

2016 -- S 2922

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2016

SENATE RESOLUTION

PROCLAIMING APRIL 24, 2016, AS "ARMENIAN GENOCIDE REMEMBRANCE DAY"
TO COMMEMORATE THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE OF 1915 TO 1923, AND IN HONOR
OF ARMENIAN-AMERICANS

Introduced By: Senators Gallo, Jabour, Goodwin, Raptakis, and Ruggerio

Date Introduced: April 28, 2016

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1 WHEREAS, The Armenian Genocide was conceived and carried out by the Ottoman
2 Empire from 1915 to 1923, and resulted in the deportation of nearly 2,000,000 Armenians, of
3 whom 1,500,000 men, women, and children were killed, and the remaining 500,000 survived but
4 were expelled from their homes. This act succeeded in the elimination of the Armenians from
5 their historic ancestral homeland where they had resided for over 2,500 years; and

6 WHEREAS, On May 24, 1915, for the first time ever, the Allied Powers of England,
7 France, and Russia, jointly issued a statement explicitly charging another government of
8 committing "a crime against humanity"; and

9 WHEREAS, This joint statement declared, "the Allied Governments announce publicly
10 to the Sublime Porte that they will hold personally responsible for these crimes all members of
11 the Ottoman Government, as well as those of their agents who are implicated in such massacres";
12 and

13 WHEREAS, United States Ambassador Henry Morgenthau, Sr. explicitly described the
14 policy of the Ottoman Empire's government to the United States Department of State as "a
15 campaign of race extermination," and on July 16, 1915, was informed by United States Secretary
16 of State Robert Lansing that the "Department approves your procedure . . . to stop Armenian
17 persecution"; and

18 WHEREAS, The post-World War I Turkish government indicted the top leaders involved
19 in the organization and execution of the Armenian Genocide and in the "massacre and destruction

1 of the Armenians," and in a series of court-martials, officials of the Young Turk regime were
2 charged, tried and convicted, for organizing and executing massacres against the Armenian
3 people; and

4 WHEREAS, In 1948, the United Nations War Crimes Commission invoked the
5 Armenian Genocide as "precisely . . . one of the types of acts which the modern term 'crimes
6 against humanity' is intended to cover" as a precedent for the Nuremberg tribunals; and

7 WHEREAS, The United States National Archives and Record Administration holds
8 extensive and thorough documentation on the Armenian Genocide, especially in its holdings
9 under Record Group 59 of the United States Department of State, files 867.00 and 867.40, which
10 are open and widely available to the public and interested institutions; and

11 WHEREAS, The United States Holocaust Memorial Council, an independent federal
12 agency, unanimously resolved on April 30, 1981, that the United States Holocaust Memorial
13 Museum would include the Armenian Genocide in the museum and has since done so; and

14 WHEREAS, When one enters the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, there is an
15 exhibit depicting Adolf Hitler, who on ordering his military commanders to attack Poland without
16 provocation in 1939, dismissed objections by stating "[w]ho, after all, speaks today of the
17 annihilation of the Armenians?", thus setting the stage for the Holocaust; now, therefore be it

18 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations
19 hereby recognizes April 24, 2016, as "Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day" in the State of
20 Rhode Island; and be it further

21 RESOLVED, That this Senate respectfully requests the President of the United States and
22 the United States Congress to call on the government of Turkey to face history and acknowledge
23 this crime of genocide committed by the Ottoman Turks in 1915 and further, urge the Turkish
24 government to make restitution for the loss of lives, confiscated properties, and general unlawful
25 deportations, separating the indigenous population from their homeland; and be it further

26 RESOLVED, That this Senate expresses its deepest sympathy to the Armenian-American
27 community of Rhode Island and assures them that this genocide will always be commemorated
28 and never forgotten; and be it further

29 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
30 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of the
31 United States, the Rhode Island Congressional Delegation, the Honorable Gina Raimondo,
32 Governor of the State of Rhode Island, the Armenian Assembly of America in Washington, and

1 the Armenian National Committee in Washington.

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