

2016 -- S 2924

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STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

IN GENERAL ASSEMBLY

JANUARY SESSION, A.D. 2016

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SENATE RESOLUTION

PROCLAIMING MAY 19TH OF 2016 AS "GREEK PONTIAN GENOCIDE  
REMEMBRANCE DAY" IN THE STATE OF RHODE ISLAND

Introduced By: Senators Raptakis, Gallo, Goodwin, Jabour, and Walaska

Date Introduced: April 28, 2016

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 1914 until 1922, in a systematic attempt to exterminate an entire  
6           population, the Ottoman Turks directed the killing of 353,000 Pontian and Anatolian Greeks and  
7           over a million Armenians and Assyrians living in Pontos, and an equal number who were forced  
8           to flee their homeland in one of the most condemnable atrocities in the history of the world; and

9           WHEREAS, The Ottoman and Kemals Neoturks engaged in exile, starvation, slaughter,  
10          and murder, using axes and fire to massacre the Pontic Greek population and perpetrate the first  
11          mass genocide of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, and the Armenian Genocide was conceived and carried out by  
12          the Ottoman Empire from 1915 to 1923, and resulted in the deportation of nearly 2,000,000  
13          Armenians, of whom 1,500,000 men, women, and children were killed, and the remaining  
14          500,000 survived but were expelled from their homes; and

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

19          WHEREAS, It is likewise important to pay tribute to the survivors of this atrocious

1 period, as well as their descendants, who have made countless contributions to the enrichment of  
2 our culture and our way of life here in the Ocean State and who stand as an inspiration to  
3 oppressed people around the world; now, therefore be it

4           RESOLVED, That this Senate of the State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations  
5 hereby joins the Greek-American community on May 19<sup>th</sup> of each year in a solemn  
6 commemoration of the Pontian Genocide of 1914-1922; and be it further

7           RESOLVED, That the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to  
8 transmit a duly certified copy of this resolution to Panayiotis Petridis at the Panayia Soumela  
9 Pontian Society of Boston.

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