



# THE ADVOCATE

Winter 2007

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## ASSEMBLY, COMMUNITY MOBILIZE SUPPORT FOR GENOCIDE LEGISLATION

Buoyed by the recent shift in Congress which propelled Armenian issues supporters into key leadership positions, the Assembly has launched a major grassroots drive to secure strong bipartisan support for an Armenian Genocide resolution (H. Res. 106) making its way through the House of Representatives.

"I think we have the best chance in probably a decade to get an Armenian Genocide resolution passed," said Rep. Adam Schiff (D-CA), the bill's lead sponsor.

Schiff introduced the resolution along with Reps. George Radanovich (R-CA), Congressional Armenian Caucus Co-Chairmen Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ) and Joe Knollenberg (R-MI), and Congressmen Brad Sherman (D-CA) and Thaddeus McCotter (R-MI) in late January. The resolution calls upon the

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## REMEMBERING HRANT DINK

WASHINGTON, DC – The tragic slaying of Hrant Dink, one of the most prominent figures of the Armenian community in Turkey, exposed the depths of ultra-nationalist sentiment and the repercussions of a flawed judicial system which have helped create a disturbing anti-Armenian trend in Turkish society.

For the Armenian Assembly, which has repeatedly called on Ankara to reform its laws and improve its treatment of minorities, Dink's loss on January 19 forever altered the landscape in which the Assembly has fought for change. The horror of his assassination and the countless death threats that preceded it, created an obligation to keep the public spotlight on the deeper implications of Turkey's shameless denial of the Armenian Genocide.

The sight of 100,000 people marching through the streets of Istanbul also revealed a measurable chasm in Turkish society, where forces opposed to state policies were willing to express their grief and dismay. The public response exposed the extent of civil society outrage and renewed debate on Article 301, a controversial provision of Turkey's penal code.

News media around the world joined the crescendo of calls, urging Turkey to repeal the article which is used to intimidate its citizens and encourage denial of the Armenian Genocide.

"This sinister provision....gives fanatics the chance to haul before the courts some of Turkey's best journalists, including Mr. Dink, as well as writers and scholars," *The Economist* observed. "Worse, noisy prosecutions have exposed many people to the rage of hotheads whose reaction to straight talk about history is to reach for their guns."

Not surprisingly, the enhanced awareness in the U.S. Congress of developments in Turkey has already put Ankara on the offensive. Nervous over the sympathy that Dink's murder has generated, Ankara's leaders are making frequent trips to Washington in hopes of blocking legislation reaffirming the Genocide. The Democratic-controlled Congress, which has propelled Armenian issues supporters to key positions, is posing new concerns for Turkey.

"The Turkish government is clearly escalating its denial campaign," said Hirair Hovnanian,

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## MESSAGE FROM THE CHAIRMAN

**H**rant Dink was assassinated for his political and civic views and for the courage to express them openly. As a citizen and journalist, Dink championed the cause of democracy and freedom in Turkey. As a prominent member of Turkey's Armenian community, he worked to build bridges between the two peoples and the countries of Armenia and Turkey through tolerance, goodwill, and dialogue.

There is no doubt that Dink's murder was an attempt to intimidate and silence the growing momentum in Turkey toward greater respect for human rights and freedoms. One of 18 journalists killed in Turkey in the last several years, and one of a dozen (including the 2006 Nobel Prize laureate in literature Orhan Pamuk) to be charged and prosecuted under Article 301 of the Turkish penal code, Mr. Dink was serving a suspended sentence, and was fighting another legal battle in the Court of Appeals for having spoken publicly about the Armenian Genocide.

We remain deeply concerned with Turkey's continued failure to adopt standards and practices of both domestic and international conduct that would reverse and overturn the climate of intolerance, prejudice and repression. Dink needed the protection of his country's authorities and instead was unfairly and repeatedly prosecuted for speaking the truth.

