



April 6, 2017

HOUSE RESOLUTION No. 58

Introduced by: Morris

April 5, 2017, read first time and referred to Statutory Committee on Interstate and International Cooperation.

1 A HOUSE RESOLUTION urging the government of Turkey to
2 cease its discrimination against the Ecumenical Patriarchate of the
3 Orthodox Christian Church.

4 *Whereas, The Ecumenical Patriarchate, located in*
5 *Istanbul, Turkey, is the sacred See that presides in a spirit of*
6 *brotherhood over a communion of the self-governing*
7 *churches of the Orthodox Christian world;*

8 *Whereas, The See is led by Ecumenical Patriarch*
9 *Bartholomew, who is 270th in direct succession to St.*
10 *Andrew the Apostle and holds titular primacy as primus inter*
11 *pares, meaning "first among equals", in the community of*
12 *Orthodox Christian churches worldwide;*



1 *Whereas, In 1994, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew,*
2 *along with leaders of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation,*
3 *cosponsored the Conference on Peace and Tolerance,*
4 *bringing together Christian, Jewish, and Muslim religious*
5 *leaders for an interfaith dialogue to help end the Balkan*
6 *conflict and the ethnic conflict in the Caucasus region;*

7 *Whereas, In 1997, the Congress of the United States*
8 *awarded Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew a*
9 *Congressional Gold Medal;*

10 *Whereas, Following the September 11, 2001, terrorist*
11 *attacks on our nation, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew*
12 *gathered a group of international religious leaders to*
13 *produce the first joint statement with Muslim leaders*
14 *condemning the attacks as "antireligious";*

15 *Whereas, In November 2005, the ecumenical patriarch,*
16 *along with Christian, Jewish, and Muslim leaders,*
17 *cosponsored the Conference on Peace and Tolerance II to*
18 *further promote peace and stability in southeastern Europe,*
19 *the Caucasus region, and Central Asia via religious leaders'*
20 *interfaith dialogue, understanding, and action;*

21 *Whereas, The Orthodox Christian Church, in existence for*
22 *nearly 2,000 years, numbers approximately 300 million*
23 *members worldwide, with more than 2 million members in*
24 *the United States;*

25 *Whereas, Since 1453, the continuing presence of the*
26 *Ecumenical Patriarchate in Turkey has been a living*
27 *testament to the religious coexistence of Christians and*
28 *Muslims;*

29 *Whereas, This religious coexistence is in jeopardy because*
30 *the government of Turkey has not recognized the rights and*
31 *religious freedoms of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, which is*
32 *considered a minority religion by the Turkish government;*

33 *Whereas, The Turkish government has limited eligibility*



1 *to hold the office of ecumenical patriarch to only Turkish*
2 *nationals;*

3 *Whereas, From the millions of Orthodox Christians living*
4 *in Turkey at the turn of the 20th century, there are fewer than*
5 *3,000 of the ecumenical patriarch's flock in Turkey today;*

6 *Whereas, The Turkish government has not honored its*
7 *agreement to reopen the Theological School on the island of*
8 *Halki, closed by the government in 1971, impeding training*
9 *for Orthodox Christian clergy;*

10 *Whereas, The Turkish government has confiscated nearly*
11 *94 percent of the properties of the Ecumenical Patriarchate*
12 *and has placed a 42 percent tax, retroactive to 1999, on the*
13 *Hospital of Baloukli and Home for the Elderly, a charity*
14 *hospital run by the Ecumenical Patriarchate;*

15 *Whereas, The European Union, a group of nations with a*
16 *common goal of promoting peace and the well-being of its*
17 *people, began accession negotiations with Turkey on October*
18 *3, 2005;*

19 *Whereas, The European Union defined membership*
20 *criteria for accession at the Copenhagen European Council*
21 *in 1993, obligating candidate countries to achieve certain*
22 *levels of reform, including stability of institutions*
23 *guaranteeing democracy, adherence to the rule of law, and*
24 *respect for and protection of minorities and human rights;*

25 *Whereas, The Turkish government's current treatment of*
26 *the Ecumenical Patriarchate is inconsistent with the*
27 *membership criteria of the European Union;*

28 *Whereas, The Turkish government's treatment of*
29 *Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew affects Orthodox*
30 *Christians in Indiana and throughout the United States; and*

31 *Whereas, In November 2006, the archons of the*
32 *Ecumenical Patriarchate of the order of St. Andrew the*



1 *Apostle, a group of laymen, each of whom has been honored*
2 *with a patriarchal title, or "offikion", by the ecumenical*
3 *patriarch for their outstanding service to the Orthodox*
4 *Church, sent an American delegation to Turkey to meet with*
5 *Turkish government officials and the United States*
6 *ambassador to the Republic of Turkey regarding the Turkish*
7 *government's treatment of the Ecumenical Patriarchate:*
8 *Therefore,*

9 *Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the*
10 *General Assembly of the State of Indiana:*

11 SECTION 1. That the members of the Indiana House of
12 Representatives urge the government of Turkey to cease its
13 discrimination against the Ecumenical Patriarchate of the Orthodox
14 Christian Church.

15 SECTION 2. That the Principal Clerk of the House of
16 Representatives transmit a copy of this resolution to the President of
17 the United States, the United States ambassador to the Republic of
18 Turkey, and the ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to the United
19 States.

