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**Genocide Awareness, Commemoration, Prevention, and Education Month
Bill 97 Passed Second Reading Unanimously**

News Release

Toronto—May 9, MPP Aris Babikian, Scarborough-Agincourt led the Second Reading debate on *Bill 97: Genocide Awareness, Commemoration, Prevention, and Education Month Act 2019*.

Representatives of 40 different civil-society organizations from 11 different ethnic and religious communities attended the debate to show their support for and solidarity to the Bill.

Bill 97, when passed by the Ontario Legislative Assembly, will recognize April as Genocide Awareness and Education Month in the province. In addition to those already recognized by the Provincial Legislature and Parliament of Canada, it will formally recognize the genocides of the Pontian Greeks, Assyrians, Chaldeans, Syriacs, Nanjing Chinese, Yazidis in Iraq under ISIS, Christian populations of Iraq and Syria under ISIS, Tamil-speaking people in Sri Lanka, and Rohingya Muslims.

Educators around Ontario will also have an opportunity to educate younger generations about the horrors of genocide and wounds that come with the trauma of crimes against humanity. MPP Babikian stated, "I am pleased that this important bill has passed second reading with the support of all political parties in the Legislative Assembly. I look forward to continuing the work on this very significant human right issue to bring healing and closure to the victims."

MPP Babikian also extended his appreciation to the many people and organizations that worked tirelessly to galvanize support for the Bill by meeting their MPPs, writing letters, and signing petitions.

Now Bill 97 will be referred to the Justice Committee of the Legislative Assembly of Ontario, for further examination.

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