

MAR 10 2010

SENATE 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 269th in direct succession to the
8 Apostle Andrew and holds titular primacy as primus inter pares,
9 meaning "first among equals," in the community of Orthodox
10 Christian 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
26 joint statement with Muslim leaders that condemned the 9/11
27 attacks as "antireligious"; and
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1 WHEREAS, in October 2005, the Ecumenical Patriarch, along
2 with Christian, Jewish, and Muslim leaders, cosponsored the
3 Conference on Peace and Tolerance II to further promote peace
4 and stability in southeastern Europe, the Caucasus region, and
5 Central Asia through religious leaders' interfaith dialogue,
6 understanding, and action; and
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8 WHEREAS, the Orthodox Christian Church, in existence for
9 nearly two thousand years, numbers approximately three hundred
10 million members worldwide with more than two million members in
11 the United States; and
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13 WHEREAS, since 1453, the continuing presence of the
14 Ecumenical Patriarchate in Istanbul has been a living testament
15 to the religious coexistence of Christians and Muslims; and
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17 WHEREAS, this religious coexistence is in jeopardy because
18 the Ecumenical Patriarchate is considered by the Turkish
19 government to be the head of the Greek minority in Istanbul
20 exclusively, rather than the head of the Greek Orthodox Church;
21 and
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23 WHEREAS, the Turkish government has limited the candidates
24 available to hold the office of Ecumenical Patriarch to only
25 Turkish nationals, and there remain fewer than two thousand of
26 the Ecumenical Patriarch's congregation in Turkey today; and
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28 WHEREAS, the Turkish government closed the Theological
29 School on the island of Halki in 1971 and has refused to allow
30 it to reopen, thus impeding training for Orthodox Christian
31 clergy; and
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33 WHEREAS, the Turkish government does not recognize the
34 Ecumenical Patriarchate as a legal entity, and is therefore
35 confiscating all of its properties along with the majority of
36 the property belonging to the Greek community and its parishes,
37 and imposing high taxes on the Balouki Hospital and Home for the
38 aged, a charity hospital; and
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40 WHEREAS, the European Union, a group of nations with a
41 common goal of promoting peace and the well-being of its
42 peoples, began accession negotiations with Turkey on October 3,
43 2005; and
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1 WHEREAS, the European Union defined membership criteria for
2 accession at the Copenhagen European Council in 1993, obligating
3 candidate countries to achieve certain levels of reform,
4 including stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy,
5 adherence to the rule of law, and respect for and protection of
6 minorities, human rights, and religious rights; and
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8 WHEREAS, the Turkish government's current treatment of the
9 Ecumenical Patriarchate is inconsistent with the membership
10 conditions and goals of the European Union; and
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12 WHEREAS, Orthodox Christians in Hawaii and throughout the
13 United States stand to lose their spiritual leader because of
14 the deliberate actions of the Turkish government; and
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16 WHEREAS, the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of the
17 Order of Saint Andrew the Apostle, a group of laymen who each
18 have been honored with a patriarchal title, or "offikion," by
19 the Ecumenical Patriarch for their outstanding service to the
20 Orthodox Church, will send an American delegation to Turkey to
21 meet with Turkish government officials, as well as the United
22 States Ambassador to the Republic of Turkey, regarding the
23 Turkish government's treatment of the Ecumenical Patriarchate;
24 now, therefore,
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26 BE IT RESOLVED by the Senate of the Twenty-fifth
27 Legislature of the State of Hawaii, Regular Session of 2010,
28 that the Republic of Turkey is requested to:
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- 30 (1) Uphold and safeguard religious and human rights
31 without compromise;
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- 33 (2) Cease its discrimination against the Ecumenical
34 Patriarchate;
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- 36 (3) Grant the Ecumenical Patriarch appropriate ecumenical
37 recognition, ecclesiastic succession, and the right to
38 train clergy of all nationalities; and
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- 40 (4) Respect the property rights, human rights, and
41 religious rights of the Ecumenical Patriarchate; and
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43 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that certified copies of this
44 Resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States,



1 the United States Ambassador to the Republic of Turkey, the
2 Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to the United States, and
3 to the members of Hawaii's congressional delegation.
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OFFERED BY:

Steve Fulemaga
Elizabeth Chiu Oakland

