

Proclamation

WHEREAS, the present year, 2015, marks the 100th anniversary of the beginning of the infamous episode known as the Armenian Genocide; and

WHEREAS, that historic event-which was launched on April 24, 1915, and continued through 1923-resulted in the annihilation, at the hands of the Ottoman Turkish government, of 1.5 million Armenians, and the deportation of almost the entire Armenian population from its ancestral lands in Asia Minor; and

WHEREAS, the Armenian Genocide marked the first instance of genocide-the attempted mass extermination of an entire people, conducted as a policy of state-in the 20th century; and

WHEREAS, the methods employed by the Ottoman Turkish government-the arrest and execution of leaders and intellectuals, forced death marches, rape and enslavement, and the incitement of ethnic and religious hatred against a minority population-would become models for subsequent genocides under Nazism and Communism, in Cambodia, Bosnia, Rwanda, and Darfur; and

WHEREAS, despite the lessons of the past, the horrors of genocide continue to plague the present day; and

WHEREAS, despite copious documentation, scholarly consensus, and official recognition by national governments across the world, the Armenian Genocide is still actively denied by the present-day Republic of Turkey; and

WHEREAS, many survivors of the Armenian Genocide found safe haven in the United States, settling in such locales as Belleville, where their descendants continue to play a vital, productive role in community life.

NOW, THEREFORE, I, Mark W. Eckert, Mayor of the City of Belleville, Illinois, do hereby proclaim that Friday, April 24, 2015 as Armenian Genocide Remembrance Day and that we honor the memory of those who perished in the Armenian Genocide on century ago, and remember all those who lost their lives and loved ones to genocide in the succeeding 100 years, in the hope that by so doing we will contribute to ridding the world of the scourge of genocide once and for all.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have herewith set my hand and caused the seal of the City of Belleville to be affixed, this 20th day of April, in the year of our Lord two thousand and fifteen.

Mark W. Eckert
Mark W. Eckert, Mayor

Dated this 20th day of April, 2015

