



HR0316

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The 20th Century witnessed unspeakable acts of
3 murder and chaos, from the Holocaust, to the massacres in
4 Rwanda and Bosnia, the genocidal campaign against the Armenian
5 people symbolizes one of the first in our modern age; and

6 WHEREAS, Between the years 1915-1923, nearly one and a half
7 million Armenian men, women, and children were massacred by the
8 Ottoman Turkish government; and

9 WHEREAS, The United Nations defines the term genocide as
10 any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in
11 whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial, or religious
12 group, including killing members of the group; causing serious
13 bodily or mental harm to members of the group; deliberately
14 inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring
15 about its physical destruction in whole or in part; imposing
16 measures intended to prevent births within the group; or
17 forcibly transferring children of the group to another; and

18 WHEREAS, The segregation and degradation of the minority
19 Christian Armenian population by the Turkish government began
20 with Ottoman rule in the mid-1800s; the brutality escalated
21 during the reign of the Young Turks, immediately following the
22 First World War; and

1 WHEREAS, In 1939, the monster, Adolf Hitler, cited the
2 Armenian genocide as justification for the genocide he himself
3 was about to lead, asking, "Who after all, speaks today of the
4 annihilation of the Armenians."; and

5 WHEREAS, The attempted extermination and forced
6 displacement of the Armenian people not only extinguished
7 precious lives, but also uprooted a centuries-old culture from
8 their ancient homeland; and

9 WHEREAS, The people of Armenia have witnessed the eastern
10 conquests of Alexander the Great, fought the legions of Rome
11 and Sassanid Persians, halted Arabian expansion, supplied
12 emperors to the throne of Byzantium, became the first nation to
13 adopt Christianity in 301 CE, and established their language's
14 alphabet barely a century later in 406 CE; and

15 WHEREAS, A century ago, Armenian heritage came under threat
16 once more, as thousands of their monasteries and churches were
17 desecrated or destroyed, national institutions and schools,
18 razed to the ground, and the surviving Armenian people,
19 scattered across the world; and

20 WHEREAS, Despite the wreckage, the Armenian people
21 endured, building a new and sovereign nation in the eastern

1 half of their homeland; and

2 WHEREAS, The 21st Century world continues to face
3 terrifying crimes against humanity even at this very hour, as
4 forces of repression and barbarism seek to roll back the
5 progress of our age; and

6 WHEREAS, These forces of terror include the Islamic State,
7 Boko Haram, the regional tentacles of al-Qa'ida, al-Nusrah
8 Front, al-Shabaab, Hizballah, and Hamas, along with far too
9 many more; and

10 WHEREAS, The great champion and prophet of liberty, Dr.
11 Martin Luther King Jr. powerfully noted that, "He who passively
12 accepts evil is as much involved in it as he who helps to
13 perpetrate it. He who accepts evil without protesting against
14 it is really cooperating with it."; and

15 WHEREAS, We must learn and boldly speak of, the often
16 heartbreaking but invaluable lessons of our common human past,
17 as well as teach them to our children and our grandchildren in
18 order for this world to finally be free of hostility and
19 violence; therefore, be it

20 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE
21 HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we,

1 and all other people of human decency, speak today of the near
2 annihilation of the Armenian people, and indeed of all those
3 who continue suffering under the heel of tyranny across the
4 world; and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That on this anniversary year of the Armenian
6 genocide, we commemorate the nearly one and a half million
7 precious lives lost and honor the rich, ancient heritage of the
8 Armenian people by dedicating April 24th as the Day of
9 Remembrance for the Holy Martyrs of the Armenian Genocide of
10 1915.