

109TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

S. RES. 149

Honoring the life and contributions of His Eminence, Archbishop Iakovos, former archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America.

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

MAY 19, 2005

Ms. SNOWE (for herself and Mr. SARBANES) submitted the following resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

RESOLUTION

Honoring the life and contributions of His Eminence, Archbishop Iakovos, former archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America.

Whereas His Eminence, Archbishop Iakovos, former archbishop of the Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of North and South America and spiritual leader of Greek Orthodox Christians in the Western Hemisphere from 1959 to 1996, passed away at the age of 93 on April 10, 2005, in Stamford, Connecticut;

Whereas, when Archbishop Iakovos retired at the age of 85 on July 29, 1996, the Archbishop had given 37 years of outstanding service that were distinguished by his leadership in furthering religious unity, revitalizing Christian worship, and championing human and civil rights;

Whereas Archbishop Iakovos was born Demetrios A. Coucouzis on the tiny island of Imbros in the Aegean Sea to Maria and Athanasios Coucouzis on July 29, 1911;

Whereas Archbishop Iakovos enrolled in the Ecumenical Patriarchal Theological School at Halki at the age of 15;

Whereas, after graduating with high honors from Halki, Archbishop Iakovos was ordained deacon in 1934, taking the ecclesiastical name Iakovos;

Whereas 5 years after his ordination, Archbishop Iakovos received an invitation to serve as archdeacon to the late Archbishop Athenagoras, the primate of North and South America, who later became Ecumenical Patriarch of Constantinople;

Whereas in 1940, Archbishop Iakovos was ordained to the priesthood in Lowell, Massachusetts, beginning his service at St. George Church in Hartford, Connecticut, while teaching and serving as assistant dean of the Holy Cross Greek Orthodox Theological School, then in Pomfret, Connecticut, and now in Brookline, Massachusetts;

Whereas in 1941, Archbishop Iakovos was named preacher at Holy Trinity Cathedral in New York City, and in the summer of 1942 served as temporary dean of St. Nicholas Church in St. Louis, Missouri;

Whereas Archbishop Iakovos was appointed dean of the Annunciation Greek Orthodox Cathedral in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1942, and remained there until 1954;

Whereas in 1945, Archbishop Iakovos earned a Master of Sacred Theology Degree from Harvard University;

Whereas Archbishop Iakovos became a United States citizen in 1950;

Whereas in 1954, Archbishop Iakovos was ordained Bishop of Melita by his spiritual father and mentor, Ecumenical Patriarch Athenagoras, for whom he served four years as personal representative of the Patriarchate to the World Council of Churches in Geneva;

Whereas on February 14, 1959, the Holy Synod of the Ecumenical Patriarchate elected Archbishop Iakovos to succeed Archbishop Michael as primate of the Greek Orthodox Church in the Americas;

Whereas Archbishop Iakovos was enthroned April 1, 1959, at Holy Trinity Cathedral in New York City, assuming responsibility for a jurisdiction that has grown to be over 500 parishes in the United States alone;

Whereas the enthronement of Archbishop Iakovos in 1959 ushered in a new era for the Greek Orthodox Church in America, in which the Church became part of the mainstream of American religious life;

Whereas in 1959, shortly after being named archbishop, Archbishop Iakovos held a historic meeting with Pope John XXIII, becoming the first Greek Orthodox Archbishop to meet with a Roman Catholic Pope in 350 years;

Whereas Archbishop Iakovos was a dynamic participant in the contemporary ecumenical movement for Christian unity, serving for nine years as President of the World Council of Churches and piloting Inter-Orthodox, Inter-Christian, and Inter-Religious dialogues;

Whereas Archbishop Iakovos vigorously supported the passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and had the courage to walk hand in hand with Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. in Selma, Alabama, a historic moment for America

that was captured on the cover of LIFE Magazine on March 26, 1965;

Whereas Archbishop Iakovos spoke out forcefully against violations of human rights and religious freedom and, in 1974, undertook a massive campaign to assist Greek Cypriot refugees following the invasion of Cyprus by Turkish armed forces;

Whereas Archbishop Iakovos was a recipient of the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the Nation's highest civilian honor, which was bestowed on him by President Carter on June 9, 1980;

Whereas in 1986, Archbishop Iakovos was awarded the Ellis Island Medal of Honor and was cited by the Academy of Athens, the National Conference of Christians and Jews, and the Appeal of Conscience;

Whereas Archbishop Iakovos, during his stewardship of the Greek Orthodox Church in America, became an imposing religious figure and a champion of social causes, encouraging the faithful to become involved in all aspects of American life;

Whereas Archbishop Iakovos was a friend to nine Presidents, and to religious and political leaders worldwide, receiving honorary degrees from some 40 colleges and universities;

Whereas Archbishop Iakovos presented a prayer at Presidential inaugural ceremonies in 1961, 1965, 1969, and 1973;

Whereas the Archbishop has said of his pastoral work with immigrants in New England and New York, "I lived and struggled with them to maintain the faith and culture.";

Whereas in a 1995 interview, the Archbishop said he had accomplished a major goal "to have the Orthodox Church

be accepted by the family of religions in the United States”; and

Whereas Archbishop Iakovos was interred at the Holy Trinity Cathedral in New York, New York, on April 15, 2005:
Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved*, That the Senate—

2 (1) mourns the loss of Archbishop Iakovos and
3 commends the life the Archbishop led;

4 (2) thanks Archbishop Iakovos for his service to
5 the members of his church and to the people of this
6 Nation;

7 (3) honors Archbishop Iakovos’ commitment to
8 the principles of equality, humanity, and peace; and

9 (4) recognizes that Archbishop Iakovos was a
10 committed and caring pastor to a whole generation
11 of Greek Americans—

12 (A) whose hard work, determination, and
13 pride in their religious and cultural heritage
14 Archbishop Iakovos embodied; and

15 (B) who will dearly miss the Archbishop.

○