

Resolution

ENROLLED SENATE
RESOLUTION NO. 54

By: Mazzei, Adelson, Aldridge,
Anderson, Ballenger,
Barrington, Bass, Bingman,
Branan, Brogdon, Brown,
Burrage, Coates, Coffee,
Corn, Crain, Crutchfield,
Easley, Eason McIntyre,
Ford, Garrison, Gumm,
Ivester, Johnson (Mike),
Jolley, Justice, Lamb,
Laster, Laughlin,
Leftwich, Lerblance,
Mazzei, Morgan, Myers,
Nichols, Paddack, Rabon,
Reynolds, Rice, Riley,
Schulz, Sparks, Sweeden,
Sykes, Wilcoxson,
Williamson, Wilson and
Wyrick

A Resolution urging the Government of Turkey to grant the Ecumenical Patriarch appropriate international recognition, ecclesiastical succession, and the right to train clergy of all nationalities and to respect the property rights and human rights of the Ecumenical Patriarch; and directing distribution.

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

WHEREAS, the See is led by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, who is the 269th in direct succession to the Apostle Andrew and holds titular primacy as "primus inter pares", meaning first among equals, in the community of Orthodox churches worldwide; and

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

WHEREAS, the Congress of the United States awarded the Congressional Gold Medal to Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew in 1997; and

WHEREAS, following the terrorist attacks on our nation on September 11, 2001, Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew gathered a group of international religious leaders to produce the first joint statement with Muslim leaders that condemned the 9/11 attacks as "antireligious"; and

WHEREAS, in October 2005, the Ecumenical Patriarch, along with Christian, Jewish, and Muslim leaders, cosponsored the Conference on Peace and Tolerance II to further promote peace and stability in southeastern Europe, the Caucasus region, and Central Asia via religious leaders' interfaith dialogue, understanding, and action; and

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, the Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of the Order of Saint Andrew the Apostle, a group of laymen who each have been honored with a patriarchal title, or "offikion", by the Ecumenical Patriarch for their outstanding service to the Orthodox Church, will send an American delegation to Turkey to meet with Turkish

government officials, as well as the United States Ambassador to the Republic of Turkey, regarding the Turkish government's treatment of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE 2ND SESSION OF THE 51ST OKLAHOMA LEGISLATURE:

THAT the Oklahoma State Senate urges the Government of Turkey to uphold and safeguard religious and human rights without compromise; grant the Ecumenical Patriarch appropriate international recognition, ecclesiastic succession, and the right to train clergy of all nationalities; and respect the property rights and human rights of the Ecumenical Patriarchate.

THAT a copy of this resolution be distributed 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, and to the members of the Oklahoma Congressional Delegation.

Adopted by the Senate the 24th day of March, 2008.



Presiding Officer of the Senate