

1 State of Arkansas  
2 90th General Assembly  
3 Regular Session, 2015

*As Engrossed: H3/12/15*

HR 1042

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5 By: Representatives D. Ferguson, *G. McGill*

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7 **HOUSE RESOLUTION**

8 *TO SUPPORT EFFORTS TO PRESERVE FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS,*  
9 *FREE MEDIA, AND DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES IN TURKEY; AND*  
10 *TO RECOGNIZE TURKISH-AMERICAN CITIZENS' ENDEAVORS TO*  
11 *IMPROVE TIES BETWEEN THE GREAT STATE OF ARKANSAS AND*  
12 *TURKEY.*

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15 **Subtitle**

16 *TO SUPPORT EFFORTS TO PRESERVE*  
17 *FUNDAMENTAL RIGHTS, FREE MEDIA, AND*  
18 *DEMOCRATIC PRINCIPLES IN TURKEY; AND TO*  
19 *RECOGNIZE TURKISH-AMERICAN CITIZENS'*  
20 *ENDEAVORS TO IMPROVE TIES BETWEEN THE*  
21 *GREAT STATE OF ARKANSAS AND TURKEY.*

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24 BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINETIETH GENERAL  
25 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:

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27 WHEREAS, Turkey is our longstanding ally, a key North Atlantic Treaty  
28 Organization member, and a strategic partner in the Middle East; and

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30 WHEREAS, a strong democracy requires both tolerance and transparency,  
31 and recent decisions by the Turkish government to intimidate and smother  
32 opposition voices are threats to the democratic principles that Turkey has  
33 previously upheld; and

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35 WHEREAS, under the leadership of President Erdogan, the Turkish  
36 government has become increasingly authoritarian as it detains journalists,



1 suppresses political dissidents, and completely disregards the rule of law  
2 and fundamental democratic precepts in Turkey; and

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4 WHEREAS, Turkey has become one of the top countries for detained  
5 journalists and restricted access to social media; and

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7 *WHEREAS, the recent arrests of members of the Turkish media, media*  
8 *owners, and prominent journalists including Mr. Hidayet Karaca, CEO of*  
9 *Samanyolu Media Group, who has been jailed without any indictment since*  
10 *December 14, 2014, and prominent journalist Mr. Mehmet Baransu because of his*  
11 *investigative reports on military coup plans as recent as 2007, among many*  
12 *others, are alarming; and*

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14 *WHEREAS, detained members of Turkish media have ties to a known critic*  
15 *of President Erdogan's Administration; and*

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17 *WHEREAS, recent arrests have had a chilling effect on freedom,*  
18 *democracy, and economic prosperity for all of Turkey; and*

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20 *WHEREAS, Mr. Ekrem Dumanli, editor-in-chief of Zaman newspaper, was*  
21 *detained and released on questionable charges, and Ms. Sedef Kabas was*  
22 *detained and released because of her tweets criticizing antidemocratic*  
23 *tendencies of the Turkish government; and*

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25 *WHEREAS, a free media must be supported and protected to foster an*  
26 *environment open to constructive political discussion and to ensure freedom*  
27 *of expression; and*

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29 *WHEREAS, a vibrant and dedicated Turkish-American community in Arkansas*  
30 *has been very active and involved in cultivating and promoting strong*  
31 *economic, educational, and social ties for the best interests of the State of*  
32 *Arkansas between Turkey and the United States,*

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34 *NOW THEREFORE,*

35 *BE IT RESOLVED BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE NINETIETH GENERAL*  
36 *ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ARKANSAS:*

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*THAT the House of Representatives of the Ninetieth General Assembly strongly urges the Turkish government to abandon its course of intimidation, embrace a free media, and tolerate dissenting voices.*

*BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED THAT upon adoption of this resolution, an appropriate copy be provided to United States Secretary of State John Kerry, United States Senator John Boozman, and United States Senator Tom Cotton by the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives.*

*/s/D. Ferguson*