His murder now challenges America and the rest of the civilized world to stand up against political violence and the atmosphere that fosters it. The Assembly accepts this challenge and is working assiduously towards genocide reaffirmation and improved treatment of religious and ethnic minorities in Turkey. In addition to the Biden resolution (S. Res. 65) in the Senate and the Crowley resolution (H. Res. 102) in the House – both of which condemn Dink's assassination – Congress should pass the Schiff-Radanovich-Pallone-Knollenberg resolution (H. Res. 106) which affirms the Armenian Genocide.

To accomplish this and much more, we need the full participation of our members and activists. I encourage you to join us in Washington on April 23-24 as we commemorate the 92nd anniversary of the Armenian Genocide and make our voices heard on Capitol Hill during a full day of meetings with elected officials. The strength of our message derives from our numbers. No other human being in Turkey should have to pay the price for speaking the truth. Join us today.

**HIRAIR HOVNANIAN**

## ASSEMBLY AGAIN PROTESTS MILITARY AID BIAS

The Assembly in February objected to the Administration's renewed calls for military aid disparity between Armenia and Azerbaijan, calling on Congress to once again reinstate parity in the Fiscal Year (FY) 2008 Foreign Operations bill.

In its budget to Congress, the Administration proposed boosting Azerbaijan's military financing over Armenia by \$2 million. Specifically, the Administration is recommending that Azerbaijan receive \$5.3 million, versus only \$3.3 million for Armenia, in Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and International Military Education and Training (IMET) assistance.

In previous years, through the combined efforts of the Assembly and others in the Armenian-American community, Congress ultimately reinstated security aid parity.

"The request for asymmetrical military assistance to Armenia and Azerbaijan not only runs counter to what Congress has appropriated in previous years, but also sends the wrong message to Armenia, an important U.S. ally," said Executive Director Bryan Ardouny. "The U.S. must ensure that it does not unintentionally disturb the delicate balance of power that exists in the South Caucasus."

The Administration's budget request also recommends \$35 million for Armenia in Freedom Support Act (FSA) funding "to help implement economic and democratic reform and fight corruption. FSA assistance will complement major MCC resources for agricultural development."

"This budget request not only cuts assistance by more than 50 percent, but it also fails to recommend any assistance to Nagorno Karabakh," Ardouny explained. "This is simply unacceptable."

Prior to the release of the Administration's budget, the House of Representatives approved FY 2007 funding for Armenia at the 2006 level of nearly \$75 million. ■

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Following the introduction of the Armenian Genocide resolution in the House of Representatives, Congressmen Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ) at podium, Adam Schiff (D-CA), Joe Knollenberg (R-MI), and George Radanovich (R-CA) held a press conference on Capitol Hill which was attended by Genocide survivors Rose Baboyian and Yer. Sirarpi Khoyan, members of the media, the Armenian Assembly and other leading Armenian-American organizations and community supporters.

President to “ensure that the foreign policy of the United States reflects appropriate understanding” of the “Armenian Genocide” and to “accurately characterize the systematic and deliberate annihilation of 1,500,000 Armenians as genocide” in the President’s annual message.

As expected, the Turkish government is vigorously opposing the resolution by calling upon its hired lobbyists, the Administration and Members of Congress, to deny that genocide occurred and to assert irreparable damage to the U.S.-Turkey relationship should Congress adopt the bill.

“[This bill] will endanger [U.S.] security interests,” Turkish Foreign Minister Abdullah Gul said in February, following a series of meetings with U.S. officials in Washington. “Damage to relations would be permanent,” he warned.

State Department Spokesman Sean McCormack clarified Washington’s position, saying “We understand the sensitivities in Turkey. We also understand the sensitivities in other communities in the U.S. and other places around the world. We are talking to the Congress about this. I think Foreign Minister Gul and the Turkish Government [are] well aware of our system of government and they understand that Congress is an independent branch.”

“We are, however, in close contact with Members of Congress on the issue and we

have conveyed to them the sensitivities expressed to us by the Turkish Government concerning this particular resolution,” McCormack added.

