



Introduced Version

**HOUSE
RESOLUTION No. _____**

Introduced by: Morris

1 A HOUSE RESOLUTION urging the government of
2 Turkey to cease its discrimination against the Ecumenical
3 Patriarchate of the Orthodox Christian Church.

4 *Whereas, The Ecumenical Patriarchate, located in Istanbul,*
5 *Turkey, is the sacred See that presides in a spirit of*
6 *brotherhood over a communion of the self-governing churches*
7 *of the Orthodox Christian world;*

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

13 *Whereas, In 1994, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew,*

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1 along with leaders of the Appeal of Conscience Foundation,
2 cosponsored the Conference on Peace and Tolerance, bringing
3 together Christian, Jewish, and Muslim religious leaders for an
4 interfaith dialogue to help end the Balkan conflict and the
5 ethnic conflict in the Caucasus region;

6 Whereas, In 1997, the Congress of the United States
7 awarded Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew a Congressional
8 Gold Medal;

9 Whereas, Following the September 11, 2001, terrorist
10 attacks on our nation, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew
11 gathered a group of international religious leaders to produce
12 the first joint statement with Muslim leaders condemning the
13 attacks as "antireligious";

14 Whereas, In November 2005, the ecumenical patriarch,
15 along with Christian, Jewish, and Muslim leaders, cosponsored
16 the Conference on Peace and Tolerance to further promote
17 peace and stability in southeastern Europe, the Caucasus
18 region, and Central Asia via religious leaders' interfaith
19 dialogue, understanding, and action;

20 Whereas, The Orthodox Christian Church, in existence for
21 nearly 2,000 years, numbers approximately 300 million
22 members worldwide, with more than 2 million members in the
23 United States;

24 Whereas, Since 1453, the continuing presence of the
25 Ecumenical Patriarchate in Turkey has been a living testament
26 to the religious coexistence of Christians and Muslims;

27 Whereas, The Turkish government has limited eligibility to
28 hold the office of ecumenical patriarch to only Turkish
29 nationals;

30 Whereas, From the millions of Orthodox Christians living in
31 Turkey at the turn of the 20th century, there are fewer than
32 3,000 of the ecumenical patriarch's flock in Turkey today;

33 Whereas, The Turkish government has confiscated nearly 94
34 percent of the properties of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and



1 *has placed a 42 percent tax, retroactive to 1999, on the*
2 *Hospital of Baloukli and Home for the Elderly, a charity*
3 *hospital run by the Ecumenical Patriarchate;*

4 *Whereas, The European Union, a group of nations with a*
5 *common goal of promoting peace and the well-being of its*
6 *people, began accession negotiations with Turkey on October*
7 *3, 2005;*

8 *Whereas, The European Union defined membership criteria*
9 *for accession at the Copenhagen European Council in 1993,*
10 *obligating candidate countries to achieve certain levels of*
11 *reform, including stability of institutions guaranteeing*
12 *democracy, adherence to the rule of law, and respect for and*
13 *protection of minorities and human rights;*

14 *Whereas, The Turkish government's current treatment of the*
15 *Ecumenical Patriarchate is inconsistent with the membership*
16 *criteria of the European Union; and*

17 *Whereas, In November 2006, the archons of the Ecumenical*
18 *Patriarchate of the order of St. Andrew the Apostle, a group of*
19 *laymen, each of whom has been honored with a patriarchal*
20 *title, or "offikion", by the ecumenical patriarch for their*
21 *outstanding service to the Orthodox Church, sent an American*
22 *delegation to Turkey to meet with Turkish government officials*
23 *and the United States ambassador to the Republic of Turkey*
24 *regarding the Turkish government's treatment of the*
25 *Ecumenical Patriarchate: Therefore,*

26 *Be it resolved by the House of Representatives of the*
27 *General Assembly of the State of Indiana:*

28 SECTION 1. That the members of the Indiana House of
29 Representatives request the government of Turkey to reconsider
30 its treatment of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of the Orthodox
31 Christian Church.

32 SECTION 2. That the Principal Clerk of the House of
33 Representatives transmit a copy of this resolution to the
34 Governor of the State of Indiana.

