

House Resolution 1229

By: Representatives Robichaux of the 48th, Kausche of the 50th, Williams of the 37th, Morris of the 26th, Wilensky of the 79th, and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing April, 2020, as Genocide Prevention and Awareness Month at the state capitol;
2 and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the goal of Genocide Prevention and Awareness Month is to educate the public
4 about the history of previous and contemporary genocides; to advocate against future
5 genocides; to focus attention on the specter of genocide so that policies, strategies, and
6 programs geared toward combating the evils of genocide and mass atrocities can be
7 developed; and to commemorate the victims of genocide; and

8 WHEREAS, during World War II, a Polish lawyer of Jewish decent, Raphael Lemkin,
9 coined the term "genocide" to describe the coordinated plan of actions aimed at the
10 destruction of essential foundations of the life of certain groups and the annihilation of a
11 group itself by disintegrating a group's social institutions, culture, language, national or
12 ethnic identities, religion, and economic existence while also destroying the personal
13 security, liberty, health, and dignity, as well as the lives, of individuals belonging to the
14 group; and

15 WHEREAS, throughout history, numerous genocides originated or stemmed from events that
16 occurred in April, and as a result, many institutions around the world have designated April
17 to be a month of genocide awareness and prevention; and

18 WHEREAS, when coining the term "genocide," Raphael Lemkin was moved to investigate
19 the forced assimilation, deportation, and near eradication of the Armenian population and
20 other Christian communities, beginning in April, 1915; and

21 WHEREAS, in April of 1933, the Nazis issued a decree preparing the way for the "Final
22 Solution" defining non-Aryans as "anyone descended from non-Aryan, especially Jewish,
23 parents or grandparents"; and

24 WHEREAS, from 1932 to 1933, the Holodomor, an artificial famine, was imposed by
25 Stalin's regime on Soviet Ukraine and killed up to eight million individuals; and

26 WHEREAS, in September, 1941, possibly the largest massacre during the Holocaust,
27 remembered as Babi Yar, took place in Kiev, Ukraine, killing nearly 34,000 Jews in only two
28 days; and

29 WHEREAS, in 1975, Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge took power in Cambodia, conducting
30 widespread killings of people belonging to specific groups, as well as an involuntary
31 relocation of all city dwellers to the countryside for forced labor, resulting in famine and
32 turning the countryside into a killing field, which resulted in the deaths of two million
33 people; and

34 WHEREAS, the 1992-1995 siege of Sarajevo, Srebrenica, and other cities in Bosnia and
35 Herzegovina, ultimately led to the deaths of more than 200,000 Bosniaks, or Bosnian
36 Muslims; and

37 WHEREAS, the Al-Anfal Campaign (1984-1988), under the leadership of Saddam Hussein,
38 sought to destroy and depopulate the Kurdistan region in northern Iraq and notoriously used
39 chemical weapons to that end, which caused the deaths of over 180,000 Kurds and others,
40 and resulted in creating millions of refugees and internally displaced persons; and

41 WHEREAS, in April of 1994, 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus were slayed by the
42 Interhamwe in Rwanda over a period of three months; and

43 WHEREAS, in April of 2003, the displacement and killing of Darfurians began by the
44 government of Sudan and led to hundreds of thousands of deaths and the displacement of
45 millions, which continues unabated to this day; and

46 WHEREAS, DAESH, the so-called Islamic State, has forcefully caused the civilian
47 population of the Ezidi-Kurdish religious minority in Iraq and Syria, beginning in 2014
48 through the present day, to flee from their ancestral towns, villages, and holy sites as a result
49 of forced conversion, killing, kidnaping, and enslaving of their population – according to
50 their records, this is the 74th genocide throughout that population's history; and

51 WHEREAS, the Genocide Prevention Task Force released its report in December of 2008
52 in order to spotlight genocide prevention as a national priority; and

53 WHEREAS, in 2011, the President of the United States declared the prevention of mass
54 atrocities and genocide to be a "core national security interest and core moral responsibility"
55 of the United States and ordered the creation of the Atrocities Prevention Board in 2012; and

56 WHEREAS, Georgians are a diverse population of racial, ethnic, national, and religious
57 groups, and there exist victims of genocide and subsequent generations who reside in
58 Georgia communities; and

59 WHEREAS, the Georgia Commission on the Holocaust is a state agency whose mission is
60 to use the lessons of the Holocaust to educate the citizens of Georgia on the consequences
61 of unchecked hate and the need for social justice and to encourage strong moral character and
62 citizenship; and

63 WHEREAS, the American Jewish Committee (AJC) Atlanta Regional Office's young
64 leadership, ACCESS, works proactively to create awareness of past and contemporary
65 instances of genocide in Georgia's citizens; and

66 WHEREAS, interfaith and interethnic groups engage the Georgia State Legislature and other
67 elected officials by creating awareness, advocacy, and action; and

68 WHEREAS, it is abundantly fitting and proper to recognize the contributions of Georgia
69 communities and the Georgia Coalition to Prevent Genocide, Am Yisrael Chai, Eternal-Life
70 Hemshech of Holocaust Survivors, the Georgia Commission on the Holocaust, the Jewish
71 Community Relations Council of Atlanta, the National Center for Civil and Human Rights,
72 AJC Atlanta Regional Office, and AJC's ACCESS in their efforts to enhance the security and
73 dignity of minority populations across the globe.

74 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
75 the members of this body recognize the month of April, 2020, as Genocide Prevention and
76 Awareness Month at the state capitol and commend AJC ACCESS Atlanta for its dedicated
77 efforts in advocating toward the prevention of genocide and mass atrocities.

78 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
79 and directed to make an appropriate copy of this resolution available for distribution to AJC
80 ACCESS Atlanta.