

REFERENCE TITLE: Assyrian Genocide; recognition

State of Arizona
House of Representatives
Fifty-sixth Legislature
First Regular Session
2023

HCR 2044

Introduced by
Representative Toma

A CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

RECOGNIZING THE ASSYRIAN GENOCIDE.

(TEXT OF BILL BEGINS ON NEXT PAGE)

1 Whereas, the denial of genocide is widely recognized as the final
2 stage of genocide, enshrining impunity for the perpetrators of genocide
3 and demonstrably paving the way for future genocides; and

4 Whereas, the Ottoman Empire committed the crime of genocide against
5 the Assyrian people, killing at least 300,000 innocent Assyrians and more
6 than one million Armenians, Greeks and other Christians by way of mass
7 executions, death marches, torture and starvation during the First World
8 War; and

9 Whereas, the Elie Wiesel Genocide and Atrocities Prevention Act of
10 2018 establishes that atrocities prevention represents a United States
11 national interest and affirms that it is the policy of the United States
12 to pursue a government-wide strategy to identify, prevent and respond to
13 the risk of atrocities by strengthening diplomatic response and by
14 effectively using foreign assistance to support appropriate transitional
15 justice measures, including criminal accountability for past atrocities;
16 and

17 Whereas, the majority of the Assyrian population was displaced from
18 their homes and forced to escape to neighboring and faraway communities
19 and countries, with many refugees fleeing to the United States. Today,
20 Arizona is honored to be home to a vibrant population of more than 25,000
21 Assyrian-Americans. This thriving community is a proud reminder of
22 survival and perseverance in the face of extreme injustice; and

23 Whereas, the most notable victim of this tragic period was the
24 ethno-martyr and Catholicos Patriarch Mar Benyamin Shimun XXI, the leader
25 of the Assyrian Nation and Church; and

26 Whereas, the Assyrian Genocide remains unrecognized by many
27 countries and organizations across the globe, including the United States.
28 Therefore

29 Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the State of Arizona,
30 the Senate concurring:

31 1. That the members of the Legislature affirm that it is the duty
32 of the United States to:

33 (a) Commemorate the Assyrian Genocide through official recognition
34 and remembrance.

35 (b) Reject efforts to enlist, engage or otherwise associate the
36 United States government with denial of the Assyrian Genocide or any other
37 genocide.

38 (c) Call on the government of Turkey to acknowledge the genocides
39 against these mentioned populations, to issue a formal apology and to take
40 prompt and meaningful steps toward restitution.

1 (d) Encourage education and public understanding of the facts and
2 relevance of the Assyrian Genocide in comparison to modern-day crimes
3 against humanity.

4 2. That the Members of the Legislature acknowledge that the Ottoman
5 Empire's campaign against its Christian minorities that occurred between
6 1914 and 1923 constituted genocide against Assyrians, Armenians and
7 Greeks.