

No. R-119. House concurrent resolution commemorating the 100th anniversary of the start of the Armenian Genocide.

(H.C.R.86)

Offered by: Representatives Lenes of Shelburne and Greshin of Warren

Offered by: Senators Sears, Baruth, Balint, Benning, Campion, Collamore, Cummings, Flory, McCormack, Mullin, Pollina, Snelling, White, and Zuckerman

Whereas, from 1915 to 1923, the government of the Ottoman Empire persecuted and executed systematically an estimated 1.5 million Armenians, and

Whereas, this brutal mistreatment became known as the Armenian Genocide and, by 1923, it had resulted in the elimination of the Armenian population in Asia Minor and historic West Armenia, and

Whereas, the Armenian Genocide began on the night of April 24, 1915, when the Turkish government arrested more than 200 Armenian community leaders in Constantinople, the Ottoman Empire's capital city, and

Whereas, most of the prominent public figures of the Armenian community were summarily executed, and

Whereas, large numbers of Armenian civilians were forcibly deported to the Syrian desert, and many died either en route, at the hands of government-aligned gangs, or from dehydration and starvation in the desert, and

Whereas, in May 1915, the Allied Powers of France, Great Britain, and Russia issued a joint statement charging the government in Constantinople with committing crimes "against humanity and civilization," the first time a government-to-government charge of this type was issued, and

Whereas, it is estimated that, by 1918, the Ottoman Empire's brutal treatment of Armenians had resulted in the deaths of one million persons and made hundreds of thousands of others homeless and stateless refugees, and

Whereas, Raphael Lemkin, the initial drafter of the United Nations Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide and the originator of the term "genocide," recognized the Armenian Genocide as the type of crime the United Nations should prevent through the establishment of international standards, and

Whereas, historians cite the Armenian Genocide as a forerunner of later human massacres, including the Holocaust, the Cambodian Killing Fields, Bosnia, Rwanda, and Darfur, and

Whereas, on April 24, 2004, Governor James Douglas issued a proclamation recognizing the Armenian Genocide on the 89th anniversary of its initiation, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly commemorates the 100th anniversary of the start of the Armenian Genocide, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the Armenian National Committee of Vermont.