

## Armenians: Most people supportive, marchers say

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was closer to 300,000.

"Justice begins with truth, and truth is being hidden," said Poochigian, whose grandparents lost family members during the genocide. "We stand up to the deniers. We stand up for truth."

Assemblyman Greg Aghazarian, R-Stockton, said it's important not to forget history: "If we do not learn the lessons of the past, we are destined to repeat them."

On April 24, 1915, the Armenian leadership in Constantinople (modern-day Istanbul) and other Armenian centers was executed. The surviving women, children and elderly were sent on death marches in the desert.

Participants in the March for Humanity educated people they met along the way. Some knew nothing of the genocide or Armenian culture. Others had a skewed understanding.

Most people were supportive. "We did get a lot of honks and thumbs-up," said marcher Chris

Torossian, 19, of Fresno.

Hundreds of people joined the full-time marchers on parts of the route. They walked down country roads and slept in churches and schools.

At the Capitol on Thursday, a crowd cheered for the marchers. Supporters waved Armenian and American flags and held signs that said, "We will never forget" and "Remember the Armenian genocide of 1915 R.I.P. 1.5 million."

"This is a rally in support of all those who seek the truth and all those who understand that genocide cannot go by with impunity," said Steven Dadaian, chairman of the Armenian National Committee of America's Western region.

"We believe in our roots," said Avedis Krikorian, 43, of Fresno, who helped organize the trip.

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