

LAW, JUSTICE, AND ETHICS

Resolution LJE-17-24

A RESOLUTION DESIGNATING APRIL AS GENOCIDE AWARENESS MONTH

WHEREAS, the term Genocide was first coined after World War II by a Jewish-Polish lawyer named Raphael Lemkin. He coined the term in 1944 while working with the U.S. Department of War;

WHEREAS, the term appeared in Lemkin's published text *Axis Rule in Occupied Europe* which studied the path of occupied areas of Nazi territories;

WHEREAS, the word genocide comes from combining the Greek word "geno", meaning race or tribe, and "cide" the Latin word for killing;

WHEREAS, on December 9, 1948 the United Nations sanctioned the Convention on Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide which made genocide a crime under International Law;

WHEREAS, the Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide would give the definition of genocide:

Genocide means any of the following acts committed with the intent to destroy, in whole or in part, a national, ethnic, racial or religious group such as:

- killing members of the group;
- causing serious bodily or mental harm to the group;
- deliberately inflicting on the group conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in whole or in part;
- imposing measures to prevent births within the group; and
- forcibly transferring the children of the group to another group;

WHEREAS, despite our best efforts to prevent the tragedy of genocide after WWII, we have seen genocide occur across the globe in places like Cambodia, Darfur, Rwanda, and Bosnia;

WHEREAS, North America has seen its own shameful history of genocide with the Trans -Atlantic Slave Trade and the deaths of more than a million Africans during the Middle Passage across the Atlantic and millions more through the brutal mutilations, horrific conditions, separating children and deaths by slave owners and others; and

WHEREAS, many of these horrific acts of genocide have occurred in the month of April and four states, New Hampshire, Texas, Minnesota and California have currently passed legislation designating the month as Genocide Awareness Month.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the National Black Caucus of State Legislators (NBCSL) encourages policymakers to adopt legislation that seeks to educate, advocate and prevent the acts of genocide against people around the world and specifically the people of the African diaspora and calls on the members of the NBCSL to sponsor said resolutions in their respective states;

LAW, JUSTICE, AND ETHICS

Resolution LJE-17-24

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that NBCSL calls upon the President and United States' Congress to adopt a national Genocide Awareness Month to assist in educating and preventing acts of genocide throughout America and the world; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED, that a copy of this resolution be transmitted to the President of the United States; the Vice President of the United States, members of the United States House of Representatives and United States Senate; and other federal and state government officials as appropriate.

SPONSOR: Senator Charleta B. Tavares (OH)

Committee of Jurisdiction: Law, Justice, and Ethics Policy Committee

Certified by Committee Co-Chair: Representative Reginald Meeks (KY)

Ratified in Plenary Session: Ratification Date is December 3, 2016

Ratification is certified by: Senator Catherine Pugh (MD), President