

Sample Letter or E-Mail

Date

The Honorable [FIRST] [LAST]
U.S. Representative
U.S. House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Re: Please Co-Sponsor H.Res.180

Dear Congressman(woman) [LAST NAME]:

As a constituent and member of the American Hellenic Institute (AHI), I request you to co-sponsor **H.Res.180** that urges Turkey to respect the rights and religious freedoms of the Ecumenical Patriarchate—the world’s oldest Christian Church.

The Turkish government has tolerated assaults against its Greek Orthodox Christian religious minority, the Ecumenical Patriarchate, and continues the illegal closure of the Greek Orthodox Halki Patriarchal School of Theology in Istanbul. **These actions violate U.S. principles and law on freedom of religion as expressed in Section 2804 of the FY98 Omnibus Emergency Supplemental Appropriations Act (PL 105-277).** This law calls for the Turkish government to safeguard the Ecumenical Patriarchate, its personnel, and its property, and to reopen the Halki Patriarchal School of Theology.

Although in 2010 Turkey has signaled the need to address the issue of religious freedom among its minorities there is still much more that needs to be accomplished—namely the recognition of the Patriarch’s “ecumenical” title, the reopening of the Halki Seminary, the return of all confiscated properties by the Turkish government, and ensuring the succession of the Ecumenical Patriarch.

Also, the United States Commission on International Religious Freedom (USIRF), which was created by the passage of the International Religious Freedom Act of 1998 (IFRA), has placed Turkey on its “Watch List” for the past two years (2009 & 2010) demonstrating Turkey’s mistreatment of all religious minorities.

Therefore, please support and uphold respect for religious freedom and international law by co-sponsoring H.Res.180.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Name
Full Address