



SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 09-041

BY SENATOR(S) Tochtrop, Bacon, Boyd, Brophy, Cadman, Carroll M., Foster, Gibbs, Harvey, Heath, Hodge, Hudak, Isgar, Keller, Kester, King K., Kopp, Lundberg, Mitchell, Morse, Newell, Penry, Romer, Sandoval, Scheffel, Schultheis, Schwartz, Shaffer B., Spence, Tapia, Veiga, White, Williams;

also REPRESENTATIVE(S) Ryden, Acree, Apuan, Balmer, Baumgardner, Benefield, Bradford, Casso, Court, Curry, Ferrandino, Fischer, Frangas, Gagliardi, Gardner B., Gardner C., Gerou, Green, Hullinghorst, Judd, Kagan, Kefalas, Kerr A., Kerr J., King S., Labuda, Lambert, Levy, Liston, Looper, Marostica, Massey, May, McCann, McFadyen, McNulty, Merrifield, Middleton, Miklosi, Murray, Nikkel, Pace, Peniston, Pommer, Primavera, Priola, Rice, Riesberg, Roberts, Scanlan, Schafer S., Solano, Sonnenberg, Soper, Stephens, Summers, Swalm, Todd, Vaad, Vigil, Waller, Carroll T.

CONCERNING REMEMBRANCE OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE ON APRIL 24, 2009, AND, IN CONNECTION THEREWITH, DESIGNATING EVERY APRIL 24 HEREAFTER AS "COLORADO DAY OF REMEMBRANCE OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE".

WHEREAS, This year marks the 94th anniversary of the first genocide of the 20th century, the Armenian Genocide, when 1.5 million men, women, and children of Armenian descent were victims of a brutal genocide perpetrated by the Turkish Ottoman Empire from 1915 to 1923; and

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

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

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

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

WHEREAS, In March 2009, *The New York Times* reported that a newly exposed official Ottoman document revealed that 972,000 Armenians disappeared from population records within one year, from 1915 through 1916; and

WHEREAS, Despite overwhelming evidence, modern Turkey continues to deny and distort the facts of the genocide, honor the perpetrators of that crime against humanity as national heroes, and persecute its citizens who acknowledge or even allude to the Armenian Genocide; and

WHEREAS, Each April, Armenians throughout the world honor their martyrs, and all the world's people should commemorate the Armenian Genocide and condemn any attempt to deny its historical truth and mischaracterize it as anything less than genocide - a term coined by Raphael Lemkin in 1944, referencing the Armenian extermination as a seminal example of genocide; and

WHEREAS, We must all fight against current injustices, such as the ongoing first genocide of the 21st century in Darfur; and

WHEREAS, We commend Armenians of Colorado, Inc., for organizing April 2009 genocide commemoration events such as a keynote speech by Mr. Artyom Tonoyan about the rise of Turkish nationalism and a panel discussion, "Breaking the Cycle of Genocide", both at the University of Denver; and

WHEREAS, We commend the growing number of Turkish citizens who challenge their government's official account of history, such as the 29,000 signatories of a recent online apology addressed to the Armenian people that was launched by some 200 Turkish academics, writers, and journalists; now, therefore,

Be It Resolved by the Senate of the Sixty-seventh General Assembly of the State of Colorado, the House of Representatives concurring herein:

(1) That this legislative body pause in its deliberations to commemorate the 94th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, to be recognized at a memorial service at 12:00 p.m. on Sunday, April 26, 2009, at the Armenian Genocide memorial plaque in the Armenian Garden, located in the northeast quadrant on the State Capitol grounds; and

(2) That we, the members of the Colorado General Assembly, hereby acknowledge April 24, 2009, and April 24 of every year hereafter, as "Colorado Day of Remembrance of the Armenian Genocide".

Be It Further Resolved, That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of the United States; the members of the Colorado Congressional Delegation; the members of the Congressional Caucus on Armenian Issues; the Honorable Bill Ritter, Governor of Colorado; the Armenian Assembly of America in Washington, D.C.; the Armenian National Committee in Washington, D.C.; and the Turkish Embassy in Washington, D.C.

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