“We cannot continue to submit to Turkey’s shameless threats and intimidation,” Pallone said. “We must stand up to the Turkish Embassy and its paid lobbyists here in Washington. The United States owes it to the Armenian-American community, to the 1.5 million that were massacred in the Genocide and to its own history, to reaffirm what is fact.”

At press time, H. Res. 106 boasted over 180 cosponsors. Pan-Armenian support will be crucial to secure additional cosponsors and ultimate passage of the bill. As part of that effort, the Assembly has launched an all-out media and grassroots campaign to raise public awareness and increase congressional support. Assembly Board Members and staff fielded reporters’ questions and the national and international media have reported widely on the prospects for the bill’s passage.



Armenian Assembly activists and staff met with Congressman Adam Schiff (D-CA) in Pasadena, California on January 27, ahead of the introduction of the Armenian Genocide bill in the House of Representatives. L to R: California ARAMAC State Chair Peter Kezirian, Board of Trustees Member and Western Office Chair Richard Mushegain, Representative Adam Schiff (D-CA), Assembly Community Relations Director Narine Zardarian, Assembly Western Office Director Lena Kaimian and Fellow Trustee Albert Cabraloff.

“We are working day in and day out to secure timely passage of the Armenian Genocide resolution,” said Executive Director Bryan Ardouny. “The Armenian Genocide can not be ignored or swept under the rug. We thank all of our members and activists who have already responded to our calls to action and encourage others to join our cause.”

**Urge Congress to properly recognize the Armenian Genocide in just a few easy steps! Go to the Assembly’s Web site at [www.aaainc.org](http://www.aaainc.org)**

**enter your zip code in the “Contact Congress” box and send your Representative a pre-written letter urging him/her to co-sponsor the Armenian Genocide resolution. Do it today!**



### House Resolution 106:

Calls upon the President to ensure that the foreign policy of the United States reflects appropriate understanding and sensitivity concerning issues related to human rights, ethnic cleansing, and genocide documented in the United States record relating to the Armenian Genocide....and calls upon the President in the President’s annual message commemorating the Armenian Genocide issued on or about April 24, to accurately characterize the systematic and deliberate annihilation of 1,500,000 Armenians as genocide and to recall the proud history of United States intervention in opposition to the Armenian Genocide.

*The new resolution is modeled after H. Res. 316 which overwhelmingly passed the House International Relations Committee last Congress and also closely mirrors H. Res. 398/ H. Res. 596, which nearly passed the House of Representatives in 2000. Only a last minute intervention by President Clinton to Speaker Dennis Hastert (R-IL) prevented a final, affirmative vote on the House floor at that time.*



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Board of Trustees Chairman. "This may be the most unfortunate aftermath of Dink's murder."

"We must ensure his death was not in vain by ending the vicious cycle of genocide denial in Turkey," Hovnanian continued. "In light of this tragedy, it is all the more appropriate for Congress to adopt a resolution reaffirming the genocide."

Hovnanian said the Assembly is also fully supporting legislation in the House and Senate condemning Dink's assassination. The resolutions, known as H. Res. 102 and S. Res. 65, were introduced by Congressman Joseph Crowley (D-NY) and Senator Joseph Biden (D-DE) respectively and call on Turkey to take appropriate action to protect freedom of speech by repealing Article 301. The Biden resolution also calls on Turkey to reestablish full diplomatic, political and economic relations with Armenia.

***Help ensure the passage of House and Senate legislation honoring the memory of Hrant Dink and deploring his assassination. Contact your elected official today and urge him/her to cosponsor H. Res. 102 and S. Res. 65. Go to [www.aaainc.org](http://www.aaainc.org) for details.***



## COMMUNITY MEMBERS UNITE IN GRIEF



On January 19, the Assembly's Western Office held a candlelight vigil in memory of Hrant Dink outside the Turkish Consulate in Los Angeles, California.



