



State of Rhode Island
GUBERNATORIAL PROCLAMATION

Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month

WHEREAS, from 1915-1923 during the Armenian Genocide, one and one-half million ethnic Armenian men, women and children as well as over one million Greeks, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Pontians, Syrians, and others were massacred as part of the planned complete eradication of these Christian indigenous communities by the Ottoman Turkish Empire during the first modern genocide that still requires justice; and

WHEREAS, Near East Relief's efforts, with the active participation of the State of Rhode Island, resulted in delivering 117 million dollars of assistance between 1915 and 1930 that directly resulted in the salvation of the Christian Armenian, Greek, and Assyrian survivors from being annihilated by the Genocide; and

WHEREAS, the State of Rhode Island recognized the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1923 decades ago affirming recognition of persecuted Armenians; and

WHEREAS, prior to the implementation of the Holocaust, to garner support from his followers, Adolf Hitler asked "Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?"; and

WHEREAS, the genocide has been recognized by the US House of Representatives, US Senate and the President of the United States and over thirty countries, including: Canada, France, Switzerland, Germany, the Vatican, and Argentina; and

WHEREAS, the Republic of Armenia is now a free, independent, democratic state and a strategic ally of the United States; and

WHEREAS, as a continuation of genocidal policies, in the lead up to the collapse of the Soviet Union and declaration of independence of the Republic of Artsakh (Nagorno Karabakh), ethnic Armenians were brutally killed in Sumgait (February 1988), Kirovabad (November 1988) and Baku (January 1990), and the entire Armenian minority of Azerbaijan, numbering over 350,000 people, was forcibly deported from the country; and

WHEREAS, in July of 1988, within months of the Sumgait pogroms, the United States Senate unanimously passed Amendment 2690 to the Fiscal Year 1989 Foreign Operations Appropriations bill (H.R. 4782), concerning the Artsakh conflict and calling on the Soviet government to "respect the legitimate aspirations of the Armenian people ..." and noted that "dozens of Armenians have been killed and hundreds injured during the recent unrests ..."; and

WHEREAS, in 1989, the United States Senate condemned the anti-Armenian Pogroms in Azerbaijan and called upon the Soviet government that "those responsible for the killing and bloodshed be identified and prosecuted"; and

WHEREAS, on December 10th of 1991, despite continued violence against the people of Artsakh, a popular referendum proclaiming the republic took place in Artsakh during the process of the Soviet Union disintegration; and

WHEREAS, Azerbaijan committed massacre against the peaceful civilians of Maragha on April 10, 1992; and

WHEREAS, the United States House of Representatives has adopted H.Con.Res. 75, declaring the atrocities perpetrated by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) against Christians, Yezidis, and other religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide; and



WHEREAS, Azerbaijan attacked the Republic of Artsakh on September 27, 2020, for 44 days causing the death and mutilation of thousands of Armenians on their own historic lands; and

WHEREAS, Azerbaijan committed human rights violations by hiring Islamic militants, using prohibited cluster munitions, banned white phosphorous, and directly targeting civilian targets and civilian populations; and

WHEREAS, from December 12, 2022 and for ten months, Azerbaijan blockaded the only road connecting Artsakh to Armenia which halted all food, medicine and fuel from entering Artsakh, and periodically cut off gas, electricity, water and lines of communication creating a dire humanitarian crisis with the intent to annihilate the ethnic Armenian population; and

WHEREAS, Azerbaijan unleashed systematic military attacks against the population of Artsakh again on September 19, 2023, indiscriminately killing civilians, women, children and the elderly and forcibly removing all Armenians from their 4,000-year-old homeland as a final step with the genocide of the Armenians of Artsakh; and

WHEREAS, Azerbaijan continues to occupy large swaths of territory in the Republic of Armenia and continues to threaten more violence against its population including the annihilation of Armenians from the territories it threatens to further usurp and occupy; and

WHEREAS, Azerbaijan continues to illegally hold Armenian civilians, non-combatants, and prisoners of war in direct violation of the Geneva Conventions; and

WHEREAS, by recognizing, remembering, and educating those about the Armenian Genocide, and the second Armenian Genocide in the Republic of Artsakh, the Holocaust, the Pogroms in Sumgait, Baku and Kirovabad, the massacre in Maragha, and all cases of past and ongoing genocide, we help protect historic memory, ensure that similar atrocities do not occur again, and remain vigilant against hatred, persecution, and tyranny; and

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Governor Daniel McKee, Governor of the State of Rhode Island, do hereby proclaim April 2025 as **Genocide Awareness and Prevention** month in memory of the victims of the Armenian Genocide, the Artsakh Genocide, the Holocaust and all other genocides in honor of all the survivors as well as the rescuers and liberators, and further proclaim that we, as residents of the State of Rhode Island, should work to promote human dignity and confront hate whenever and wherever it occurs.



Given under my hand and the seal of the Office of the Governor of the State of Rhode Island, this 1st day of April, 2025.

Daniel J. McKee
Governor

Gregg M. Amore
Secretary of State