

AMENDED IN ASSEMBLY APRIL 7, 2014

CALIFORNIA LEGISLATURE—2013–14 REGULAR SESSION

**Assembly Joint Resolution**

**No. 35**

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**Introduced by Assembly Member John A. Pérez**

*(Coauthors: Assembly Members Achadjian, Alejo, Allen, Ammiano, Atkins, Bigelow, Bocanegra, Bonilla, Bonta, Bradford, Brown, Buchanan, Ian Calderon, Campos, Chau, Chávez, Chesbro, Cooley, Dababneh, Dahle, Daly, Dickinson, Donnelly, Eggman, Fong, Fox, Frazier, Beth Gaines, Garcia, Gatto, Gomez, Gonzalez, Gordon, Gorell, Gray, Grove, Hagman, Hall, Harkey, Roger Hernández, Holden, Jones, Jones-Sawyer, Levine, Linder, Maienschein, Mansoor, Medina, Melendez, Mullin, Muratsuchi, Nazarian, Nestande, Olsen, Pan, Patterson, Perea, V. Manuel Pérez, Quirk, Quirk-Silva, Rendon, Ridley-Thomas, Rodriguez, Salas, Skinner, Stone, Ting, Wagner, Waldron, Weber, Wieckowski, Wilk, Williams, and Yamada)*

February 18, 2014

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Assembly Joint Resolution No. 35—Relative to the Armenian Genocide.

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AJR 35, as amended, John A. Pérez. Armenian Genocide.

This measure would designate the week of April 20 to 26, 2014, as “California Week of Remembrance for the Armenian Genocide of 1915–1923,” and would memorialize the Congress and the President of the United States to observe the California Week of Remembrance for the Armenian Genocide by participating in the Armenian Genocide Commemorative Project.

Fiscal committee: no.

1 WHEREAS, The Armenian Genocide of 1915–1923 was the  
2 first genocide of the 20th century, in which 1.5 million men,  
3 women, and children lost their lives at the hands of the Turkish  
4 Ottoman Empire in their attempt to systematically eliminate the  
5 Armenian race; and

6 WHEREAS, In their 3,000 year historic homeland in Asia  
7 Minor, Armenians were subjected to severe and unjust persecution  
8 and brutality by the Turkish rulers of the Ottoman Empire before  
9 and after the turn of the 20th century, including widespread acts  
10 of destruction and murder during the period from 1894 to 1896,  
11 inclusive, and again in 1909; and

12 WHEREAS, The massacre of the Armenians constituted one of  
13 the most atrocious violations of human rights in the history of the  
14 world; and

15 WHEREAS, Adolph Hitler, in persuading his army commanders  
16 that the merciless persecution and killing of Jews, Poles, and other  
17 people would bring no retribution, declared, “Who, after all, speaks  
18 today of the annihilation of the Armenians?”; and

19 WHEREAS, Unlike other people and governments that have  
20 admitted and denounced the abuses and crimes of predecessor  
21 regimes, and despite the overwhelming proof of genocidal intent,  
22 the Republic of Turkey has inexplicably and adamantly denied the  
23 occurrence of the crimes against humanity committed by the  
24 Ottoman and Young Turk rulers, and those denials compound the  
25 grief of the few remaining survivors of the atrocities, desecrate  
26 the memory of the victims, and cause continuing pain to the  
27 descendants of the victims; and

28 WHEREAS, Leaders of nations with strategic, commercial, and  
29 cultural ties to the Republic of Turkey should be reminded of their  
30 duty to encourage Turkish officials to cease efforts to distort facts  
31 and deny the history of events surrounding the Armenian Genocide;  
32 and

33 WHEREAS, The determination of those who continue to speak  
34 the truth about the Armenian Genocide is tested to this day with  
35 some of these speakers of truth being silenced by violent means;  
36 and

37 WHEREAS, The accelerated level and scope of denial and  
38 revisionism, coupled with the passage of time and the fact that  
39 very few survivors remain who can serve as reminders of

1 indescribable brutality and tormented lives, compel a sense of  
2 urgency in efforts to solidify recognition of historical truth; and  
3 WHEREAS, By consistently remembering and forcefully  
4 condemning the atrocities committed against the Armenians, and  
5 honoring the survivors as well as other victims of similar heinous  
6 conduct, we guard against repetition of such acts of genocide and  
7 provide the American public with a greater understanding of its  
8 heritage; and

9 WHEREAS, This measure would provide that the Legislature  
10 deplors the persistent, ongoing efforts by any person in this  
11 country or abroad to deny the historical fact of the Armenian  
12 Genocide; and

13 WHEREAS, California is home to the largest  
14 Armenian-American population in the United States, and  
15 Armenians living in California have enriched our state through  
16 their leadership in business, agriculture, academia, government,  
17 and the arts; and

18 WHEREAS, The State of California has been at the forefront  
19 of encouraging and promoting a curriculum relating to human  
20 rights and genocide in order to empower future generations to  
21 prevent recurrence of the crime of genocide; now, therefore, be it

22 *Resolved by the Assembly and the Senate of the State of*  
23 *California, jointly,* That the State of California commends its  
24 conscientious educators who teach about human rights and  
25 genocide; and be it further

26 *Resolved,* That the Legislature of the State of California hereby  
27 designates the week of April 20 to 26, 2014, as “California Week  
28 of Remembrance for the Armenian Genocide of 1915–1923”; and  
29 be it further

30 *Resolved,* That California commemorates California Week of  
31 Remembrance for the Armenian Genocide through the Armenian  
32 Genocide Commemorative Project; and be it further

33 *Resolved,* That the State of California respectfully calls upon  
34 the Congress and the President of the United States to act likewise  
35 and to formally and consistently recognize and reaffirm the  
36 historical truth that the atrocities committed against the Armenian  
37 people constituted genocide; and be it further

38 *Resolved,* That the Legislature calls upon the Republic of Turkey  
39 to acknowledge the facts of the Armenian Genocide and to work  
40 toward a just resolution; and be it further

1     *Resolved*, That the Chief Clerk of the Assembly transmit copies  
2 of this resolution to the President and Vice President of the United  
3 States, Members of the United States Congress, the Governor, and  
4 the Turkish Ambassador to the United States.

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