More than 200 members of the Armenian community attended a memorial service for Dink at St. Mary's Armenian Apostolic Church in Washington, DC on January 26. Assistant Secretary of State Daniel Fried (above) expressed awe and admiration for Dink, saying that he "stood for a civic virtue higher than hatred, higher than ethnic stereotypes, higher than fears and repression and ignorance. His was a vision of a better world."

# ELEGY FOR AN ARMENIAN A TRIBUTE TO HRANT DINK

*By: Adam Garrie, UCLA*

The questions with answers that dare not speak,  
A life dedicated to all who seek,  
To lift the veil from tired eyes,  
Craving justice's shelter from both truth and lies.

The adopted children of a wandering world,  
Where dreams are written but scarcely heard,  
A warrior armed but with a pen,  
And by the bullet met untimely end.

The stewardship of a refugee,  
So perhaps a shrunken world could see,  
The fields of death whose blood is dry,  
When overdue tears do cease to cry.

The debt of honour without a price,  
Ignorance for paradise,  
The consequence of the words one speaks,  
In times of bounty when men grow meek,  
But undeterred by time and place,  
Running marathons in a thankless race,  
A progressing world on a circular track,  
History is the shadow behind your back.  
Modern men with medieval souls,  
Could not hallow such noble goals,  
The ancient streets a witness bear,  
Soldiers are those who dream to dare.

Time makes legends but martyrs are made by man,  
Forgiveness is for the living and those who understand,  
The shadow that walks behind you—once was a child too,  
Your world is always given—but your path you have to choose.

From India's rivers and Persia's ancient sands,  
On both sides of the Bosphorus to the New World's foreign lands,  
A people live not by soil but by unspoken fact,  
That no swords, empires, or bullets can from this world extract.

With mourning comes tomorrow,  
And duty must fulfill,  
To answer destiny's horn call,  
That bows before our will.

# BUILDING SUPPORT ON CAPITOL HILL

In an effort to secure a crucial bipartisan majority on the Armenian Genocide resolution, Assembly leaders and supporters are meeting with Members of Congress, urging them to cosponsor H. Res. 106 and reaffirm the historical fact of the Armenian Genocide. In recent weeks, Board of Trustees Member Annie Totah and Executive Director Bryan Ardouny met with House Majority Leader and Armenian Caucus Member Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-MD), who has voiced support for U.S. reaffirmation of the Armenian Genocide. Additional meetings were

held with Caucus Members Reps. Charles Rangel (D-NY), Shelley Berkley (D-NV), Eliot Engel (D-NY), and Brad Sherman (D-CA), as well as Reps. John Sarbanes (D-MD) and Sheila Jackson-Lee (D-TX) – all of whom have cosponsored the resolution. Also, Ardouny and longtime Fellow Trustee James Melikian, met with Armenian Caucus Co-Chair Frank Pallone, Jr. (D-NJ) and Caucus Members Reps. Brad Sherman (D-CA) and Loretta Sanchez (D-CA), to thank them for their support on H. Res. 106.



Board of Trustees Member Annie Totah, and Genocide Resolution supporter and Chairman of the Ways and Means Committee Rep. Charles B. Rangel (D-NY).



L to R: Executive Director Bryan Ardouny, Board of Trustees Member Annie Totah and longtime Armenian issues supporter and House Majority Leader Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-MD).



Congresswoman Loretta Sanchez (D-CA) flanked by Fellow Trustee James Melikian, left, and Executive Director Bryan Ardouny.



Fellow Trustee James Melikian and Congressman Brad Sherman (D-CA).

