

**Second Regular Session  
Seventieth General Assembly  
STATE OF COLORADO**

**INTRODUCED**

LLS NO. R16-0524.01 Joel Moore x4497

**HJR16-1013**

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**HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 16-1013**

101      **CONCERNING ATROCITIES AGAINST CHRISTIANS AND OTHER ETHNIC**  
102                    **AND RELIGIOUS MINORITIES.**

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1            WHEREAS, Those who commit or support atrocities against  
2 Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities, including Yezidis,  
3 Turkmen, Sabean-Mandean, Kaka'e, Shi'a, and Kurds, and who target  
4 them specifically for ethnic or religious reasons, intend to exterminate or  
5 to force the migration or submission of anyone who does not share their  
6 views concerning religion; and

7            WHEREAS, Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities  
8 have been an integral part of the cultural fabric of the Middle East for  
9 millennia; and

10            WHEREAS, Christians and other ethnic and religious minorities

Shading denotes HOUSE amendment. Double underlining denotes SENATE amendment.  
*Capital letters indicate new material to be added to existing statute.*  
*Dashes through the words indicate deletions from existing statute.*

1 have been murdered; subjugated; forced to emigrate; and have suffered  
2 grievous bodily and psychological harm, including sexual enslavement  
3 and abuse, inflicted in a deliberate and calculated manner in violation of  
4 the laws of their respective nations, the laws of war, laws and treaties  
5 forbidding crimes against humanity, and the United Nations Convention  
6 on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide, signed in  
7 Paris on December 9, 1948 (the Convention); and

8 WHEREAS, These atrocities are undertaken with the specific  
9 intent to bring about the eradication and displacement of their  
10 communities and the destruction of their cultural heritage in violation of  
11 local laws, the laws of war, laws and treaties that punish crimes against  
12 humanity, and the Convention; and

13 WHEREAS, Local, national, and international laws and treaties,  
14 as well as the Convention, condemn murder, massacre, forced migration,  
15 extrajudicial punishment, kidnapping, slavery, human trafficking, torture,  
16 rape, and persecution of individuals based upon their religion, and these  
17 crimes shall be punished, whether they are committed by constitutionally  
18 responsible rulers, public officials, or private individuals; and

19 WHEREAS, Article I of the Convention and international and  
20 local laws confirm that genocide and crimes against humanity, whether  
21 committed in time of peace or in time of war, are crimes that  
22 governmental authorities are obligated to prevent and to punish; and

23 WHEREAS, Article II of the Convention declares that "genocide  
24 means any of the following acts committed with intent to destroy, in  
25 whole or in part, a national, ethnical, racial or religious group, as such:  
26 (a) Killing members of the group; (b) Causing serious bodily or mental  
27 harm to members of the group; (c) Deliberately inflicting on the group  
28 conditions of life calculated to bring about its physical destruction in  
29 whole or in part; (d) Imposing measures intended to prevent births within  
30 the group; [and] (e) Forcibly transferring children of the group to another  
31 group"; and

32 WHEREAS, Article III of the Convention affirms that "the  
33 following acts shall be punishable: (a) Genocide; (b) Conspiracy to  
34 commit genocide; (c) Direct and public incitement to commit genocide;  
35 (d) Attempt to commit genocide; [and] (e) Complicity in genocide"; and

36 WHEREAS, A March 13, 2015, report of the United Nations

1 Committee on Human Rights prepared at the request of the Government  
2 of Iraq stated "[e]thnic and religious groups targeted by ISIL include  
3 Yezidis, Christians, Turkmen, Sabeen-Mandean, Kaka'e, Kurds and  
4 Shi'a" and that "[i]t is reasonable to conclude that some of the incidents  
5 [in Iraq in 2014–2015] ... may constitute genocide"; and

6 WHEREAS, Attacks on Yezidis included the mass killing of men  
7 and boys and the enslavement and forcible transfer of women and  
8 children; and

9 WHEREAS, On July 10, 2015, Pope Francis, Supreme Pontiff of  
10 the Roman Catholic Church, declared that Middle Eastern Christians are  
11 facing genocide, a reality that must be "denounced", and that "[i]n this  
12 third world war, waged piecemeal, which we are now experiencing, a  
13 form of genocide is taking place, and it must end"; now, therefore,

14 *Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the Seventieth*  
15 *General Assembly of the State of Colorado, the Senate concurring herein:*

16 That we, the members of the General Assembly, find that:

17 (1) The atrocities committed against Christians and other ethnic  
18 and religious minorities who are targeted specifically for religious reasons  
19 constitute, and are hereby declared to be, crimes against humanity and  
20 genocide; and

21 (2) Each of the contracting parties to the United Nations  
22 Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide,  
23 signed in Paris on December 9, 1948, and to other international  
24 agreements forbidding war crimes and crimes against humanity,  
25 particularly the governments of countries and their nationals who are in  
26 any way supporting these crimes, are reminded of their legal obligations  
27 under the Convention and those international agreements; and

28 (3) Every government and multinational body should call the  
29 atrocities being committed in the name of religion by their rightful  
30 names--"crimes against humanity", "war crimes", and "genocide"; and

31 (4) The United Nations and the United Nations Secretary-General  
32 should assert leadership by calling the atrocities being committed in these  
33 places by their rightful names--"war crimes", "crimes against humanity",  
34 and "genocide"; and

1           (5) The member states of the United Nations, with an urgent  
2 appeal to the Arab States that wish to uphold religious freedom, tolerance,  
3 and justice:

4           (A) Should join in this resolution;

5           (B) Should collaborate on measures to prevent further war crimes,  
6 crimes against humanity, and genocide; and

7           (C) Should collaborate on the establishment and operation of  
8 domestic, regional, and international tribunals to punish those responsible  
9 for the ongoing crimes; and

10          (6) The governments of the Kurdistan Region of Iraq, the  
11 Hashemite Kingdom of Jordan, the Lebanese Republic, and other  
12 countries, including Turkey, Greece, the United States of America, and  
13 the member states of the European Union, are commended for having  
14 sheltered and protected those fleeing the violence of ISIS (Daesh) and  
15 other extremists until they can safely return to their homes in Iraq and  
16 Syria; and

17          (7) All those who force the migration of religious communities  
18 from their ancestral homelands, where they have lived and practiced their  
19 faith in safety and stability for hundreds of years--including specifically  
20 the Nineveh Plain, a historic heartland of Christianity in Iraq, and Mount  
21 Sinjar, the historic home of the Yezidis--should be tracked, sanctioned,  
22 arrested, prosecuted, and punished in accordance with the laws of the  
23 place where their crimes were committed and under applicable  
24 international criminal statutes and conventions.

25           *Be It Further Resolved*, That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent  
26 to President Barack Obama; Vice President Joe Biden; Mitch McConnell,  
27 Majority Leader, United States Senate; Harry Reid, Minority Leader,  
28 United States Senate; Paul Ryan, Speaker, United States House of  
29 Representatives; Kevin McCarthy, Majority Leader, United States House  
30 of Representatives; Nancy Pelosi, Minority Leader, United States House  
31 of Representatives; Colorado's congressional delegation; the Syrian  
32 American Council; the African Community Center of Denver; Lutheran  
33 Family Services; the Colorado Coalition for Genocide Awareness and  
34 Action; the Congressional Prayer Caucus Foundation; the St. Rafka  
35 Mission of Hope and Mercy; former Colorado State Senator Thomas J.  
36 Wiens; Peter Boyles; and Father Andre Y. Mahanna.