

CS FOR HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 32(STA)

IN THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA

TWENTY-EIGHTH LEGISLATURE - SECOND SESSION

BY THE HOUSE STATE AFFAIRS COMMITTEE

Offered: 4/2/14

Referred: Rules

Sponsor(s): REPRESENTATIVE SADDLER

A RESOLUTION

1 **Urging the United States government to condemn violent acts of religious persecution**
2 **and seek a peaceful resolution to the conflicts in Syria.**

3 **BE IT RESOLVED BY THE LEGISLATURE OF THE STATE OF ALASKA:**

4 **WHEREAS** thousands of Alaskans have strong spiritual and historical bonds with the
5 people of Syria and the Holy Land; and

6 **WHEREAS** thousands of Alaskans are members of the Orthodox Christian Church, a
7 faith that has been in Alaska since 1794, and are members of the same faith as those of the
8 Orthodox Church in Syria and the Holy Land; and

9 **WHEREAS** thousands of Alaskans are Roman Catholic Christians and have been
10 called by Pope Francis in his Christmas prayer to pray for the suffering people of Syria and to
11 work toward peace; and

12 **WHEREAS** thousands of Alaskans are Protestant Christians who have a deep concern
13 for and pray for the people of Syria, as expressed in articles concerning Syria by the Voice of
14 the Martyrs, a nonprofit interdenominational Christian organization; and

15 **WHEREAS** Alaskans are saddened and outraged by the crimes against humanity in
16 Syria, including such atrocities as the murder of innocent women and children, the massacre

1 of Christians in jihadi attacks, the burning and desecration of over 90 Christian churches, the
2 kidnapping of Bishops Youhanna Ibrahim and Boulos Yazigi, the recent abduction of Mother
3 Pelagia Sayaf and the orphan children she cares for at Saint Tecla monastery, the forced
4 conversion of peaceful Syrians to Islam or death to those who do not convert, and the
5 dislocation of hundreds of thousands of Christians from their homeland; and

6 **WHEREAS** Syria has been the beloved homeland of Christian people, beginning with
7 the presence of Jesus Christ in 33 A.D., and the Christian Church in Damascus and
8 throughout Syria is expressly mentioned in the New Testament; and

9 **WHEREAS**, although many western governments and the mass media demonstrate an
10 indifference to the impending demise of Christian people in the land of the birth of
11 Christianity and the crimes against the Syrian people, Alaskans take a courageous stand for
12 peace and protection for the Syrian people against terrorism;

13 **BE IT RESOLVED** that the Alaska State Legislature urges the United States
14 government to condemn violent acts of religious persecution and seek a peaceful resolution to
15 the conflicts in Syria.

16 **COPIES** of this resolution shall be sent to the Honorable Barack Obama, President of
17 the United States; the Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr., Vice-President of the United States and
18 President of the U.S. Senate; the Honorable John F. Kerry, United States Secretary of State;
19 General Martin E. Dempsey, Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff; the Honorable Robert
20 Menendez, Chair of the U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; the Honorable Barbara
21 Mikulski, Chair of the U.S. Senate Committee on Appropriations; the Honorable Dave Camp,
22 Chair of the U.S. House Ways and Means Committee; the Honorable Bob Corker, ranking
23 member, U.S. Senate Committee on Foreign Relations; the Honorable Lisa Murkowski and
24 the Honorable Mark Begich, U.S. Senators, and the Honorable Don Young, U.S.
25 Representative, members of the Alaska delegation in Congress; and all other members of the
26 United States Senate.