
HOUSE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

REQUESTING THE REPUBLIC OF TURKEY TO UPHOLD AND SAFEGUARD RELIGIOUS AND HUMAN RIGHTS, TO CEASE DISCRIMINATION AGAINST THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE, TO GRANT THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH APPROPRIATE ECUMENICAL RECOGNITION, ECCLESIASTIC SUCCESSION, AND THE RIGHT TO TRAIN CLERGY OF ALL NATIONALITIES, AND TO RESPECT THE PROPERTY RIGHTS, HUMAN RIGHTS, AND RELIGIOUS RIGHTS OF THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE.

1 WHEREAS, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, located in Istanbul,
2 Turkey, is the Sacred See that presides in a spirit of
3 brotherhood over a communion of self-governing churches of the
4 Orthodox Christian world; and

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6 WHEREAS, the See is led by Ecumenical Patriarch
7 Bartholomew, who is the 270th in direct succession to the Apostle
8 Andrew and holds titular primacy as primus inter pares, meaning
9 "first among equals," in the community of Orthodox Christian
10 churches worldwide; and

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12 WHEREAS, in 1994, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, along
13 with leaders of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation, cosponsored
14 the Conference on Peace and Tolerance, which brought together
15 Christian, Jewish, and Muslim religious leaders for an
16 interfaith dialogue to help end the Balkan conflict and the
17 ethnic conflict in the Caucasus region; and

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19 WHEREAS, in 1997, the Congress of the United States awarded
20 Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew with the Congressional Gold
21 Medal; and

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23 WHEREAS, following the terrorist attacks on our nation on
24 September 11, 2001, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew gathered a
25 group of international religious leaders to produce the first



1 joint statement with Muslim leaders that condemned the 9/11
2 attacks as "antireligious"; and
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4 WHEREAS, in October 2005, the Ecumenical Patriarch, along
5 with Christian, Jewish, and Muslim leaders, cosponsored the
6 Conference on Peace and Tolerance II to further promote peace
7 and stability in southeastern Europe, the Caucasus region, and
8 Central Asia through religious leaders' interfaith dialogue,
9 understanding, and action; and
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11 WHEREAS, the Orthodox Christian Church, in existence for
12 nearly 2,000 years, numbers approximately 300,000,000 members
13 worldwide with more than 2,000,000 members in the United States;
14 and
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16 WHEREAS, since 1453, the continuing presence of the
17 Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul has been a living testament
18 to the religious coexistence of Christians and Muslims; and
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20 WHEREAS, this religious coexistence is in jeopardy because
21 the Ecumenical Patriarchate is considered by the Turkish
22 government to be the head of the Greek minority in Istanbul
23 exclusively, rather than the head of the Greek Orthodox Church;
24 and
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26 WHEREAS, the Turkish government has limited the candidates
27 available to hold the office of Ecumenical Patriarch to only
28 Turkish nationals, and there remain fewer than 2,000 of the
29 Ecumenical Patriarch's congregation in Turkey today; and
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31 WHEREAS, the Turkish government closed the Theological
32 School on the island of Halki in 1971 and has refused to allow
33 it to reopen, thus impeding training for Orthodox Christian
34 clergy; and
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36 WHEREAS, the Turkish government does not recognize the
37 Ecumenical Patriarchate as a legal entity, and is therefore
38 confiscating all of its properties along with the majority of
39 the property belonging to the Greek community and its parishes,
40 and imposing high taxes on the Balouki Hospital and Home for the
41 Aged, a charity hospital; and
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43 WHEREAS, the European Union, a group of nations with a
44 common goal of promoting peace and the well-being of its



1 peoples, began accession negotiations with Turkey on October 3,
2 2005; and

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4 WHEREAS, the European Union defined membership criteria for
5 accession at the Copenhagen European Council in 1993, obligating
6 candidate countries to achieve certain levels of reform,
7 including stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy,
8 adherence to the rule of law, and respect for and protection of
9 minorities, human rights, and religious rights; and

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11 WHEREAS, the Turkish government's current treatment of the
12 Ecumenical Patriarchate is inconsistent with the membership
13 conditions and goals of the European Union; and

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15 WHEREAS, Orthodox Christians in Hawaii and throughout the
16 United States stand to lose their spiritual leader because of
17 the deliberate actions of the Turkish government; and

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19 WHEREAS, the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of the
20 Order of Saint Andrew the Apostle, a group of laymen who each
21 have been honored with a patriarchal title, or "offikion," by
22 the Ecumenical Patriarch for their outstanding service to the
23 Orthodox Church, will send an American delegation to Turkey to
24 meet with Turkish government officials, as well as the United
25 States Ambassador to the Republic of Turkey, regarding the
26 Turkish government's treatment of the Ecumenical Patriarchate;
27 now, therefore,

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29 BE IT RESOLVED by the House of Representatives of the
30 Twenty-sixth Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session
31 of 2011, the Senate concurring, that the Republic of Turkey is
32 requested to:

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34 (1) Uphold and safeguard religious and human rights
35 without compromise;
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37 (2) Cease its discrimination against the Ecumenical
38 Patriarchate;
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40 (3) Grant the Ecumenical Patriarch appropriate ecumenical
41 recognition, ecclesiastic succession, and the right to
42 train clergy of all nationalities; and



H.C.R. NO. 192

1 (4) Respect the property rights, human rights, and
2 religious rights of the Ecumenical Patriarchate;

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4 and

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6 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
7 Concurrent Resolution be transmitted to the President of the
8 United States, the United States Ambassador to the Republic of
9 Turkey, the Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to the United
10 States, and to the members of Hawaii's congressional delegation.

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SR

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