

SENATE RESOLUTION NO. 793

WHEREAS, In 2009, the Texas Legislature established the Texas Holocaust and Genocide Commission to further educate Texans about the Holocaust and other genocides; the commission's responsibilities include coordinating events in the State of Texas that memorialize the Holocaust and other genocides; for historical reasons, the Texas Senate has chosen April of 2011 to be Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month; and

WHEREAS, Throughout history, numerous genocides originated in April or stemmed from events that occurred in April; as a result, many institutions around the world have designated April to be a month of genocide awareness and prevention; in April of 1933, the Nazis issued a decree that prepared the way for the "Final Solution," in which they defined non-Aryans as "anyone descended from non-Aryan, especially Jewish, parents or grandparents. One parent or grandparent classifies the descendant as non-Aryan . . . especially if one parent or grandparent was of the Jewish faith"; and

WHEREAS, In April of 1975, the Khmer Rouge entered Phnom Penh, the capital of Cambodia, and initiated wide-scale massacres that turned cities into "killing fields"; these massacres resulted in the death of two million people; in April of 1992, the siege of Sarajevo, Bosnia and Herzegovina's capital city, ultimately led to the deaths of more than 2,000 Bosnian Serbs; and

WHEREAS, In April of 2003, the displacement of Darfurians began in Sudan, leading to hundreds of thousands of deaths and the displacement of millions; in April of 1994, the Rwandan President's airplane was shot down, leading to the slaying of moderate leaders by Hutu hardliners, and, over the next three months, 800,000 Tutsis were slaughtered; and

WHEREAS, In 2008, the Prevention of Genocide Task Force, convened by the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the American Academy of Diplomacy, and the United States Institute of Peace, issued a report stating that in order to stop future genocides and mass atrocities, effective prevention measures must be implemented before a crisis erupts; central to this notion was the idea that educating the public serves to protect individual rights and promotes a culture of lawfulness that can help to prevent future genocides; and

WHEREAS, Genocide often begins with the stratification of a community, in which one group is ostracized and dehumanized, creating an intolerance that can lead to the mass murder of that targeted group and their supporters; learning about past and current genocides will raise the call to protect individual rights and create recognition of the need for society to act when presented with instances of hatred and intolerance; and

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WHEREAS, The Senate has chosen the month of April to emphasize the need to heighten public awareness of the early stages of human behavior that spawn acts of genocide, the need to build strong communities and prevent future genocides, and the need on the state and national levels to continue to honor all who have been victimized by genocide; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That the Senate of the State of Texas, 82nd Legislature, hereby declare the month of April, 2011, Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month as a tribute to all whose lives have been touched by genocide and as a reminder of the need for the protection of human rights and for vigilance against the forces of intolerance; and, be it further

RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be prepared in recognition of Genocide Awareness and Prevention Month.

Shapiro

President of the Senate

I hereby certify that the above Resolution was adopted by the Senate on April 18, 2011.

Secretary of the Senate

Member, Texas Senate