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THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

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HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 190 Session of  
2015

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INTRODUCED BY DUSH, BAKER, D. COSTA, FARINA, GODSHALL, GREINER,  
HENNESSEY, KAUFFMAN, LONGIETTI, MILLARD, READSHAW, SACCONI,  
SONNEY, THOMAS, WATSON, WHEELAND, YOUNGBLOOD, GABLER AND  
ZIMMERMAN, MARCH 31, 2015

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INTRODUCED AS NONCONTROVERSIAL RESOLUTION UNDER RULE 35,  
MARCH 31, 2015

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A RESOLUTION

1 Honoring the Coptic Christians martyred as they stood for their  
2 faith and eliciting solidarity in the wake of the killings.

3 WHEREAS, In Christianity, a person is considered a martyr if  
4 killed for one's faith; and

5 WHEREAS, Egypt's Coptic Christians are among many recent  
6 martyrs; and

7 WHEREAS, The Copts trace their history to Alexandria during  
8 the apostolic age; and

9 WHEREAS, Over the centuries, they have held variable  
10 political and economic power in the Middle East; and

11 WHEREAS, Now a religious minority in Egypt, Coptic Christians  
12 constitute the largest single group of foreign workers in  
13 neighboring Libya; and

14 WHEREAS, Extremists have targeted Copts in Libya solely  
15 because of their faith; and

16 WHEREAS, In incidents leading to the Copts' captivity,

1 militants separated the Christians from the Muslims living in a  
2 housing compound in the central Libyan city of Sirte; and

3 WHEREAS, Islamic State released a video in February 2015,  
4 showing mass killings of captive Egyptian Coptic Christians by  
5 beheading; and

6 WHEREAS, In their last moments, the 21 Egyptian Coptic  
7 Christians were forced to kneel on a Libyan beach; and

8 WHEREAS, Some of the men can be heard professing their  
9 embrace of Christianity; and

10 WHEREAS, Egyptian President Abdel Fattah al-Sisi declared a  
11 seven-day mourning period in his country; and

12 WHEREAS, His Holiness Pope Tawadros II of the Coptic Church  
13 has acclaimed the men as martyrs, having died for their faith;  
14 and

15 WHEREAS, His Holiness Pope Francis of the Roman Catholic  
16 Church has publicly referred to the men as martyrs, hailing  
17 their confessed Christianity and denouncing their murder; and

18 WHEREAS, One week after their execution, the men were  
19 recognized as the 21 Coptic martyrs of Libya when their names  
20 were entered into the Coptic Synaxarium; and

21 WHEREAS, The martyrdom of these canonized men is thus  
22 commemorated annually as part of the Coptic Orthodox Church  
23 calendar; and

24 WHEREAS, The House of Representatives of the Commonwealth of  
25 Pennsylvania mourns and respects these 21 expatriate workers who  
26 were persecuted and who died for their faith; therefore be it

27 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives honor the Coptic  
28 Christians martyred as they stood for their faith and elicit  
29 solidarity in the wake of the killings; and be it further

30 RESOLVED, That a copy of this resolution be transmitted to

1 His Holiness Pope Tawadros II, Pope of Alexandria, Patriarch of  
2 the See of St. Mark, at St. Mark's Coptic Orthodox Cathedral,  
3 Abbassia District, Cairo, Egypt.