

Proclamation

by Governor Earl Ray Tomblin

Whereas, from 1915-1923 during the Armenian Genocide, one and one-half million ethnic Armenian men, women, and children as well as over one million Greeks, Assyrians, Pontians, Syrians, and others were massacred as part of the planned complete eradication of these indigenous communities by the Ottoman Turkish Empire during the first modern genocide that still requires justice; and

Whereas, prior to the implementation of the Holocaust, in order to garner support from his followers, Adolf Hitler asked "Who, after all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?"; and

Whereas, the Holocaust was the state-sponsored, systematic persecution and annihilation of European Jews by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945—six million Jews were murdered; Roma (Gypsies), people with disabilities, and Poles were also targeted for destruction or decimation for racial, ethnic, or national reasons; and millions more, including homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, Soviet prisoners of war, and political dissidents, also suffered grievous oppression and death under Nazi tyranny; and

Whereas, other cases of genocide include the killings in Cambodia in 1975, the massacres in Bosnia in 1992, the slaughter in Rwanda in 1994, and now in the 21st century, the displacements and deaths in Darfur as well as targeting of religious minorities by the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL) in the Middle East; and

Whereas, the United States House of Representatives has adopted H.Con.Res. 75, declaring the atrocities perpetrated by the ISIL against Christians, Yezidis, and other religious and ethnic minorities in Iraq and Syria war crimes, crimes against humanity, and genocide; and

Whereas, by recognizing and consistently remembering the Armenian Genocide, the Holocaust, and all cases of past and ongoing genocide, we help protect historic memory, ensure that similar atrocities do not occur again, and remain vigilant against hatred, persecution, and tyranny.

Now, Therefore, Be it Resolved that I, Earl Ray Tomblin, Governor of the Great State of West Virginia, do hereby proclaim *April 2016* as:

Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month

in the Mountain State in memory of the victims of the Armenian Genocide, the Holocaust, and all other genocides and in honor of all the survivors as well as the rescuers and liberators. I further proclaim that we, as citizens of the State of West Virginia, should work to promote human dignity and confront hate whenever and wherever it occurs.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the Great Seal of the State of West Virginia to be affixed.

Done at the Capitol, City of Charleston, State of West Virginia, this the Twenty-Eighth day of April, in the year of our Lord, Two Thousand Sixteen, and in the One Hundred Fifty-Third year of the State.



Earl Ray Tomblin

Earl Ray Tomblin
Governor

By the Governor:

Natalie E. Tennant

Natalie E. Tennant
Secretary of State