



HJ0056

LRB099 11492 MST 32588 r

1 HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The centennial of the Armenian Genocide is before
3 us, and Armenians throughout the world resound with a powerful
4 call for justice and truth that will not be silenced; and

5 WHEREAS, Each day of 2015 is a day of devotion for the
6 Armenian people, a spiritual journey to memorials of their
7 martyrs in the homeland and in the diaspora; and

8 WHEREAS, The Armenian people kneel humbly before those
9 memorials in prayer for the souls of the innocent who rest in
10 unmarked graves, having accepted death rather than reject their
11 faith and nation; and

12 WHEREAS, In 1915, and in the years that followed, Ottoman
13 Turkey committed genocide against the Armenian people; and

14 WHEREAS, In the historic homeland of Western Armenia and in
15 Armenian communities throughout other parts of the Ottoman
16 Empire, one and a half million sons and daughters of the
17 Armenian nation were subjected to slaughter, famine, and
18 disease as they were deported and forced to march to their
19 deaths; and

20 WHEREAS, A centuries-old inheritance was pillaged as

1 thousands of monasteries and churches were desecrated and
2 destroyed, national institutions and schools were razed to the
3 ground, and their spiritual and national values were uprooted;
4 and

5 WHEREAS, Western Armenia, where the Armenian people had
6 lived since the time of Noah, where they forged an identity and
7 shaped a distinctive culture, was savagely wrested from the
8 native population; and

9 WHEREAS, Eastern Armenia, the birthplace of the Church of
10 Armenia and from where the Armenian people received the light
11 of St. Gregory the Illuminator, was threatened out of
12 existence; and

13 WHEREAS, In this time of darkness, when Armenia was
14 splintered, when its fragments were scattered the world over,
15 it was hard to believe that a new day would come; and

16 WHEREAS, The Armenian people persevered by the Lord's
17 grace, rose up from the ashes, and began to build anew; and

18 WHEREAS, In Eastern Armenia, a country was built out of
19 ruins, a homeland of light and hope, where Armenians once again
20 harnessed their creative forces in education, the sciences, and
21 the arts; and

1 WHEREAS, Today, though they still face hardships, the
2 Armenian people continue to strengthen their independent
3 homeland, where they live in freedom and look with hope to the
4 future; and

5 WHEREAS, The Armenian spirit also flourished in far-flung
6 lands, where the exiled people set down roots, built schools
7 and churches, and gave generously of their talents in these new
8 places they called home; and

9 WHEREAS, By placing their hope in the Lord, the Armenian
10 people were illuminated and empowered; His light kindled the
11 ingenuity of their spirit; and His might propelled them to
12 victories in the face of destruction and in the face of
13 annihilation; and

14 WHEREAS, It was the Will of the Lord that the Armenian
15 nation should live and rise again, so that they might seek
16 justice where there has been oppression, concern where there
17 has been indifference, and truth where there has been denial;
18 and

19 WHEREAS, The Armenian people in their native homeland and
20 in the diaspora will continue their fight without retreat,
21 working together in unity until justice triumphs over darkness;

1 and

2 WHEREAS, The innocent martyrs cry out for justice; the
3 destroyed shrines and the falsification and distortion of
4 history cry out for justice; and

5 WHEREAS, We believe that the states and nation states and
6 individuals who have recognized the Armenian Genocide will be
7 joined by others who believe that the affirmation of truth will
8 lead to a world free of hostility and violence; and

9 WHEREAS, We express our gratitude to all those states and
10 nation states who had the courage and conviction to recognize
11 and condemn the Armenian Genocide, and also to the countries
12 and individuals who gave a new home to the Armenian people, for
13 we know that these acts of justice and compassion are glimpses
14 of humanity at its best, and they are lessons we can pass on
15 from one generation to the next to guide our world toward peace
16 and harmony; and

17 WHEREAS, In spiritual consolation, His Holiness Karekin
18 II, Supreme Patriarch and Catholicos of All Armenians, issued a
19 Patriarchal encyclical on December 28, 2014 announcing that
20 during the Divine Liturgy on April 23, 2015, the Church of
21 Armenia will perform a special ceremony canonizing as saints
22 its sons and daughters who became Martyrs for their faith and

1 for their homeland; and

2 WHEREAS, His Holiness pronounced April 24, 2015 as the Day
3 of Remembrance of the Holy Martyrs of the Armenian Genocide of
4 1915; and

5 WHEREAS, The People of Illinois, as represented by the
6 General Assembly and the Governor, should remain mindful of
7 these tragic events, and should act in a spirit of justice and
8 humanity to designate April 24, 2015 as the Day of Remembrance
9 of the Holy Martyrs of the Armenian Genocide of 1915;
10 therefore, be it

11 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
12 NINETY-NINTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, THE
13 SENATE CONCURRING HEREIN, that we commemorate April 24, 2015 as
14 the Day of Remembrance of the Holy Martyrs of the Armenian
15 Genocide of 1915; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That we request Governor Bruce Rauner to proclaim
17 April 24, 2015, as the Day of Remembrance of the Holy Martyrs
18 of the Armenian Genocide of 1915; and be it further

19 RESOLVED, That we call upon the people of Illinois to
20 observe that Day of Remembrance and to draw strength from the
21 firm determination of the Armenian people, who trampled death

1 and rose again to rebuild, to renew, and to reassert the spirit
2 of their ancestors; and be it further

3 RESOLVED, That this be the lesson we teach our children and
4 our grandchildren, so that they, too, will realize that the
5 affirmation of truth will lead to a world free of hostility and
6 violence; and be it further

7 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
8 presented to Governor Bruce Rauner.