

2020 -- S 2873

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2020

SENATE RESOLUTION

PROCLAIMING MAY 19TH OF 2020 AS "GREEK PONTIAN GENOCIDE
REMEMBRANCE DAY" IN THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

Introduced By: Senators Raptakis, Euer, Lombardi, Gallo, and Conley

Date Introduced: June 16, 2020

Referred To: Placed on the Senate Consent Calendar

1 WHEREAS, Rhode Island is proud to be the home of numerous ethnic communities,
2 many of whom have prospered and enjoyed the freedom and democracy upon which our nation
3 was founded; tragically, throughout history, the people of many countries have not realized the
4 same autonomy and equality; and

5 WHEREAS, From 1914 until 1922, in a systematic attempt to exterminate an entire
6 population, the Ottoman Turks directed the killing of 353,000 Pontian and Anatolian Greeks and
7 over a million Armenians and Assyrians living in Pontos, and an equal number who were forced
8 to flee their homeland in one of the most condemnable atrocities in the history of the world; and

9 WHEREAS, The Ottoman and Kemals Neoturks engaged in exile, starvation, slaughter,
10 and murder, using axes and fire to massacre the Pontic Greek population and perpetrate the first
11 mass genocide of the 20th century, and the Armenian Genocide was conceived and carried out by
12 the Ottoman Empire from 1915 to 1923, and resulted in the deportation of nearly 2,000,000
13 Armenians, of whom 1,500,000 men, women, and children were killed, and the remaining
14 500,000 survived but were expelled from their homes; and

15 WHEREAS, It is vital and proper to remember those who lost their lives in the Pontian
16 Genocide, and it is paramount that people of all nations look at this horrific event in our world's
17 not-so-distant history as a way to learn a valuable lesson, so that such atrocities are not tolerated
18 and are never committed again; and

19 WHEREAS, It is likewise important to pay tribute to the survivors of this atrocious

1 period, as well as their descendants, who have made countless contributions to the enrichment of
2 our culture and our way of life here in the Ocean State and who stand as an inspiration to
3 oppressed people around the world; and

4 WHEREAS, 2020 will be memorialized throughout the world as the symbolic 101st
5 Anniversary of the Genocide of the Pontian Greeks. May we never forget the brutality the Pontian
6 Greeks experienced at the hands of the Ottoman Empire, and may we learn the hard lessons from
7 the past so that the history of the Pontian Genocide, and all Genocides, never happen again; now,
8 therefore be it

9 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
10 hereby joins the Greek-American community on May 19th of each year in a solemn
11 commemoration of the Pontian Genocide of 1914-1922; and be it further

12 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
13 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to Gus Tsilfides, President Pan-Pontian Federation
14 of USA and Canada and Georgios Gialtouridis of the Pontian Society "Panagia Soumela" Boston.

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