

117TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION

S. RES.

Commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the founding of the American
Hellenic Educational Progressive Association.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

Mr. VAN HOLLEN (for himself and Mr. RUBIO) submitted the following
resolution; which was referred to the Committee on _____

RESOLUTION

Commemorating the 100th Anniversary of the founding of
the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association.

Whereas the American Hellenic Educational Progressive Association (referred to in this preamble as “AHEPA”) was founded on July 26, 1922, in Atlanta, Georgia, by 8 visionary Greek immigrants to help unify, organize, and protect individuals of all ethnic, racial, and religious backgrounds against the terror, hatred, and bigotry perpetrated predominantly by the Ku Klux Klan;

Whereas the mission of AHEPA is to promote the Hellenic ideals of ancient Greece, which include philanthropy, education, civic responsibility, and family and individual excellence through community service and volunteerism;

Whereas, since the inception of AHEPA, the organization has instilled in the members of AHEPA an understanding of

their Hellenic heritage and an awareness of the contributions that Hellenic heritage has made to the development of democratic principles and governance in the United States and throughout the world;

Whereas AHEPA has done much throughout the history of the organization to foster patriotism in the United States;

Whereas members of AHEPA have served in the Armed Forces of the United States to protect the freedom of the people of the United States and to preserve those democratic ideals that are part of the Hellenic legacy;

Whereas, in World War II, members of AHEPA parachuted behind enemy lines in Nazi-occupied Greece to help liberate Greece;

Whereas AHEPA raised more than \$253,000,000 for United States war bonds during World War II, and, as a result of the effort, AHEPA was named an official issuing agent for United States war bonds by the Department of the Treasury, an honor that no other civic organization had yet achieved;

Whereas, in 1990, the members of AHEPA donated \$612,000 toward the restoration of the Statue of Liberty and Ellis Island, New York, for which AHEPA received special recognition by the Department of the Interior;

Whereas the AHEPA National Housing Program has sponsored safe and dignified affordable housing for vulnerable senior citizens under the Section 202 Supportive Housing for the Elderly program (administered by the Department of Housing and Urban Development and authorized under section 202 of the Housing Act of 1959 (12 U.S.C.

1701q)), and the sponsorship has a portfolio of 4,467 units in 87 communities in 19 States;

Whereas AHEPA has engaged in “Track Two Diplomacy” to foster reconciliation and rapprochement in the Eastern Mediterranean, which is in the best interest of the United States, and has enhanced people-to-people ties between countries;

Whereas AHEPA financially supports scholarships, natural disaster and humanitarian relief, medical research, and countless other charitable and philanthropic causes by contributing more than \$2,200,000 annually from the national, district, and local levels of AHEPA;

Whereas generations of Greek American women and Philhellenes have worked to strengthen society through service organizations, such as the Daughters of Penelope, in order to—

- (1) provide affordable housing for older adults;
- (2) sponsor and support domestic violence shelters;
- (3) provide scholarship awards;
- (4) raise awareness and provide financial support for medical research and charitable causes; and
- (5) help those in need of humanitarian assistance or natural disaster relief;

Whereas, in the spirit of their Hellenic heritage and in commemoration of the Centennial Olympic Games held in Atlanta, Georgia, members of AHEPA raised \$775,000 for the Tribute to Olympism and Hellenism sculpture, the fan-like structure of which helped to save lives during the 1996 Olympic Bombing at Centennial Olympic Park;

Whereas members of AHEPA raised \$110,000 for the creation of the George C. Marshall Statue erected on the

grounds of the United States Embassy in Athens, Greece, in celebration of the historic relationship between the United States and Greece and in tribute to General Marshall, an outstanding statesman and Philhellene;

Whereas members of AHEPA raised \$1,000,000 toward the rebuilding of Saint Nicholas Greek Orthodox Church and National Shrine at the World Trade Center, which was the only house of worship destroyed on September 11, 2001;

Whereas members of AHEPA have been Presidents and Vice Presidents of the United States, United States Senators and Representatives, and United States Ambassadors, and have served honorably as elected and appointed officials at local and State levels throughout the United States; and

Whereas President George H. W. Bush cited AHEPA as 1 of the “thousand points of light” in the United States: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) recognizes the significant contributions to
3 the United States of citizens of Hellenic heritage;

4 (2) commemorates the 100th Anniversary of
5 the founding of the American Hellenic Educational
6 Progressive Association, applauds its mission, and
7 commends the many charitable contributions of its
8 members to communities in the United States and
9 around the world; and

10 (3) requests the President to issue a proclama-
11 tion recognizing the 100th Anniversary and many

- 1 accomplishments of the American Hellenic Edu-
- 2 cational Progressive Association.