



The Turkish American Cultural Society of New England, Inc.

*P.O. Box 230162
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a non-profit, grass-root organization

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The Honorable Steve Cassano, Co-Chair
Government Administration and Elections Committee
Legislative Office Building
Room 2200
Hartford, CT 06106-1591

March 11, 2016

Dear Senator Cassano:

As the Turkish American Cultural Society of New England, a non-profit grass-root community organization representing Turkish-Americans, Turks, and friends of Turkey living in New England since 1964, we are writing to express our serious concern and objection about an added subdivision, “(NEW) 75”, amending Section 1. Subsection (a) of section 10-29a of the 2016 supplement to the general statutes, as introduced in the Connecticut Senate Bill 438.

The added subdivision reads, “(NEW) (75) The Governor shall proclaim the month of April of each year to be Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month to heighten public awareness of the evils of genocide in order to commemorate the victims of genocide and to prevent future atrocities. Suitable exercises shall be held in the State Capitol and elsewhere as the Governor designates for the observance of the month.”

It is almost certain that if this bill becomes an act the Armenian lobby machine will attempt to use the Governor’s Office as a leverage to launch false allegations of “Armenian Genocide” in every April to enforce their ethnically oriented political agenda.

We strongly oppose the legislating of history. Connecticut Senate does not have the authority, the expertise, the means nor the resources to pass a definitive judgment with respect to a particular group of people and with respect to a complex set of events during a world war that claimed the lives of over 50 million. Furthermore, the United States, by virtue of its ratification of the UN Genocide Convention, acknowledges the sole jurisdiction to hear allegations of genocide is the International Court of Justice at the Hague, not state legislatures.

This will be unfair and unproductive, and not only would be an affront to Turkey, a friend and ally of the United States for decades, but it would also put one community against another implanting seeds of hatred and animosity. In fact, we would like to remind you the tragic assassination of Orhan R. Glündüz, the founder of the Turkish American Cultural Society of New England and the Honorary Consul General of the Republic of Turkey to New England, by Armenian terrorists on May 4th in 1982 in Boston, which is still painfully fresh in the memories of the Turkish-American community in New England.

Moreover, long standing United States federal and foreign policy is to not define the Armenian case as genocide, but rather to encourage Armenia and Turkey to resolve their historical differences bilaterally, without US interference.

We trust that you recognize the validity of our concerns. Regardless of our ethnic backgrounds, we are all taxpayers and expect to be treated as the words of the pledge of allegiance states "and justice for all". We expect that the legislature would be fair to all constituencies and be on the side of historical truth and facts, not on the side of a partisan effort distorting history. We kindly request that the subdivision "(NEW) 75" as mentioned in the Senate Bill 438 be reconsidered and withdrawn in the name of historical and legal accuracy, and to promote peaceful coexistence of communities from different ethnic and religious backgrounds.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "E. Gömülü". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial "E" and a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Erkut Gömülü
President, Turkish American Cultural Society of New England
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