# ARMENIAN ASSEMBLY OF AMERICA'S ANNUAL BOARD OF TRUSTEES MEETING AND ADVOCACY DAY

Renaissance Mayflower Hotel  
April 23-24, 2007

Washington, DC

**Plan for the Assembly's future**

**Learn the "how-to's" of Advocacy**

**Meet with Members of Congress**

Join your fellow activists in Washington as we make our voices heard on Capitol Hill

Commemorate the 92nd Anniversary of the Armenian Genocide  
during a special Capitol Hill ceremony led by the Armenian Caucus Co-Chairs

Featuring keynote speaker, former U.S. Ambassador to Armenia John M. Evans

For more information, contact Mary Garabadian at 202-393-3434 x 226 or via email at [mary@aaainc.org](mailto:mary@aaainc.org)

# ASSEMBLY PREPARES FOR 35TH ANNIVERSARY GALA WEEKEND

Washington, DC – With tremendous excitement and anticipation, the Armenian Assembly is celebrating its 35th anniversary with a series of events around the country, culminating in a special Gala celebration in Los Angeles, California in November.

The commemorative year kicked off in February with three full days of events in Boca Raton, Florida, starting with the eastern Legacy Society Appreciation Dinner, followed by a Member Briefing and the Assembly's Runway 2007 Fashion Show Benefit, an event supporting Assembly programs and initiatives.

"We're planning events in cities across the country to highlight the Assembly's accomplishments these past 35 years," said Executive Director Bryan Ardouny. "We encourage members to attend with their friends and family and learn more about our organization's important work and discuss our shared goals and hopes for the future."

The 2007 Gala Co-Chairs are Albert and Diane Cabraloff and Paul



Executive Director Bryan Ardouny flanked by 2007 Gala Committee Co-Chairs Diane Cabraloff, left, and Sandra Kalemkarian.

Program will be held during the Gala weekend and is expected to attract many intern alumni. □

and Sandra Kalemkarian.

"We're also celebrating another significant milestone – the 30th anniversary of the Assembly's Summer Internship Program," Ardouny added. "The program has helped hundreds of college students take their first steps toward professional development while building a more active and aware citizenry through hands-on public policy experience."

Since 1977, the Assembly has hosted Armenian-American college-aged students for an eight-week stint in the nation's capital. Events marking the 30th anniversary of the Internship Program, known as the Terjenian-Thomas Assembly Internship Program since 2002, are expected to attract many former interns.

A reception marking the 30th Anniversary of the Washington Internship Program will be held during the Gala weekend and is expected to

Celebrate the Assembly's 35th Anniversary in your hometown!

If you would like to plan a commemorative event in your area, our staff will gladly assist you.

Those interested should contact Mary Garabadian in the Assembly's Washington Office at (202) 393-3434 x226.

## WHO WERE THE TERJENIANS AND THOMAS?

In 2003, the Assembly's long-running Washington Internship Program was endowed and renamed the Terjenian-Thomas Assembly Internship Program. The gift was the legacy of three siblings, Aram and Florence Terjenian and Annie Thomas, all first-time donors who have since passed away.

In 1990, attorney Haig Der Manuelian, one of the original founders of the Assembly, recommended they provide in their estates for an endowment to perpetuate the Assembly's Internship Program, thereby also perpetuating the family names.

Annie Thomas, a longtime librarian at Harvard University's prestigious Widener Library, was widowed without children. Her sister Florence worked as an executive secretary for an investment management firm, while her brother Aram, a World War II veteran and graduate of Boston University, worked in a rug retail store. Neither Florence nor Aram married.

Der Manuelian described the siblings as "unassuming, kind and gentle persons, who welcomed an opportunity to pool their modest resources permanently to put them to such a good purpose."

The Assembly is grateful to the Terjenian and Thomas families endowment contribution which has helped make it possible for students to intern at the Assembly year after year.

## ATTENTION INTERN ALUMNI

Don't miss out on important updates about Gala weekend activities and intern alumni events.

Update your contact information via email to:

[alumni@aaainc.org](mailto:alumni@aaainc.org)

# COMMUNITY RELATIONS DIRECTOR SAYS “LET’S WORK TOGETHER”

Narine Zardarian, the Assembly’s new Community Relations Director, says she has a strong bond to Armenia, her birthplace, and home until 1989, when she and her family resettled in California.

