SPONSOR: Sen. Lopez & Rep. Schwartzkopf

DELAWARE STATE SENATE
148th GENERAL ASSEMBLY

SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION NO. 15

A RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE.

WHEREAS, during the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1923, one million five hundred thousand men, women, and children of Armenian descent, and hundreds of thousands of Assyrian and Greek descent, lost their lives at the hands of the Ottoman Turkish Empire in its attempt to systematically eliminate the Armenian race , while hundreds of thousands had become homeless and stateless refugees; and

WHEREAS, April 24, 1915, is globally observed as the commencement of the Armenian Genocide; and

WHEREAS, By 1923, these crimes against humanity not only resulted in the killing of unprecedented numbers of innocent peoples, but also had the consequence of permanently removing all traces of the Christian Armenians and other targeted peoples from their historic homelands of more than three millennia, and enriching the perpetrators with the lands and other property of the victims of these crimes, including the usurpation of several thousand churches; and

WHEREAS, by consistently remembering and forcefully condemning the atrocities committed against the Armenians, and honoring the survivors as well as other victims of similar heinous conduct, we guard against repetition of such acts of genocide and provide the American public with a greater understanding of history; and

WHEREAS, the United States is on record as having officially recognized the Armenian Genocide in the United States government's May 28, 1951, written statement to the International Court of Justice regarding the Reservations to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, through President Ronald Reagan's April 22, 1981, Proclamation No. 4838, and by Congressional legislation including House of Representatives Joint Resolution 148 adopted on April 8, 1975, and House of Representatives Joint Resolution 247 adopted on September 10, 1984; and

WHEREAS, even prior to the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, the United States has a record of having sought to justly and constructively address the consequences of the Ottoman Empire's intentional destruction of the Armenian people, including through Concurrent Resolution 12 adopted on February 9, 1916, Resolution 359 adopted on May 11, 1920, and President Woodrow Wilson's November 22, 1920, decision entitled, "The Frontier between Armenia and Turkey"; and

WHEREAS, in response to the Genocide and at the behest of the President Woodrow Wilson and the U.S. State Department, the Near East Relief organization was founded and was provided unprecedented complete access to all U.S. government documents and files concerning the plight of Christian minorities; and

WHEREAS, Near East Relief's efforts, with the active participation of the First State, resulted in delivering 117 million dollars of assistance between 1915 and 1930, including the delivery of food, clothing, and materials for shelter, setting up refugee camps, clinics, hospitals, and orphanages; and

WHEREAS, the generous philanthropy of the American people directly resulted in the salvation of the Christian Armenian and Assyrian refugees nation from being completely annihilated by the Genocide by saving more than one million refugees, including more than one hundred thirty thousand orphans through their humanitarian assistance; and

WHEREAS, Delaware is home to a small, but vibrant Armenian-American community who have enriched our state through their leadership and contribution in business, agriculture, academia, government, and the arts; and

WHEREAS, Armenians in Delaware, and throughout the world, have not been provided with justice for the crimes perpetrated against the Armenian nation despite the fact that a century has passed since the crimes were first committed, but remain resolved and their spirit continues to thrive a century after their near annihilation; now, therefore; and

WHEREAS, April 24, 2015, will mark the centennial anniversary since the commencement of the Armenian Genocide.

NOW, THEREFORE:

BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the 148th General Assembly of the State of Delaware, the House concurring therein, that:

1. The Delaware General Assembly hereby designates the year of 2015, as "Delaware Year of Remembrance for the Armenian Genocide of 1915-1923."

2. This resolution recognizes the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide and acknowledges the criminal mistreatment of the Christian Armenians, Assyrians, and Greeks by the government of the Ottoman Turkish Empire as an issue of international and historic significance that requires a resolution based on truth and justice.

3. The Delaware General Assembly urges the Republic of Turkey to acknowledge the facts of the Armenian Genocide and to work toward a just resolution.

4. The Delaware General Assembly shall call upon the citizens of the State of Delaware to recognize the 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide and honor the memory of the 1.5 million people who died as a result.

5. The Delaware General Assembly respectfully calls upon the Congress and the President of the United States to act likewise and to formally and consistently recognize and reaffirm the historical truth that the atrocities committed against the Armenian people constituted genocide.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that a suitably prepared copy be mailed to The Armenian Prelacy of New York.

SYNOPSIS

This Concurrent Resolution recognizes the 100th Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide.

AUTHOR: Sen. Lopez