



SJ0020

LRB103 25965 ECR 52317 r

1 SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Assyrians, an ethnic minority group, are the
3 indigenous people of Mesopotamia and have lived in the Middle
4 East since ancient times, including in what is today Turkey,
5 Iraq, Iran, and Syria; and

6 WHEREAS, Today, Assyrians, also known as Chaldeans and
7 Syriacs, live around the world, including over 600,000 who
8 live in the United States and over 80,000 who live in Illinois;
9 and

10 WHEREAS, Between 1914 and 1923, the Assyrian Genocide
11 occurred; during this time, the Ottoman Empire murdered over
12 300,000 Assyrian men, women, and children by methods that
13 included mass executions, death marches, torture, and
14 starvation; and

15 WHEREAS, During the Assyrian Genocide, also known as the
16 Seyfo Genocide, the Ottoman Turks and their Kurdish allies
17 also systematically raped and enslaved Assyrian women and
18 girls, forced the Assyrians from their ancestral lands, and
19 pillaged and destroyed their communities; and

20 WHEREAS, The killings of over two million Armenians,
21 Assyrians, Greeks, Christians, and other religious minority

1 populations represented the culmination of a series of violent
2 persecutions dating back to the late 1800s; and

3 WHEREAS, The year 2023 marks the 108th anniversary of the
4 Armenian, Assyrian, and Greek genocides of 1915; these
5 genocides were part of the planned eradication of those
6 indigenous communities by the Ottoman Turkish Empire; yet, to
7 this day, Turkey has still not recognized these genocides; and

8 WHEREAS, August 7, 1933 is recognized by the International
9 Association of Genocide Scholars as the date on which as many
10 as 6,000 Assyrians were killed at the orders of the Iraqi
11 government in an event known as the Simele Massacre; this
12 massacre continued the legacy of persecution exemplified by
13 the 1915 Assyrian Genocide; and

14 WHEREAS, August 7th, globally observed by the Assyrian
15 community as Assyrian Remembrance Day, is in remembrance of
16 the Simele Massacre and of all persecution the Assyrian people
17 have faced as a result of their distinct and ancient ethnic and
18 religious identity; and

19 WHEREAS, The persecution against Assyrians continues until
20 this day in their ancestral homeland, where they are
21 continually targeted for persecution by state and non-state
22 actors such as the Republic of Turkey, the Republic of Iraq,

1 the Kurdistan Regional Government, and the so called Islamic
2 State of Iraq and the Levant or ISIL; and

3 WHEREAS, ISIL has persistently destroyed culturally and
4 historically significant locations and items, including UNESCO
5 world heritage sites such as the ancient Assyrian city of
6 Nimrud; and

7 WHEREAS, The United States House of Representatives and
8 United States Senate concurrently resolved that "the
9 atrocities perpetrated by ISIL against Christians, Yezidis,
10 and other religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria
11 constitute war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide";
12 and

13 WHEREAS, The denial of genocide is widely recognized as
14 the final stage of genocide; this denial maintains impunity
15 for the perpetrators of these atrocities and demonstrably
16 paves the way for future genocides; and

17 WHEREAS, The resilience and endurance of the Assyrian
18 people, despite being victims of a genocide that the Islamic
19 State continues to perpetuate to this day, is commendable and
20 praiseworthy; therefore, be it

21 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED THIRD GENERAL

1 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE HOUSE OF
2 REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING HEREIN, that RESOLVED, That we
3 recognize the Assyrian Genocide of 1915 as a genocide and as a
4 reprehensible crime against humanity, and we honor the memory
5 of the hundreds of thousands of Assyrians who were murdered;
6 and be it further

7 RESOLVED, That the State of Illinois recognizes the Simele
8 Massacre of 1933 as a genocide and reprehensible crime against
9 humanity and honors the memory of the thousands of Assyrians
10 who were murdered during the Simele Massacre of 1933; and be it
11 further

12 RESOLVED, That the State of Illinois deplores the
13 persistent, ongoing efforts by any person, in this country or
14 abroad, to deny the historical fact of the Assyrian Genocide
15 or any other genocide; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That the State of Illinois respectfully calls
17 upon the President of the United States to formally and
18 consistently reaffirm the historical truth that the atrocities
19 committed against the Assyrian, Armenian, and Greek
20 populations of the Ottoman Empire between 1914 and 1923
21 constituted genocide; and be it further

22 RESOLVED, That the State of Illinois encourages education

1 and public understanding of the facts of the Assyrian
2 Genocide, including the United States' role in humanitarian
3 relief effort and the relevance of the Assyrian Genocide to
4 modern day crimes against humanity; and be it further

5 RESOLVED, That we declare August 7, 2023 as Assyrian
6 Remembrance Day in the State of Illinois.