

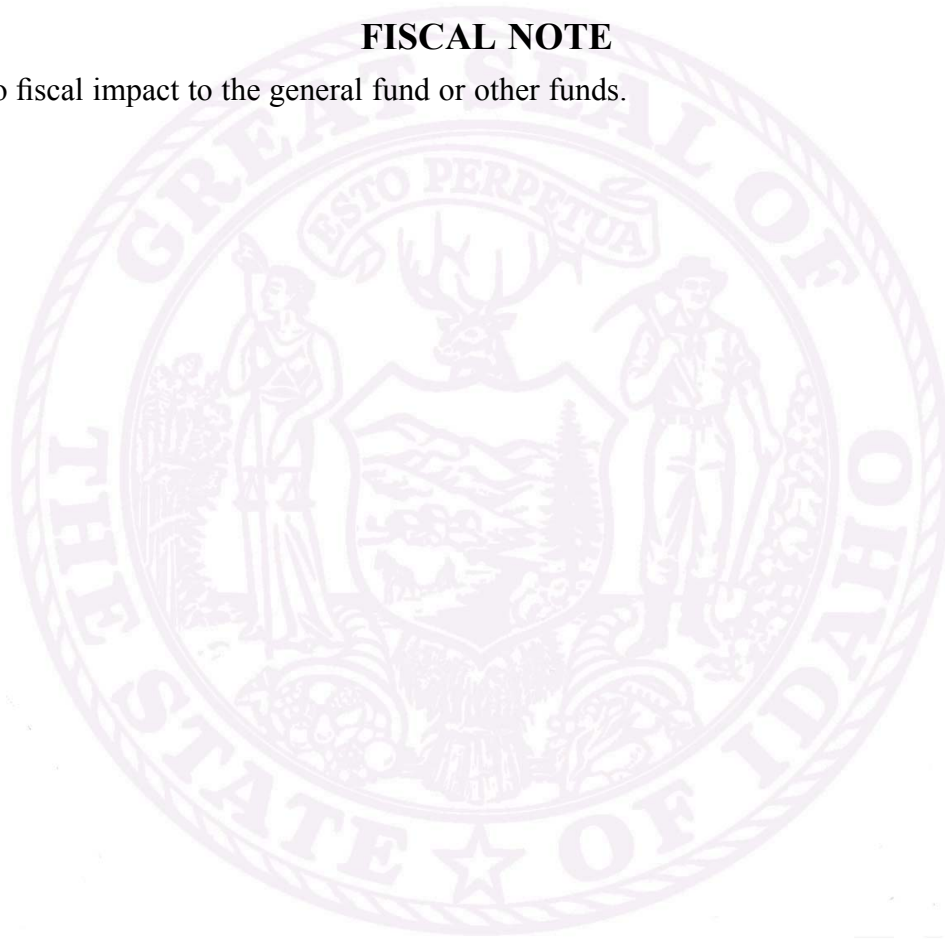
## **STATEMENT OF PURPOSE**

### **RS23928**

This joint memorial would urge the government of Turkey to respect the rights and religious freedoms of the Ecumenical Patriarchate of the Eastern Orthodox Church. The Ecumenical Patriarch is the leader of the second largest Christian faith worldwide with approximately 300 million followers. The seat of the church has been centered in Constantinople/Istanbul for the past 2000 years. However, Christians in Turkey have experienced great persecution which includes the government's interference with the selection of their leader, the closing of their seminary where clergy are trained, confiscation of property, physical violence, and the inability to worship in public.

### **FISCAL NOTE**

There is no fiscal impact to the general fund or other funds.



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