
THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 817 Session of
2020

INTRODUCED BY INNAMORATO, DELLOSO, DONATUCCI, KORTZ, ROTHMAN,
MILLARD, LEE, BURNS, HILL-EVANS, BROWN, KIM, ROZZI, MALAGARI,
NEILSON, MIZGORSKI, FRANKEL, HOHENSTEIN, BURGOS, FREEMAN,
YOUNGBLOOD, ULLMAN, KENYATTA, MADDEN, BERNSTINE AND
SCHLOSSBERG, MARCH 13, 2020

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON VETERANS AFFAIRS AND EMERGENCY
PREPAREDNESS, MARCH 13, 2020

A RESOLUTION

1 Recognizing the month of April 2020 as "Genocide Awareness and
2 Prevention Month" in Pennsylvania.

3 WHEREAS, During World War II, Raphael Lemkin, a Polish lawyer
4 of Jewish descent, coined the term "genocide" to describe a
5 coordinated plan of action aimed at the destruction of the
6 foundations of national groups, with the aim of annihilating an
7 entire group; and

8 WHEREAS, Genocide disintegrates the political and social
9 institutions, culture, language, national feelings, religion and
10 economic existence of a group while destroying the personal
11 security, liberty, health, dignity and lives of individuals
12 belonging to the group; and

13 WHEREAS, Following the Holocaust, on December 9, 1948, the
14 United Nations General Assembly adopted Resolution 260 A (III),
15 the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of
16 Genocide, declaring genocide to be a crime under international

1 law; and

2 WHEREAS, The convention defined genocide to include the
3 commission of certain acts, including killing members of a
4 group, causing serious bodily or mental harm to members of a
5 group, deliberately inflicting conditions of life calculated to
6 bring about a group's physical destruction in whole or in part,
7 imposing measures intended to prevent births within a group and
8 forcibly transferring children of the group to another with the
9 intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic,
10 racial or religious group; and

11 WHEREAS, Genocide and mass atrocities are crimes that have
12 been perpetrated in many instances before and after the
13 Holocaust, including, but not limited to, Armenia, Cambodia,
14 Bosnia, Rwanda and Sudan and which are currently being
15 perpetrated in places such as Syria and Myanmar; and

16 WHEREAS, The history of the United States is informed by acts
17 of genocide and mass atrocities that have been perpetrated on
18 this country, including the genocide of indigenous peoples,
19 enslavement of individuals of African and African-American
20 descent and racial terror lynchings; and

21 WHEREAS, This Commonwealth is home to individuals who have
22 endured genocide and mass atrocities in their countries of
23 origin; and

24 WHEREAS, The General Assembly passed Act 70 of 2014 to
25 encourage schools to include education about the Holocaust,
26 genocide and human rights violations from grades 6 through 12;
27 and

28 WHEREAS, The LIGHT Education Initiative and the Holocaust
29 Center of Pittsburgh, with Together We Remember, are working to
30 sustain the progress of Act 70 of 2014 in schools and educate

1 the public about the nature and progression of mass violence;
2 and

3 WHEREAS, Together We Remember is an organization dedicated to
4 ending all forms of identity-based violence, including genocide,
5 through remembrance vigils that encourage communities to face
6 historical traumas and take peaceful action to address the
7 trauma through dialogue, education, technology and advocacy; and

8 WHEREAS, World Without Genocide is an organization that works
9 to protect innocent people in various countries, prevent
10 genocide, advocate for the sentencing of perpetrators and
11 recognize and remember those who have been victimized by
12 violence; and

13 WHEREAS, In order to prevent future genocides and mass
14 atrocities, effective measures must be implemented before a
15 crisis erupts; and

16 WHEREAS, Educating the public can help to protect individual
17 rights and promote a culture of lawfulness and moral courage
18 that helps to prevent future genocides and hate crimes; and

19 WHEREAS, The month of April marks many genocides in history
20 such as the anniversary of the siege of Sarajevo on April 5, the
21 Day of Remembrance of the Victims of the Rwanda Genocide on
22 April 7, the Holocaust Remembrance Day on April 21, the
23 anniversary of the start of the Cambodian genocide on April 17
24 and the Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day on April 24; and

25 WHEREAS, Many other states such as Minnesota, California and
26 Texas have designated April as "Genocide Awareness and
27 Prevention Month"; and

28 WHEREAS, The recognition of April as "Genocide Awareness and
29 Prevention Month" encourages individuals to celebrate diverse
30 communities and their experiences, honors those who have

1 survived global atrocities, educates the public about the nature
2 and progression of mass violence, strives to build more peaceful
3 communities locally and globally and serves as an effective tool
4 to further these goals; therefore be it

5 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives recognize the
6 month of April 2020 as "Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month"
7 in Pennsylvania; and be it further

8 RESOLVED, That the Commonwealth condemn and desire to combat
9 all acts of genocide and identity-based violence and counteract
10 attitudes of intolerance, racism, anti-Semitism, hatred and
11 extremism that enable mass violence.