



# Congressional Record

PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES OF THE 114<sup>th</sup> CONGRESS, FIRST SESSION

## *House of Representatives*

1 **PETITION**

2 A petition to Congress honoring the accomplishments of individuals and organizations  
3 doing the difficult work of genocide detection and prevention, and providing survivor  
4 relief.

5 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

6 This petition may be cited as the “Honoring the Accomplishments of Genocide  
7 Prevention and Relief Workers”

8 **SECTION 2. FINDINGS.**

9 In the past 100 years, over 100 millions lives have been lost in genocides and mass  
10 atrocities;

11 During the same period, heroic American citizens, politicians, diplomats, faith based  
12 organizations, and non-government organizations have made it a part of their  
13 mission to raise awareness of genocides, help prevent genocides, and provide relief  
14 to survivors of genocides;

15 Some of these citizens, relief organizations, diplomats, and politicians put their lives and  
16 treasure at risk by working in conflict zones to alert the world of impending  
17 genocides and genocides in progress, rescue genocide survivors, and provide relief.

18

19 **SECTION 3. Petition**

20 On this 100th anniversary of the Armenian Genocide, and through this petition, LA2DC  
21 organizing committee members wish to recognize and honor the contributions of the  
22 following people and organizations for their work in raising awareness of genocides,  
23 providing relief to genocide survivors, and working to prevent genocides;

24 a. The American People – for setting the standard in the world for  
25 philanthropy, social activism, human rights, justice, and prevention of  
26 crimes against humanity. In their first act of large scale, nationwide,  
27 organization and execution of a relief campaign, from 1915 to 1930,  
28 Americans donated more than \$117 million – the equivalent of \$2.7  
29 billion in 2015 dollars – to relief organizations that saved over 1 million  
30 Christian Armenians, Greeks, Assyrians, and other minorities during the  
31 first mass atrocity of the 20th century, when these minorities were  
32 targeted for extermination and deportation by the Ottoman Empire.  
33 Over the past 100 years, Americans continue to be in the front lines of  
34 helping to prevent genocides, and providing relief and hope to survivors  
35 of atrocities.

36 b. Ambassador Henry Morgenthau – who as United States Ambassador to  
37 the Ottoman Empire, alerted the United States government of  
38 “Destruction of the Armenian Race...” and called on Americans to get  
39 organized to help the survivors.

40 c. The Near East Foundation (formerly known as Near East Relief or NER)  
41 – for providing relief to 1 million refugees and 132,000 orphan survivors

- 42 of the atrocities perpetrated by the Ottoman Empire from 1915 – 1923.  
43 During this period, NER raised the equivalent of \$2.7 billion in 2015  
44 dollars, and mobilized over 1,000 volunteers to help build 400  
45 orphanages, food and clothing distribution centers, clinics and hospitals,  
46 and vocational training schools for the survivors.
- 47 d. The American Red Cross – for providing relief to survivors of genocides  
48 and mass atrocities for the past 100 years, starting with its first  
49 international assistance program in 1915 that provided relief to the  
50 survivors of the Armenian Genocide.
- 51 e. The United States Holocaust Memorial Museum – for leading national  
52 and international efforts to promote human dignity, confront hatred, and  
53 prevent the next genocide.
- 54 f. The Museum of Tolerance – for educating and enlightening more than  
55 250,000 visitors per year since 1993, and challenging them to understand  
56 the Holocaust and genocides in both historic and contemporary contexts  
57 and confront all forms of prejudice and discrimination in our world  
58 today.
- 59 g. Raphael Lemkin – for inventing the term “genocide” to describe the  
60 atrocities that target groups for annihilation, and for working tirelessly to  
61 gain approval of Convention on the Prevention and Punishment of the  
62 Crime of Genocide by United Nations in 1948.
- 63 h. University of Southern California’s Shoah Foundation and its founder,  
64 Mr. Steven Spielberg - for painstakingly collecting nearly 52,000

65 eyewitness testimonies of the Holocaust, the Armenian Genocide, and  
66 other genocide survivors, and using their first hand accounts to teach the  
67 world about the horrors of genocides and the importance of preventing  
68 them.

69 i. Facing History and Ourselves – for educating over ten thousand teachers  
70 in the United States and worldwide, and through them, hundreds of  
71 thousands of students, on the history of prejudice and racism, and the  
72 role they play in the events that lead to genocide. Since 1976, Facing  
73 History has been engaged in genocide prevention work by promoting  
74 global citizenship and heightened awareness of genocides.

75 j. The International Committee of The Red Cross and United Nations  
76 Children’s Fund – for starting a vast relief operation in 1979 for the  
77 people of Cambodia threatened by famine and disease in the aftermath of  
78 the Cambodian Genocide, which claimed millions of lives.

79 k. United State Army Europe and United States Air Force Europe – for  
80 delivering humanitarian aid in 1995 and 1996 to the survivors of the  
81 Bosnian Genocide, during which an estimated 100,000 Bosniaks were  
82 systematically targeted and killed.

83 l. Senator William Proxmire – for following through his commitment to  
84 deliver a speech every day the United States Senate was in session in  
85 support of the ratification of United Nations Convention on the  
86 Prevention and Punishment of the Crime of Genocide. After 20 years

87 and 3,211 speeches, the United States Senate ratified the convention on  
88 February 11, 1986.

89 m. President Ronald Reagan – for signing the Genocide Implementation Act  
90 of 1987 into law, making genocide a Federal offense, and declaring,  
91 “This legislation still represents a strong and clear statement by the  
92 United States that it will punish acts of genocide with the force of law  
93 and the righteousness of justice.”

94 n. The International Rescue Committee – for providing emergency supplies  
95 and restoring infrastructure following the 1994 genocide in Rwanda,  
96 where an estimated 800,000 mostly Tutsi minorities were massacred.

97 o. Not On Our Watch, and Messrs. George Clooney, Don Cheadle, Matt  
98 Damon, Brad Pitt, David Pressman, and Jerry Weintraub for using their  
99 public profiles to bring attention to atrocities around the world, and  
100 raising awareness of the genocide in Darfur, where 300,000 civilians  
101 were targeted and murdered, and 2 million displaced.

102 p. United States Institute of Peace Genocide Prevention Task Force, and  
103 Co-Chairs Honorable Madeleine K. Albright and Honorable William S.  
104 Cohen – for developing a genocide prevention blueprint entitled,  
105 “Preventing Genocide: A Blueprint for U.S. Policymakers”, which  
106 affirmed that genocides are preventable, and issued 34 specific  
107 actionable recommendations that United States can implement to help  
108 detect and prevent genocides.

- 109 q. Ambassador Samantha Power, the United States Ambassador to the  
110 United Nations - for her groundbreaking research documented in her  
111 book published in 2003, “A Problem from Hell”, which recounts the  
112 history of genocide and offers a framework for policy makers that can  
113 help detect and prevent genocides.
- 114 r. Congressman Adam Schiff – for being the leading voice in the United  
115 States Congress advocating for recognition of past genocides as an  
116 important step towards detecting and preventing future genocides and  
117 atrocities.
- 118 s. The Armenian National Committee of America - for advocating for the  
119 recognition of the Armenian Genocides and raising awareness of  
120 genocides as crimes against humanity.
- 121 t. Countless other Americans and organizations who have made it their  
122 mission to help prevent the next genocide and promote peaceful  
123 resolution of conflicts.