“I feel a strong connection to my homeland,” said Zardarian, who holds a degree in psychology from UCLA. “Part of that has to do with the fact that my parents continue to tell me stories of their youth in Armenia, speak the language, cook the food and maintain the traditions and culture.”

As Community Relations Director, Zardarian will expand the Assembly’s grassroots outreach in California and beyond, as well as assist with the Assembly’s government relations program.



“Armenians have a rich history and it is one that is full of struggle,” Zardarian said. “It is that history that brings me to the Armenian Assembly. For me, this is not just a job, but a way for me to contribute to healing the wounds of our past by doing my part in strengthening and building a better future for our community.”

As the year progresses, Zardarian will keep readers informed about upcoming events, which will include member briefings, community workshops, lectures and seminars.

Zardarian encourages community members to contact her with their thoughts and ideas, via email at [nzardarian@aaainc.org](mailto:nzardarian@aaainc.org) or call 310-360-0091. □

## BOSTON SUPPORTERS TAKE PART IN YOUNG PROFESSIONALS EVENT

For thirty years, the Assembly has provided a forum for young leaders to learn more about issues facing Armenian-Americans. Through its popular internship programs and young professionals events across the country, the Assembly has helped build a more active and aware citizenry. Recently, Armenian-American supporters came together in Boston for a chance to

network and discuss key community concerns during a wine tasting event hosted by the Assembly’s Young Professionals Group. Organized by Young Professionals’ leaders Noelle Tashjian, Vasken Kebabjian and Chris Talanian, the event included remarks by Executive Director Bryan Ardouny and Armenia Tree Project Deputy Director Jason Sohigian.



L to R: Noelle Tashjian, Christopher Talanian and Vasken Kebabjian organized the Assembly event in Boston, MA.



L to R: Lisa Maranian, Kim Tashkian, James Tillis, Mark Janian and Charleen Onanian Janian.

## LEAVE A LEGACY

Ensuring a secure, prosperous, and democratic Armenia is a goal we all share.

Help us fulfill this promise by remembering the Assembly in your will, trust, or estate plan. By making such a gift, you become eligible to join the Assembly's Legacy Society.

For more information, contact **Andy Zovko**, Development Director, at [azovko@aaainc.org](mailto:azovko@aaainc.org) or **(202) 393-3434**.

## ATTENTION STUDENTS

To learn more about the Terjenian-Thomas Assembly Internship Program in Washington, or the sister program in Armenia, please contact Intern Coordinator **Joseph Piatt**

**202-393-3434 x237**

or via email at [jpiatt@aaainc.org](mailto:jpiatt@aaainc.org).

## Sign Me Up Now As An Armenian Assembly Member!

Yes! I want to help make a difference. Please accept my donation of \$ \_\_\_\_\_ towards strengthening the U.S.-Armenia and U.S.-Karabakh relationships.

I would like to join the Armenian Assembly as a Member. Please sign me up at the following level:

- (FT) Fellow Trustee (\$1,000 to \$4,999)     
  (CA) Contributing Affiliate (\$500 to \$999)     
  (SA) Supporting Affiliate (\$250 to \$499)  
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Winter/2007

# WE WELCOME THESE NEW MEMBERS TO THE ASSEMBLY FAMILY

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*This list represents contributions received during the period of 9/1/2006-1/31/2007.*

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## Calendar of Events

APRIL 22: Annual Armenian Genocide Commemoration; Times Square, New York

APRIL 23-24: Annual Board of Trustees Meeting and Advocacy Day; Washington, DC

APRIL 24: Armenian Genocide Commemoration on Capitol Hill; Washington, DC

JULY 15: Annual Great Lakes Regional Council Picnic; Farmington Hills, MI

## We'd Like to Hear From You . . .

We look forward to receiving your reaction to this newsletter, as well as any topics you would like us to address in future issues.

If you know of someone who should receive this newsletter, please send his or her name, e-mail address or street address and we will gladly add it to our distribution list.

You can reach us at the following address:

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