

State of Arkansas  
87th General Assembly  
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SCR 3

By: Senator D. Johnson  
By: Representative Wills

## SENATE CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

URGING THE GOVERNMENT OF TURKEY TO GRANT THE  
ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH APPROPRIATE INTERNATIONAL  
RECOGNITION, ECCLESIASTICAL SUCCESSION, AND THE  
RIGHT TO TRAIN CLERGY OF ALL NATIONALITIES AND TO  
RESPECT THE PROPERTY RIGHTS AND HUMAN RIGHTS OF  
THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCHATE.

### Subtitle

URGING THE GOVERNMENT OF TURKEY TO GRANT  
THE ECUMENICAL PATRIARCH APPROPRIATE  
RECOGNITION AND RIGHTS.

WHEREAS, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, located in Istanbul, Turkey, is  
the Sacred See that presides in a spirit of brotherhood over a communion of  
self-governing churches of the Orthodox Christian world; and

WHEREAS, the See is led by Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew, who is the  
269<sup>th</sup> in direct succession to the Apostle Andrew and holds titular primacy as  
primus inter pares, meaning "first among equals", in the community of  
Orthodox churches worldwide; and

WHEREAS, the Orthodox Christian Church, in existence for nearly two  
thousand (2,000) years, numbers approximately three hundred million  
(300,000,000) members worldwide with more than two million (2,000,000)  
members in the United States; and



1 WHEREAS, since 1453, the continuing presence of the Ecumenical  
2 Patriarchate in Turkey has been a living testament to the religious  
3 coexistence of Christians and Muslims; and  
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5 WHEREAS, this religious coexistence is in jeopardy because the  
6 Ecumenical Patriarchate is considered a minority religion by the Government  
7 of Turkey; and  
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9 WHEREAS, the Government of Turkey has limited the candidates available  
10 to hold the office of Ecumenical Patriarch to only Turkish nationals, and  
11 from the millions of Orthodox Christians living in Turkey at the turn of the  
12 twentieth century and due to the continued policies during this period by the  
13 Government of Turkey, there remain less than three thousand (3,000) of the  
14 Ecumenical Patriarch's flock left in Turkey today; and  
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16 WHEREAS, the Government of Turkey closed the Theological School on the  
17 Island of Halki in 1971 and has refused to allow it to reopen, thus impeding  
18 training for Orthodox Christian clergy; and  
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20 WHEREAS, the Government of Turkey has confiscated nearly ninety-four  
21 percent (94%) of the Ecumenical Patriarchate's properties and has placed a  
22 tax of forty-two percent (42%), retroactive to 1999, on the Balouki Hospital  
23 and Home for the Aged, a charity hospital owned by the Ecumenical  
24 Patriarchate; and  
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26 WHEREAS, the European Union, a political and economic union of nation  
27 states with a common goal of promoting peace and the well-being of its  
28 people, began accession negotiations with Turkey on October 2, 2005; and  
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30 WHEREAS, the European Union defined membership criteria for accession  
31 at the Copenhagen European Council in 1993, obligating candidate countries to  
32 achieve certain levels of reform, including stability of institutions  
33 guaranteeing democracy, adherence to the rule of law, and respect for and  
34 protection of minorities and human rights; and  
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36 WHEREAS, the Government of Turkey's current treatment of the Ecumenical

1 Patriarchate is inconsistent with the membership conditions and goals of the  
2 European Union; and

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4 WHEREAS, Orthodox Christians in Arkansas and throughout the United  
5 States stand to lose their spiritual leader because of the continued actions  
6 of the Government of Turkey,

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8 NOW THEREFORE,

9 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE SENATE OF THE EIGHTY-SEVENTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY, THE  
10 HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES CONCURRING THEREIN:

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12 THAT the members of the Arkansas General Assembly urge the Government  
13 of Turkey to:

14 (1) Uphold and safeguard religious and human rights without  
15 compromise;

16 (2) Cease its discrimination of the Ecumenical Patriarchate;

17 (3) Grant the Ecumenical Patriarch appropriate international  
18 recognition, ecclesiastic succession, and the right to train clergy of all  
19 nationalities; and

20 (4) Respect the property rights and human rights of the  
21 Ecumenical Patriarchate.

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23 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Clerk of the Senate transmit copies of  
24 this resolution to:

25 (1) The President of the United States;

26 (2) The United States Ambassador to the Republic of Turkey;

27 (3) The Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to the United  
28 States; and

29 (4) The members of the Arkansas Congressional Delegation.  
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