

Letter from Clinton to House Speaker Dennis Hastert

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October 19–2000

The Honorable J. Dennis Hastert

Speaker of the

House of Representatives

Washington–DC 20515-1314

Dear Mr. Speaker:

I am writing to express my deep concern about H. Res. 596—dealing with the tragic events in eastern Anatolia under Ottoman rule in the years 1915-1923.

Every year on April 24—I have commemorated Armenian Remembrance Day—mourning the deportations and massacres of innocent Armenia’s during that era. And every year—I have challenged all Americans to recommit themselves to ensuring that such horrors never occur again.

However—I am deeply concerned that consideration of H. Res. 596 at this time could have far-reaching negative consequences for the United States.

We have significant interests in this troubled region of the world: containing the threat posed by East and Central Asia—stabilizing the Balkans—and developing new sources of energy. Consideration of the resolution at this sensitive time will negatively affect those interests and could undermine efforts to encourage improved relations between Armenia and Turkey — the very goal the sponsors of this Resolution seek to advance.

I fully understand how strongly both Turkey and Armenia feel about this issue. Ultimately—this painful matter can only be resolved by both sides examining the past together.

I urge you in the strongest terms not to bring this Resolution to the floor at this time.

Sincerely—

[signed]

Bill Clinton