

AFFIDAVIT OF PETER A. JOURAS, JR.

Comes now Peter A. Jouras Jr., Esq., of 10709 Horton, Overland Park, Kansas, of lawful age, who being first duly sworn, on his oath deposes and states:

On behalf of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese Christians and as an Orthodox Christian, I request the Kansas Senate pass Resolution No. 1835 for the support of the religious freedom of the Orthodox Church. The U.S. Senate, House and 32 States have passed similar resolutions.

History

The Orthodox Christian Church's history dates back to Jesus Christ and began in 33 A.D. The Church's spiritual and ecumenical, worldwide, leader is the Patriarch. The church where the Patriarch sits is located in Constantinople, which is modern day Istanbul, Turkey. When the Orthodox elect a new Ecumenical Patriarch, he is selected from the worldwide Orthodox Christian population of about 300 million.

Turkish Government's Restrictions

Currently, the Turkish government imposes several restrictions on the Patriarchate. First, the Patriarch must be a Turkish citizen. Second, those who elect him must be Turkish citizens. Third, the Turkish government can veto any candidate for Patriarch. Fourth, the Turkish government does not recognize the ecumenical, worldwide, status of the Patriarch. They limit his status as only over the 2,000 Orthodox in Turkey. Fifth, the Turkish government does not recognize the Patriarchate as a legal entity having ownership rights over any property including churches, hospitals and seminaries.

Issue

There are less than 2,000 Orthodox Christians remaining in Turkey and the number is dwindling. Thus, it becomes increasingly difficult to find a spiritual leader for the Church when the Orthodox cannot select from the 300 million Orthodox Christians worldwide. Additionally, since the Patriarch is not recognized by the Turkish government, the Patriarchate cannot own property. Much of the Church's property has been confiscated by the Turkish government, including the seminary to train clergy one of whom would ultimately become the Patriarch in Turkey. This affects not only Orthodox Christians worldwide, but those living in United States and Kansas of which I am a member.

Support

73 U.S. Senators, including former U.S. Senator, Governor Brownback and Senator Roberts of Kansas, signed the attached November 29, 2006 letter of support to President Bush. (Exhibit 1)

Also attached is a May 11, 2007 letter signed by numerous U.S. Congressmen who also support this religious freedom. (Exhibit 2)

Finally, the U.S. Senate, Congress and 32 States have similar resolutions. To date, resolutions have been adopted or introduced in 32 states, including Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Connecticut, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, Michigan, Mississippi, Minnesota, Nebraska, Nevada, New Mex-

ico, New Jersey, Oklahoma, Oregon, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, South Carolina, Tennessee, Utah, Vermont, Virginia, Washington, West Virginia and Wisconsin. (See attached summary sheet-Exhibit 3)

Information

There are several articles (exhibit 4) which more fully explain the difficulties faced by the Orthodox Church. Included is the 8/27/08 letter of Senator John McCain to President George W. Bush, who discussed this issue.

Included is the November 26, 2006, Chicago Tribune article on this issue of religious freedom. It starts out, "Imagine the Vatican surrounded in a fiercely secular yet very Muslim Italy." This is what it is like for the Patriarchate of the Orthodox Christian Church.

Included is an article about Pope Benedict XVI and Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew. This provides some other details of the Catholic and Orthodox solidarity and perspective.

Also, if you would like to see the 60 Minutes interview with Patriarch Bartholomew, which was aired in August 2010, the link is:

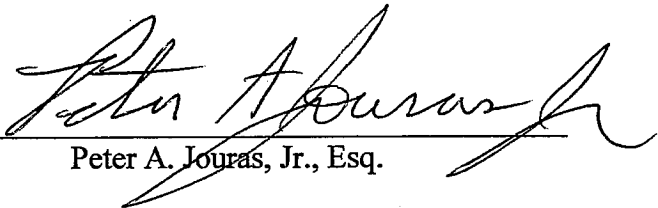
<http://www.cbsnews.com/video/watch/?id=6754652n&tag=contentMain;contentBody>

Finally, enclosed is a November 27, 2006 article in the Hellenic News, the testimony of Dr. Anthony Limberakis before the U.S. Helsinki Commission, as well as some additional articles.

Conclusion

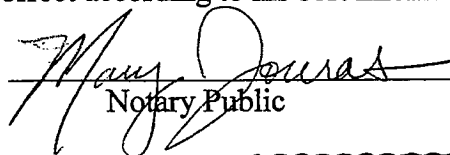
In conclusion, our goal is to present all of the adopted resolutions to the Turkish Foreign Minister in Ankara this coming fall. I appreciate your time in considering this resolution. I hope and pray you will be able to adopt it in 2011.

Further, Affiant sayeth not.


Peter A. Jouras, Jr., Esq.

State of Kansas)
) ss.
County of Johnson)

On this 22 day of January, 2011, personally appeared before me Peter A. Jouras, Jr., of lawful age, who being first duly sworn, on his oath stated that the facts and opinions contained in the above and foregoing are true and correct according to his best information and belief.


Notary Public

My commission expires:

