

**Senate Resolution No. 1807**

Senator Owens

1-19

1 A RESOLUTION urging the Government of Turkey to uphold and  
2 safeguard religious and human rights without compromise; ~~ease~~  
3 **cease** its discrimination of the Ecumenical Patriarchate; grant the  
4 Ecumenical Patriarch appropriate international recognition;  
5 ecclesiastic succession and the right to train clergy of all  
6 nationalities; and respect the property rights and human rights of the  
7 Ecumenical Patriarchate.

8  
9 WHEREAS, The Orthodox Christian Church, in existence for nearly  
10 2,000 years, numbers approximately 300 million members worldwide  
11 with more than 2 million members in the United States; and

12 WHEREAS, Since 1453, the continuing presence of the Ecumenical  
13 Patriarchate in Turkey has been a living testament to the religious  
14 coexistence of Christians and Muslims; and

15 WHEREAS, This religious coexistence is in jeopardy because the  
16 Ecumenical Patriarchate is considered a minority religion by the  
17 Turkish government; and

18 WHEREAS, The Government of Turkey has limited the candidates  
19 available to hold the office of Ecumenical Patriarch to only Turkish  
20 nationals and from the millions of Orthodox Christians living in Turkey  
21 at the turn of the 20th century and due to the continued policies during  
22 this period by the Turkish government, there remain less than 3,000 of  
23 the Ecumenical Patriarch's flock left in Turkey today; and

24 WHEREAS, The Government of Turkey closed the Theological  
25 School on the island of Halki in 1971 and has refused to allow it to  
26 reopen, thus impeding training for Orthodox Christian clergy; and

27 WHEREAS, The Turkish government has confiscated nearly 94% of  
28 the Ecumenical Patriarchate's properties and has placed a 42% tax,  
29 retroactive to 1999, on the Baloukli Hospital and Home for the Aged, a  
30 charity hospital run by the Ecumenical Patriarchate; and

31 WHEREAS, The European Union, a group of nations with a  
32 common goal of promoting peace and the well-being of its peoples,  
33 began accession negotiations with Turkey on October 3, 2005; and

1       WHEREAS, The European Union defined membership criteria for  
2 accession at the Copenhagen European Council in 1993, obligating  
3 candidate countries to achieve certain levels of reform, including  
4 stability of institutions guaranteeing democracy, adherence to the rule  
5 of law and respect for and protection of minorities and human rights;  
6 and

7       WHEREAS, The Turkish government's current treatment of the  
8 Ecumenical Patriarchate is inconsistent with the membership conditions  
9 and goals of the European Union; and

10       WHEREAS, Orthodox Christians in Kansas and throughout the  
11 United States stand to lose their spiritual leader because of the  
12 continued actions of the Turkish government; and

13       WHEREAS, The Archons of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of the  
14 Order of St. Andrew the Apostle, a group of laymen who each have  
15 been honored with a patriarchal title, or "offikion," by the Ecumenical  
16 Patriarch for their outstanding service to the Orthodox Church, will  
17 send an American delegation to Turkey to meet with Turkish  
18 government officials, as well as the United States Ambassador to the  
19 Republic of Turkey, regarding the Turkish government's treatment of  
20 the Ecumenical Patriarchate: Now, therefore,

21       Be it resolved by the Senate of the State of Kansas: That we urge the  
22 Government of Turkey to uphold and safeguard religious and human  
23 rights without compromise; cease its discrimination of the Ecumenical  
24 Patriarchate; grant the Ecumenical Patriarch appropriate international  
25 recognition, ecclesiastic succession and the right to train clergy of all  
26 nationalities; and respect the property rights and human rights of the  
27 Ecumenical Patriarchate; and

28       Be it further resolved: That the Secretary of the Senate is directed to  
29 provide an enrolled copy of this resolution to the President of the  
30 United States, the United States Ambassador to the Republic of Turkey,  
31 the Ambassador of the Republic of Turkey to the United States and to  
32 the members of the Kansas Congressional Delegation.