

Amended Version 10-2-20

Mr. Schmerelson, Ms. Goldberg - Standing with the Armenian People and the Republic of Artsakh\_(Res-010-20/21) (Waiver of Board Rule 72)

Whereas, The Armenian people were subjects of a systematic and premeditated genocidal campaign, which began at the hands of the Ottoman government, through 1919 and continued under the Kemalist government of the Republic of Turkey from 1920 through 1923, whereby 1.5 million Armenian men, women and children were slaughtered or marched to their deaths in an effort to annihilate the Armenian Nation in the first modern genocide, while thousands of kidnapped children and young women were forced to change their Armenian names to Turkish names and convert to Islam, and hundreds of thousands more were subjected to ethnic cleansing during the period of the modern Republic of Turkey from 1924 through 1937;

Whereas, These crimes against humanity also had the consequence of permanently removing all traces of the Armenians and other targeted people from their historic homelands, and enriching the perpetrators with the lands and other property of the victims of these crimes, including the usurpation of several thousand churches;

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Whereas, The Republic of Turkey has inexplicably and adamantly denied the occurrence of the crimes against humanity committed by the Ottoman and Young Turk rulers for many years, and continues to do so a full century since the first crimes constituting genocide occurred, despite the Turkish government's earlier admissions and the overwhelming proof of genocidal intent;

Whereas, On September 26, 2020, Azerbaijan's military forces launched a deadly and unprovoked attack against the Republic of Artsakh, including that country's capital city, Stepanakert, and that attack has already taken innocent civilian lives; and

Whereas, This reckless invasion is a direct threat not only to the Armenian population that has lived in Artsakh for millennia, but also to regional stability to fundamental United States interests; and

Whereas, During a time when the United Nations has called for a ceasefire around the world due to the COVID pandemic, Azerbaijan instead is renewing warfare, violating its ceasefire agreement with Armenia, and causing death and destruction; and

Whereas, Turkey has already thrown its full support to Azerbaijan's invasion and has threatened Armenia, and in this context the Azeri invasion carries the echoes of generations of pan-Turkish nationalist commitment to erasing the Armenian population and culture from the world; and

Whereas, Any statement of moral equivalence of the parties, in the face of Azerbaijan's continued ceasefire violations, military incursions, bellicose threats of massive violence, and acts of aggression against civilians, is entirely unacceptable, yet the United States still refuses to state clearly that there is only one perpetrator responsible for the violence, bloodshed and instability in the region, and that is Azerbaijan; and

Whereas, The interests of the United States will be harmed by instability in this vital region, and our reputation in the international community will be damaged by our failure to contribute meaningfully to lasting peace; and

Whereas, Because our country is based on and committed to the values of democracy, liberty and the right of self-determination, the United States has a moral obligation to stand up and speak out on behalf of the people of the Republic of Artsakh, who have earned their right of self-governance and have flourished as a free, democratic and sovereign nation for almost 30 years; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Governing Board of the Los Angeles Unified School District, by the adoption of this resolution, calls upon President Donald Trump and Secretary of State Mike Pompeo to condemn Azerbaijan unequivocally for its latest violation of the ceasefire, and to demand an immediate and permanent cessation of all Azeri hostile action; and

Resolved further, That the LA Unified School Board calls upon the Trump Administration and the United States Congress to take immediate action to cease all military support and cooperation with Azerbaijan, including suspending all arms shipments to Azerbaijan; and

Resolved, That the LA Unified School Board calls upon the Trump Administration to utilize all diplomatic, economic and political means to compel Azerbaijan to engage meaningfully in the peace process, through the Minsk Group or otherwise, to achieve a sustainable, lasting peace that ensures the territorial integrity, sovereignty and independence of the Republic of Artsakh.