

2026 -- H 8567

=====
LC006457
=====

STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2026

HOUSE RESOLUTION

PROCLAIMING MAY 19TH OF 2026 AS "GREEK AND PONTIC GENOCIDE
REMEMBRANCE DAY" IN THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

Introduced By: Representatives Solomon, Blazejewski, Kazarian, Chippendale,
Paplauskas, Casey, Kennedy, Ajello, Hopkins, and Shallcross Smith

Date Introduced: May 19, 2026

Referred To: House read and passed

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 300,000 Assyrians living in
9 Pontos, and Mesopotamia and an equal number who were forced to flee their homeland in one of
10 the most condemnable 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 along with the
18 mass killing and deportation of Assyrians during the same period, and the remaining 500,000
19 survived but were expelled from their homes; and

1 WHEREAS, It is vital and proper to remember those who lost their lives in the Greek
2 Genocide, and it is paramount that people of all nations look at this horrific event in our world's
3 not-so-distant history as a way to learn a valuable lesson, in order that such atrocities are not
4 tolerated and are never committed again; and

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

9 WHEREAS, The year 2026 will be memorialized throughout the world as the symbolic
10 107th Anniversary of the Genocide of the Pontian Greeks. May we never forget the brutality the
11 Pontian Greeks experienced at the hands of the Ottoman Empire, and may we learn the hard
12 lessons from the past in order that the history of the Greek Genocide, and all Genocides, never
13 happen again; now, therefore be it

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

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

=====
LC006457
=====