

1.1 A Senate resolution

1.2 expressing the sense of the Minnesota Senate urging the government of Turkey to

1.3 uphold and safeguard religious and human rights.

1.4 WHEREAS, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, led by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, who

1.5 is the 269th in direct succession to the Apostle Andrew and holds titular title first among equals,

1.6 in the community of Orthodox churches worldwide; and

1.7 WHEREAS, in 1997, the Congress of the United States awarded Ecumenical Patriarch

1.8 Bartholomew with the Congressional Gold Medal; and

1.9 WHEREAS, the Orthodox Christian Church, in existence for nearly 2,000 years, numbers

1.10 approximately 300 million members worldwide with more than two million members in the United

1.11 States; and

1.12 WHEREAS, since 1453, the continuing presence of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Turkey

1.13 has been a living testament to one worldwide faith; and

1.14 WHEREAS, this religious coexistence is in jeopardy because the Ecumenical Patriarchate

1.15 is being persecuted because of unfair, hostile actions by various factions within the Turkish

1.16 government; and

1.17 WHEREAS, the Turkish government's current treatment of the Ecumenical Patriarchate is

1.18 inconsistent with the membership conditions and goals of the European Union; and

1.19 WHEREAS, Orthodox Christians in this State and throughout the United States stand to lose

1.20 their spiritual leader because of the continued actions of the Turkish government; and

1.21 WHEREAS, we rightly appreciate that the current Turkish government has made positive

1.22 improvements in the last ten years in its relation to the Ecumenical Patriarchate with respect to the

1.23 return of two significant properties formerly in dispute, with respect to allowing Orthodox clergy

1.24 in lands outside Turkey to apply for and gain citizenship in Turkey to help ensure the possibility

2.1 of patriarchal succession, and with respect to the physical security of the Ecumenical Patriarchate  
2.2 in the recent uncovering and thwarting of a plotted assassination of Patriarch Bartholomew; and

2.3 WHEREAS, we recognize that the current Turkish government has continued to negotiate  
2.4 and publicly address these and other related issues with a commitment to their resolution in a manner  
2.5 acceptable to all interested parties; and

2.6 WHEREAS, Minnesota has a significant population of Greek Orthodox parishioners, with  
2.7 citizens in Minneapolis, St. Paul, Duluth, and Rochester; NOW, THEREFORE,

2.8 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the State of Minnesota that we urge the Government of  
2.9 Turkey to uphold and safeguard religious and human rights without compromise; cease its  
2.10 discrimination of the Ecumenical Patriarchate; grant the Ecumenical Patriarchate appropriate  
2.11 international recognition, ecclesiastic succession, and the right to train clergy of all nationalities;  
2.12 and to respect the property rights and human rights of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

2.13 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is directed to prepare a copy  
2.14 of this resolution, to be authenticated by his signature and that of the Chair of the Senate Rules and  
2.15 Administration Committee, and transmit it to Metropolitan Iakovos of Chicago.