

## Senate Resolution 361

By: Senators Parent of the 42nd, Shafer of the 48th, Henson of the 41st, Miller of the 49th, Unterman of the 45th and others

## A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the month of April, 2015, as Genocide Prevention and Awareness Month at the  
2 capitol; and for other purposes.

3 WHEREAS, the goal of Genocide Prevention and Awareness Month is to educate the public  
4 about the history of previous and contemporary genocides; how to advocate against future  
5 genocides; to focus attention on the specter of genocide so that policies, strategies, and  
6 programs geared towards combating the evils of genocide can be developed; and to  
7 commemorate the victims of genocide; and

8 WHEREAS, during World War II, a Polish lawyer of Jewish decent, Raphael Lemkin,  
9 coined the term "genocide" to describe the coordinated plan of actions aimed at the  
10 destruction of essential foundations of the life of certain groups with the aim of annihilating  
11 a group itself by disintegrating a group's social institutions, culture, language, national or  
12 ethnic identities, religion, and economic existence, while also destroying the personal  
13 security, liberty, health, and dignity, as well as the lives, of individuals belonging to the  
14 group; and

15 WHEREAS, throughout history, numerous genocides originated or stemmed from events that  
16 occurred in April, and as a result, many institutions around the world have designated April  
17 to be a month of genocide prevention and awareness; and

18 WHEREAS, when coining the term "genocide," Raphael Lemkin was moved to investigate  
19 the forced assimilation, deportation, and near complete eradication of the Armenian  
20 population beginning in April 1915; prompting Adolf Hitler to remark in 1939, "Who after  
21 all, speaks today of the annihilation of the Armenians?"; and

22 WHEREAS, this April marks the 100th anniversary of the Armenian (and other Christian  
23 communities') Genocide during the time of the Ottoman Empire; and

24 WHEREAS, in April of 1933, the Nazis issued a decree preparing the way for the "Final  
25 Solution" defining non-Aryans as "anyone descended from non-Aryan, especially Jewish,  
26 parents or grandparents"; and

27 WHEREAS, 2015 marks the 40th anniversary of the Cambodian genocide, where in April  
28 of 1975, Pol Pot and the Khmer Rouge took power in Cambodia, conducting wide-spread  
29 killings of people belonging to specific groups, as well as an involuntary relocation of all city  
30 dwellers to the countryside for forced labor in squalid conditions, resulting in famine and  
31 starvation which turned the countryside into killing fields; these acts resulted in the deaths  
32 of two million people; and

33 WHEREAS, 2015 marks the 20th anniversary of the 1992-1995 siege of Sarajevo,  
34 Srebrenica, and other cities in Bosnia and Herzegovina, which ultimately led to the deaths  
35 of more than 200,000 Bosniaks, or Bosnian Muslims; and

36 WHEREAS, the Al-Anfal Campaign (1984-1988), under the leadership of Saddam Hussein,  
37 sought to destroy and depopulate the Kurdistan Region in northern Iraq and notoriously used  
38 chemical weapons to this end, which caused the death of over 180,000 Kurds and others, the  
39 destruction of over 4,500 villages (90 percent of villages in the region), and resulted in  
40 creating millions of refugees and internally displaced persons; and

41 WHEREAS, in April of 1994, the Rwandan president's airplane was shot down, which led  
42 to the slaying of 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus by the Interhamwe over the next three  
43 months; and

44 WHEREAS, in April of 2003, the displacement and killing of Darfurians began by the  
45 Government of Sudan and led to hundreds of thousands of deaths and the displacement of  
46 millions which continues unabated today; and

47 WHEREAS, the so-called Islamic State (ISIS/L) has forcefully caused the civilian population  
48 of the Ezidi-Kurdish religious minority in Iraq and Syria, beginning in 2014 through the  
49 present day, to flee from their ancestral towns, villages, and holy sites as a result of forced  
50 conversion, killing, kidnaping, and enslaving of their population -- particularly women and  
51 children and according to their records, this is the 74th genocide throughout the population's  
52 history; and

53 WHEREAS, the Genocide Prevention Task Force released its report on December of 2008  
54 to spotlight genocide prevention as a national priority; and

55 WHEREAS, in 2011 the President of the United States declared the prevention of mass  
56 atrocities and genocide to be a "core national security interest and core moral responsibility"  
57 of the United States and ordered the creation of the Atrocities Prevention Board in 2012; and

58 WHEREAS, the Georgia Commission on the Holocaust is a state agency whose mission is  
59 to use the lessons of the Holocaust to educate the citizens of Georgia on the consequences  
60 of unchecked hate and the need for social justice, and to encourage strong moral character  
61 and citizenship; and

62 WHEREAS, the Georgia Coalition to Prevent Genocide operates as a proactive group with  
63 a mission to develop a permanent anti-genocide constituency in Georgia, and it depends on  
64 citizen support to engage elected officials at the state and national levels through advocacy  
65 and action and by creating awareness within the community; and

66 WHEREAS, it is abundantly fitting and proper to recognize the contributions of the Georgia  
67 Coalition to Prevent Genocide, Eternal-Life Hemshech of Holocaust Survivors, the Georgia  
68 Commission on the Holocaust, The Jewish Community Relations Council of Atlanta, The  
69 National Center for Civil and Human Rights, The American Jewish Committee Atlanta  
70 Regional Office, and ACCESS Atlanta in their efforts to enhance the security and dignity of  
71 minority populations across the globe.

72 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE that the members of this body  
73 recognize the month of April, 2015, as Genocide Prevention and Awareness Month at the  
74 capitol and commend the Georgia Coalition to Prevent Genocide for its dedicated efforts in  
75 preventing genocide.

76 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Secretary of the Senate is authorized and directed  
77 to make appropriate copies of this resolution available for distribution to the Georgia  
78 Coalition to Prevent Genocide.