced By: Representatives Kazarian, Corvese, Nunes, Mattiello, and Chippendale

Date Introduced: April 24, 2013

Referred To: House read and passed

1 WHEREAS, Armenians living in their historic homeland in Asia Minor were subjected to
2 severe persecution and brutal injustice by the Turkish rulers of the Ottoman Empire before and
3 after the turn of the twentieth century, including widespread acts of destruction, mayhem, and
4 murder during the period from 1894 to 1896, and again in 1909; and

5 WHEREAS, The horrible experience of the Armenians at the hands of their Turkish
6 oppressors culminated with what is known by historians as the "First Genocide of the Twentieth
7 Century" or the "Forgotten Genocide"; and

8 WHEREAS, The Armenian Genocide began with the murder of hundreds of Armenian
9 intellectuals and political, religious, and business leaders who were arrested and taken from their
10 homes in Constantinople before dawn on April 24, 1915; and

11 WHEREAS, The Young Turk regime then in control of the empire planned and executed
12 the unspeakable atrocities committed against the Armenians from 1915 through 1923, including
13 the torture, starvation, and murder of 1.5 million Armenians, death marches into the Syrian
14 desert, and the exile of more than 500,000 innocent people; and

15 WHEREAS, While there were some Turks who jeopardized their safety in order to
16 protect Armenians from the slaughter being perpetrated by the Young Turk regime, the massacres
17 of the Armenians constituted one of the most atrocious violations of human rights in the history
18 of the world; and

19 WHEREAS, The United States Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, Henry Morgenthau,

1 Sr., stated "Whatever crimes the most perverted instincts of the human mind can devise, and
2 whatever refinements of persecutions and injustice the most debased imagination can
3 conceive, became the daily misfortunes of other devoted people. I am confident that the whole
4 history of the human race contains no such horrible episode as this. The great massacres and
5 persecutions of the past seem almost insignificant when compared to the sufferings of the
6 Armenian race in 1915. The killing of the Armenian people was accompanied by the systematic
7 destruction of churches, schools, libraries, treasures of art, and cultural monuments in an
8 attempt to eliminate all traces of a noble civilization with a history of more than 3,000 years";
9 and

10 WHEREAS, Contemporary newspapers like the New York Times carried headlines
11 including, "Tales of Armenian Horrors Confirmed," "Million Armenians Killed or in Exile,"
12 and "Wholesale Massacre of Armenians by Turks"; and

13 WHEREAS, Adolph Hitler, in persuading his army commanders that the merciless
14 persecution and killing of Jews, Poles, and other groups of people would bring no retribution,
15 declared, "Who after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians"; and

16 WHEREAS, Unlike other groups and governments that have admitted the abuses and
17 crimes of predecessor regimes, and despite the overwhelming weight of the evidence, the
18 Republic of Turkey has denied the occurrence of the crimes against humanity committed by the
19 Young Turk rulers, and those denials compound the grief of the few remaining survivors of the
20 atrocities and desecrate the memory of the victims; and

21 WHEREAS, Nations of the world have suffered reprisals and condemnations by Turkey
22 because of efforts to commemorate the Armenian Genocide; and

23 WHEREAS, There have been concerted efforts to revise history through the
24 dissemination of propaganda suggesting that Armenians were responsible for their fate in the
25 period from 1915 through 1923 and by the funding of programs at American educational
26 institutions for the purpose of furthering the cause of this revisionism and to counter, in
27 the words of a Turkish official, "the Armenian view"; and

28 WHEREAS, Leaders of nations with strategic, commercial, and cultural ties to the
29 Republic of Turkey should be reminded of their duty to encourage Turkish officials to cease
30 efforts to distort facts and deny the history of events surrounding the Armenian Genocide; and

31 WHEREAS, The accelerated level and scope of denial and revisionism, coupled with the
32 passage of time and the fact that very few survivors remain who serve as reminders of
33 indescribable brutality and tormented lives, compel a sense of urgency in efforts to solidify
34 recognition of historical truth; and

1 WHEREAS, By consistently remembering and forcefully condemning the atrocities
2 committed against the Armenians and honoring the survivors, as well as other victims of similar
3 heinous conduct, we guard against repetition of those acts of genocide; and

4 WHEREAS, Rhode Island is home to a large population of Armenians, and those citizens
5 have enriched our state through their leadership in the fields of business, agriculture, academia,
6 medicine, government, and the arts and are proud and patriotic practitioners of American
7 citizenship; now, therefore be it

8 RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island and
9 Providence Plantations hereby designates April 24, 2013, as "Rhode Island Remembrance of the
10 Armenian Genocide of 1915 - 1923"; and be it further

11 RESOLVED, That this House hereby respectfully memorializes the Congress of the
12 United States to likewise act to commemorate the Armenian Genocide; and be it further

13 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
14 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to The Honorable Barack Obama, President of the
15 United States, the Rhode Island Congressional Delegation, The Honorable Lincoln Chafee,
16 Governor of the State of Rhode Island, and The Armenian National Committee in Washington,
17 D.C.

=====
LC02411
=====