



SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 14-034

BY SENATOR(S) Tochtrop, Aguilar, Balmer, Baumgardner, Brophy, Cadman, Crowder, Grantham, Guzman, Harvey, Heath, Herpin, Hill, Hodge, Jahn, Johnston, Jones, Kefalas, Kerr, King, Lambert, Lundberg, Marble, Newell, Nicholson, Renfroe, Rivera, Roberts, Scheffel, Schwartz, Steadman, Todd, Ulibarri, Zenzinger, Carroll;
also REPRESENTATIVE(S) Moreno, Becker, Buck, Conti, Coram, Court, DelGrosso, Dore, Exum, Fields, Fischer, Foote, Garcia, Gardner, Gerou, Ginal, Hamner, Holbert, Humphrey, Joshi, Kagan, Kraft-Tharp, Labuda, Lawrence, Lee, May, McLachlan, McNulty, Melton, Mitsch Bush, Murray, Navarro, Nordberg, Peniston, Pettersen, Primavera, Priola, Rankin, Rosenthal, Ryden, Salazar, Schafer, Singer, Sonnenberg, Swalm, Szabo, Tyler, Vigil, Waller, Williams, Wright, Young.

CONCERNING THE "COLORADO DAY OF REMEMBRANCE OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE" ON APRIL 24, 2014.

WHEREAS, This year marks the 99th anniversary of the first genocide of the 20th century, the Armenian genocide, when 1.5 million men, women, and children of Armenian descent were victims of a brutal genocide perpetrated by the Turkish Ottoman Empire from 1915 to 1923; and

WHEREAS, As a result, there are fewer than 75,000 indigenous Armenians living within the borders of modern Turkey today; and

WHEREAS, The former United States Ambassador to the Ottoman Empire, Henry Morgenthau, Sr., stated in 1915, "Whatever crimes the most perverted instincts of the human mind can devise, and whatever refinements of persecutions and injustice the most debased imagination can conceive, became the daily misfortunes of this devoted people."; and

WHEREAS, The killing of the Armenian people was followed by the

systematic destruction of churches, schools, libraries, treasures of art, and cultural monuments that continues to this day in an attempt to eliminate all traces of a noble civilization with a history of more than 3,000 years; and

WHEREAS, Colorado newspapers widely reported the extermination of the Armenian people, and Colorado communities generously raised funds to assist the survivors, known at that time as the "Starving Armenians", as illustrated in the January 16, 1919, Denver Post front-page story titled "Campaign for Armenian Relief is Making Splendid Headway" and a July 30, 1922, Denver Post front-page story titled "\$60,000,000 from U.S. Keeps Armenians from Extinction"; and

WHEREAS, In 2009, the New York Times reported on an official Ottoman document revealing that 972,000 Armenians disappeared from population records within one year, between 1915 and 1916; and

WHEREAS, Despite overwhelming evidence, modern Turkey continues to deny the facts of the genocide, honor the perpetrators of that crime against humanity as national heroes, and persecute its citizens who acknowledge or even allude to the Armenian genocide; and

WHEREAS, Each April, Armenians throughout the world honor their martyrs and commemorate the Armenian genocide, a term first used by Raphael Lemkin, the legal scholar who coined the word "genocide" and drafted the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, explaining on CBS television in 1949 that he "became interested in genocide because it happened to the Armenians; and . . . their criminals . . . were not punished"; and

WHEREAS, We commend Armenians of Colorado, Inc., the Colorado Coalition for Genocide Awareness and Action, and other human rights organizations for their ongoing efforts to bring awareness and to educate the community, including our youth, about the Armenian genocide; and

WHEREAS, We commend the growing number of Turkish citizens, including academics, writers, journalists, and municipal officials in Diyarbakir, Turkey, who challenge the national government's official account of history amid threats of prosecution and imprisonment; now, therefore,

Be It Resolved by the Senate of the Sixty-ninth General Assembly of the State of Colorado, the House of Representatives concurring herein:

(1) That we pause in our deliberations to commemorate the 99th anniversary of the Armenian genocide, which will be formally recognized at a memorial service at 2:00 p.m. on Sunday, April 27, 2014, at the Armenian Garden, located in the northeast quadrant on the State Capitol grounds;

(2) That we, the members of the General Assembly, hereby acknowledge April 24, 2014, and April 24 of each year thereafter, as "Colorado Day of Remembrance of the Armenian Genocide"; and

(3) That we ask the government of Turkey to honor its obligations under international treaties and human rights law to return all that has been confiscated and to compensate for all destroyed Christian properties and sacred sites, allow for the reconstruction and preservation of these properties, and allow the Christian minorities to practice and teach their religion as requested by Congressional House Resolution 306, overwhelmingly adopted in December 2011.

Be It Further Resolved, That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of the United States; the members of Colorado's congressional delegation; the members of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues; the Honorable John Hickenlooper, Governor of Colorado; the Armenian Assembly of America in Washington, D.C.; the Armenian National Committee of America in Washington, D.C.; the Armenian and Turkish Embassies in

Washington, D.C.; the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute in Yerevan, Armenia; the Colorado Coalition for Genocide Awareness and Action; and Armenians of Colorado, Inc.

Morgan Carroll
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