Ambassador Namik Tan  
Embassy of Turkey  
2525 Massachusetts Avenue, NW  
Washington, DC 2008  

February 16, 2012  

Dear Ambassador Tan,  

We write to you to express our deep concern that the policies of the Turkish government pose a serious threat to the future of the Ecumenical Patriarchate, the spiritual home of the world’s second largest Christian Church of approximately 300 million Orthodox Christians. 

Nearly ninety-four percent of the Ecumenical Patriarchate’s properties have already been confiscated by the Turkish government. 

Turkish laws and policies restrict who may be elected Ecumenical Patriarch to Turkish citizens, These threaten the Ecumenical Patriarchate with extinction in the coming years. This cannot stand. Any of the nearly 300 million non-Turkish Orthodox Christians should be able to become Ecumenical Patriarch. 

Millions of Orthodox Christian Americans—including those in the state of Washington—stand to lose their spiritual head, and all Christians will give up a crucial link to their history and forefathers, for it was within this 2,000 year old Sacred See that the test of the New Testament was codified, the canonical structure of the Christian Church was established and the Nicene Creed was created. 

Thirty-eight (38) religious freedom resolutions and letter in support of the Ecumenical Patriarchate have been adopted in thirty-two (32) legislatures in the United State, urging the Turkish government to do essentially four things:

* Cease its discrimination of the Ecumenical Patriarchate;  
* Grant the Ecumenical Patriarchate international recognition, ecclesiastic succession, and the right to train its clergy;  
* Respect the Ecumenical Patriarchate’s property rights; and  
* Re-open the Halki Theological School.

We, the undersigned support these requests and share their concern for the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and respectfully request that you communicate these concerns to the leaders of the Turkish government urging them to discontinue those policies which threaten the future existence of the Patriarchate.
Representative John Ahern

Representative Glenn Anderson

Representative Mike Armstrong

Representative Barbara Bailey

Representative Bruce Chandler

Representative Larry Couse

Representative Gary Alexander

Representative Jan Angel

Representative Katrina Asay

Representative Vincent Buys

Representative Cary Condotta

Representative Cathy Dahlquist
Representative Bruce Dammeier

Representative Richard DeBolt

Representative Larry Haler

Representative Paul Harris

Representative Mike Hope

Representative Brad Klippert

Representative Gary Alexander

Representative Susan Fagan

Representative Mark Hargrove

Representative Bill Hinkle

Representative Norm Johnson

Representative Joel Kretz
Representative Emily Cody
District 34

Representative Anna Kaj
District 32

Representative Maryzeri Beckner
District 36

Representative Kathy Haugh
District 35

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District 51

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