

House Resolution 555

By: Representatives Cheokas of the 134th, Wilkinson of the 52nd, Carter of the 175th, Stephens of the 164th, Epps of the 140th, and others

A RESOLUTION

1 Commending the Turkish-American community in Georgia and the Istanbul Center and
2 recognizing March 29, 2011, as Turkish-American Day at the state capitol; and for other
3 purposes.

4 WHEREAS, the Turkish-American community in Georgia and the Istanbul Center have
5 made numerous contributions to diversity, economic well-being, culture, and the quality of
6 life in the State of Georgia; and

7 WHEREAS, there are an estimated 8,000 Turkish-Americans residing in the State of Georgia
8 and 500 Turkish-American businesses; and

9 WHEREAS, Georgia's trade with Turkey increased by more than 65 percent over the last
10 year through the efforts of the Turkish-American community, the Turkish-American
11 Chamber of Commerce of the Southeast United States, and the Istanbul Center; and

12 WHEREAS, the Istanbul Center is a nonprofit organization that is headquartered in Atlanta,
13 Georgia, with a branch location in Norcross, Georgia, to promote better understanding and
14 closer relations among various and diverse communities; and

15 WHEREAS, the Istanbul Center has become the premiere representative organization of the
16 Turkish culture by disseminating knowledge of the language, history, culture, education, and
17 social life of Turkey in Georgia and other states in the Southeast; and

18 WHEREAS, in facing the challenges of today's world, the Istanbul Center encourages
19 dialogue between the Turkish-American community and the world through educational,
20 cultural, and humanitarian works; and

21 WHEREAS, the Istanbul Center promotes programs such as the annually organized Atlanta
22 Turkish Festival, Childrens' Festival, food festivals, cooking classes, art and handcraft

23 exhibits, and music and dance performances that help educate and inform the citizens of
24 Georgia about the Turkish culture; and

25 WHEREAS, the annual Atlanta Turkish Festival attracts thousands of Americans and Turks
26 to Atlanta to enjoy Turkish culture, food, art, handicrafts, music, and concerts, with frequent
27 special guests from Turkey performing music or artistic demonstrations at the festival; and

28 WHEREAS, the Istanbul Center has facilitated greater cultural understanding between
29 Turkish-Americans and the people of Georgia by providing opportunities for dialogue with
30 community leaders, many of whom are of different cultures and faith backgrounds, as
31 evidenced by the center's cultural and educational programming; and

32 WHEREAS, the Turkish-Americans are devoted to improving the lives of others, assisting
33 the Istanbul Center with relief programs for victims of natural and other disasters, organizing
34 donations and food drive programs, and encouraging others in the Turkish-American
35 community to volunteer at the Atlanta Community Food Bank and several area homeless
36 shelters; and

37 WHEREAS, the Istanbul Center reciprocally promotes Georgia and the Southeastern United
38 States in Turkey through television programming, interviews, advertisements, and trips to
39 Turkey.

40 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES that
41 the members of this body commend the Turkish-American community of Georgia and the
42 Istanbul Center for their contributions to the State of Georgia and recognize March 29, 2011,
43 as Turkish-American Day at the state capitol.

44 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the House of Representatives is authorized
45 and directed to transmit an appropriate copy of this resolution to the Istanbul Center.