

**First Regular Session
Seventieth General Assembly
STATE OF COLORADO**

INTRODUCED

LLS NO. R15-0854.01 Effie Ameen x2044

SJR15-027

SENATE SPONSORSHIP

Guzman,

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SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 15-027

101 **CONCERNING THE "COLORADO DAY OF REMEMBRANCE OF THE**
102 **ARMENIAN GENOCIDE" ON APRIL 24, 2015.**

1 WHEREAS, This year marks the 100th anniversary of the first
2 genocide of the 20th century, the Armenian genocide, when 1.5 million
3 men, women, and children of Armenian descent were victims of a brutal
4 genocide perpetrated by the Turkish Ottoman Empire from 1915 to 1923;
5 and

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

8 WHEREAS, The former United States Ambassador to the Ottoman
9 Empire, Henry Morgenthau, Sr., stated in 1915, "Whatever crimes the
10 most perverted instincts of the human mind can devise, and whatever

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.
Capital letters indicate new material to be added to existing statute.
Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.

1 refinements of persecutions and injustice the most debased imagination
2 can conceive, became the daily misfortunes of this devoted people."; and

3 WHEREAS, The killing of the Armenian people was followed by
4 the systematic destruction of churches, schools, libraries, treasures of art,
5 and cultural monuments that continues to this day in an attempt to
6 eliminate all traces of a noble civilization with a history of more than
7 3,000 years; and

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

15 WHEREAS, In response to the genocide and at the behest of
16 President Woodrow Wilson and the U.S. State Department, the Near East
17 Relief organization was founded and became the first Congressionally
18 sanctioned American philanthropic effort created exclusively to provide
19 humanitarian assistance and rescue the Armenian Nation and other
20 Christian minorities from annihilation, and many of those rescued went
21 on to survive, revive, and thrive outside of their ancestral homeland all
22 over the world and specifically in the state of Colorado; and

23 WHEREAS, Near East Relief succeeded, with the active
24 participation of many Coloradans, including Governor Oliver Shoup, who
25 concurrently served as Colorado State Chairman for Near East Relief, in
26 delivering \$117 million of assistance and saving more than one million
27 refugees, including 132,000 orphans, between 1915 and 1930 by
28 delivering food, clothing, and materials for shelter and setting up refugee
29 camps, clinics, hospitals, and orphanages; and

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

33 WHEREAS, Each April, Armenians throughout the world honor
34 their martyrs and commemorate the Armenian genocide, a term first used
35 by Raphael Lemkin, the legal scholar who coined the word "genocide"
36 and drafted the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and

1 Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, explaining on CBS television in
2 1949 that he "became interested in genocide because it happened to the
3 Armenians; and . . . their criminals . . . were not punished"; and

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

9 *Be It Resolved by the Senate of the Seventieth General Assembly*
10 *of the State of Colorado, the House of Representatives concurring herein:*

11 (1) That we pause in our deliberations to commemorate the 100th
12 anniversary of the Armenian genocide, which will be formally recognized
13 at a memorial service at 12:00 p.m. on Friday, April 24, 2015, at the
14 newly renovated Armenian Garden, established in 1982 in the northeast
15 quadrant on the State Capitol grounds, and which service will include the
16 unveiling of a cultural monument crafted in Armenia that honors the
17 victims of all crimes against humanity;

18 (2) That we, the members of the General Assembly, hereby
19 acknowledge April 24, 2015, and April 24 of each year thereafter, as
20 "Colorado Day of Remembrance of the Armenian Genocide"; and

21 (3) That we express support for efforts toward constructive and
22 durable Armenian-Turkish relations based upon acknowledgment of the
23 facts and ongoing consequences of the Armenian genocide, and a fair,
24 just, and comprehensive international resolution of this crime against
25 humanity.

26 *Be It Further Resolved,* That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent
27 to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of the United States; the
28 members of Colorado's congressional delegation; the members of the
29 Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues; the Honorable John
30 Hickenlooper, Governor of Colorado; the Armenian Assembly of
31 America in Washington, D.C.; the Armenian National Committee of
32 America in Washington, D.C.; the Armenian Embassy in Washington,
33 D.C.; the Armenian Genocide Museum-Institute in Yerevan, Armenia; the
34 Colorado Coalition for Genocide Awareness and Action; Rocky
35 Mountain Hye Advocates; and Armenians of Colorado, Inc.