

2017 -- H 6235

LC002723

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2017

HOUSE RESOLUTION

PROCLAIMING MAY 19TH OF 2017 AS "GREEK PONTIAN GENOCIDE  
REMEMBRANCE DAY" IN THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

Introduced By: Representatives Solomon, Serpa, Shekarchi, Kazarian, and McNamara

Date Introduced: May 18, 2017

Referred To: House read and passed

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 20<sup>th</sup> 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; now, therefore be it

4           RESOLVED, That this House of Representatives of the State of Rhode Island and  
5 Providence Plantations hereby joins the Greek-American community on May 19<sup>th</sup> of each year in  
6 a solemn commemoration of the Pontian Genocide of 1914-1922; and be it further

7           RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to  
8 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Gus Tsilfides President Pan-Pontain Federation  
9 of USA and Canada and Panagiotis Petridis at the Panagia Soumela Pontian Society of Boston.

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