President Barack Obama  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Ave. NW  
Washington, DC 2005  

February 16, 2012  

Dear President Obama,  

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 Nicean 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.
Senator Mike Cadden
District 4

Senator M. Haskell
District 14

Senator[Signature]
District 17

Senator Bob Morton
District 7

Senator[Signature]
District 47

Senator[Signature]
District 8

Senator[Signature]
District 23
Senator  
District 18

Senator  
District 15

Senator  
District 6

Senator  
District 45

Senator  
District 13

Senator  
District 02

Senator  
District 39
Senator EL KENY
District 43

Senator Jeanne Kohl-Welles
District 36

Senator Debbie Fekete
District 27

Senator Phil Wilk
District 21

Senator Ralph Knue
District 26

Senator Rodney Furukawa
District 48

Senator Tim Sheldon
District 35
Senator Craig A. Peterson, District 49

Senator [Signature], District 29

Senator Sharon K. Nelson, District 39

Senator Christine Dolores, District 23

Senator [Signature], District 38

Senator Rosemary M. Archi and [Signature], District 1

Senator Marilyn Chase, District 32