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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2025

SENATE RESOLUTION

PROCLAIMING MAY 19TH OF 2025 AS "GREEK AND PONTIC GENOCIDE
REMEMBRANCE DAY" IN THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

Introduced By: Senators Raptakis, Gallo, and Tikoian

Date Introduced: May 15, 2025

Referred To: Recommended for Immediate Consideration

1 WHEREAS, Rhode Island is proud to be the home of numerous ethnic communities,
2 many of whom have prospered and enjoyed the freedom and democracy upon which our nation
3 was founded; tragically, throughout history, the people of many countries have not realized the
4 same autonomy and equality; and

5 WHEREAS, From 1913 until 1923, in a systematic attempt to exterminate the entire
6 Greek population in Pontus, Smyrna, Asia Minor, and Eastern Thrace of the Ottoman Empire
7 took place. The Ottoman Turks directed the killing of 353,000 Pontian and over one million
8 Anatolian and Asia Minor Greeks and over a million Armenians and Assyrians living in Pontos,
9 and an equal number who were forced to flee their homeland in one of the most condemnable
10 atrocities in the history of the world; and

11 WHEREAS, The Ottoman and Kemals Neo Turks engaged in forced relocation, death
12 marches, starvation, slaughter, rape, forced conversion to Islam, conscription into labor
13 battalions, arbitrary executions, and destruction of Christian Orthodox cultural, historical and
14 religious monuments to ethnically cleanse the Greek population and perpetrate the first mass
15 genocide of the 20th century. Furthermore, the Armenian Genocide was conceived and carried
16 out by the Ottoman Empire from 1915 to 1923, and resulted in the deportation of nearly
17 2,000,000 Armenians, of whom 1,500,000 men, women, and children were killed, and the
18 remaining 500,000 survived but were expelled from their homes; and

19 WHEREAS, It is vital and proper to remember those who lost their lives in the Greek

1 Genocide, and it is paramount that people of all nations look at this horrific event in our world's
2 not-so-distant history as a way to learn a valuable lesson, in order that such atrocities are not
3 tolerated and are never committed again; and

4 WHEREAS, It is likewise important to pay tribute to the survivors of this atrocious
5 period, as well as their descendants, who have made countless contributions to the enrichment of
6 our culture and our way of life here in the Ocean State and who stand as an inspiration to
7 oppressed people around the world; and

8 WHEREAS, The year 2025 will be memorialized throughout the world as the symbolic
9 106th Anniversary of the Genocide of the Pontian Greeks. May we never forget the brutality the
10 Pontian Greeks experienced at the hands of the Ottoman Empire, and may we learn the hard
11 lessons from the past in order that the history of the Greek Genocide, and all Genocides, never
12 happen again; now, therefore be it

13 RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island hereby joins the Greek-
14 American community on May 19th of each year in a solemn commemoration of the Greek and
15 Pontic Genocide of 1913-1923; and be it further

16 RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to
17 transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to Miltiadis Tsavdaridis, President of the Pan-
18 Pontian Federation of the USA and Canada.

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