IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

HOUSE JOINT MEMORIAL NO. 12

BY STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

A JOINT MEMORIAL


We, your Memorialists, the House of Representatives and the Senate of the State of Idaho assembled in the First Regular Session of the Sixty-third Idaho Legislature, do hereby respectfully represent that:

WHEREAS, the Orthodox Christian Church, in existence for nearly 2,000 years, numbers approximately 300 million members worldwide with more than two million members in the United States; and

WHEREAS, since 1453, the continuing presence of the Ecumenical Patriarchate in Turkey has been a living testament to the religious coexistence of Christians and Muslims; and

WHEREAS, this religious coexistence is important because the Orthodox Christian Church is a recognized religion by the Turkish Government; and

WHEREAS, fewer than 3,000 of the Ecumenical Patriarch's flock live in Turkey today; and

WHEREAS, Orthodox Christians in Idaho and throughout the United States support their spiritual leader; and

WHEREAS, where there have been difficulties in the past with the relationship of the Orthodox Christian Church and the Turkish Government, recent actions by the Turkish Government demonstrate an interest in improving its relationship with and treatment of the Orthodox Christian Church, which actions are acknowledged and welcomed; and

WHEREAS, the people of Idaho desire to encourage the continued dialogue and communication of the leadership of the Turkish Government and the Orthodox Christian Church, as demonstrated by recent high-level meetings between Turkish officials and the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the members of the First Regular Session of the Sixty-third Idaho Legislature, the House of Representatives and the Senate concurring therein, that we urge the government of Turkey to: uphold and safeguard religious and human rights of all its citizens without compromise; grant the Ecumenical Patriarch appropriate ecclesiastical succession and the right to train clergy of all nationalities; and respect the property rights and human rights of the Ecumenical Patriarchate and all religious and faith traditions.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives be, and she is hereby authorized and directed to forward a copy of this Memorial to the President of the United States, the United States Ambassador to the Republic of Turkey, the Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to the United States, to the President of the Senate and the Speaker of the House of
Representatives of Congress and the congressional delegation representing the State of Idaho in the Congress of the United States.