

2017



HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 17-1027

BY REPRESENTATIVE(S) Michaelson Jenet and Sias, Arndt, Becker J., Becker K., Beckman, Benavidez, Bridges, Buck, Buckner, Carver, Catlin, Coleman, Covarrubias, Danielson, Esgar, Everett, Exum, Foote, Garnett, Ginal, Gray, Hamner, Hansen, Herod, Hooton, Humphrey, Jackson, Kennedy, Kraft-Tharp, Landgraf, Lawrence, Lebsack, Lee, Leonard, Liston, Lentine, Lundein, McKean, McLachlan, Melton, Mitsch Bush, Navarro, Neville P., Nordberg, Pabon, Pettersen, Rankin, Ransom, Rosenthal, Saine, Salazar, Singer, Thurlow, Valdez, Van Winkle, Weissman, Willett, Williams D., Wilson, Winter, Wist, Young, Duran; also **SENATOR(S)** Crowder and Fenberg, Aguilar, Baumgardner, Cooke, Coram, Court, Donovan, Fields, Garcia, Gardner, Guzman, Hill, Holbert, Jahn, Jones, Kagan, Kefalas, Kerr, Lambert, Lundberg, Marble, Martinez Humenik, Merrifield, Moreno, Neville T., Priola, Scott, Smallwood, Sonnenberg, Tate, Todd, Williams A., Zenzinger, Grantham.

CONCERNING THE DECLARATION OF APRIL 23, 2017, THROUGH APRIL 29, 2017, AS "HOLOCAUST AWARENESS WEEK".

WHEREAS, Prejudice, bigotry, and racism have been the cause of conflict, war, and mass atrocities throughout human history; and

WHEREAS, The Holocaust was the systematic, bureaucratic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of 6 million Jews by the Nazi regime and its collaborators; the Nazis, who came to power in Germany in January 1933, believed that Germans were "racially superior" and that the Jews, deemed "inferior", were an alien threat to the so-called German racial community; and

WHEREAS, Between 1933 and 1945, Nazi Germany and its collaborators murdered 6 million of the 9 million Jews who lived throughout Europe, 1.5 million of whom were children, as well as 5 million other civilians it deemed to be "inferior", including Sinti and Roma people, Poles, people with intellectual or developmental disabilities, gay men, Jehovah's Witnesses, Soviet prisoners of war, and political dissidents; and

WHEREAS, Hitler used anti-Semitism as a political weapon to gain popular support, blaming Jews for all of Germany's problems, including their defeat in World War I, the economic depression, and the Bolshevik threat of communism; that Hitler's accusations were blatantly contradictory and his facts were often fabricated made little difference; and

WHEREAS, We must never forget the horrors of the Holocaust and how, by 1945, the Germans and their collaborators had killed nearly 2 out of every 3 European Jews as part of the "Final Solution", the Nazi policy to murder the Jews of Europe; and

WHEREAS, Today, while we remember the heartbreak part of human history that is the Holocaust, we specifically acknowledge the experience of the Polish Jewish community, the largest in Europe prior to the Holocaust; once the central European home to 3.3 million Jews, by 1945, 3 million had been executed; and

WHEREAS, Today, while we remember the horror that was the Holocaust, we focus our attention to the passing of time and the few remaining survivors who can tell us their stories first hand; we must acknowledge those who ensure that we never forget; and

WHEREAS, "Never Again" has been the mantra of generations who survived the atrocities in Europe, with the goal being to never relive this history and to guide us to learn the basics of respect for humanity; until now we have always had first-hand eye witnesses and survivors living in our midst; and

WHEREAS, Even with first-hand eye witnesses living amongst us, there have been those who have tried to erase the history of the Holocaust, to revise the facts and deny what occurred; now, more than ever, we must bear witness, as our children and grandchildren will be the last generations to know this story directly from those who lived through it; and

WHEREAS, In Colorado, there are several organizations dedicated to the retelling of the accounts of genocide; and

WHEREAS, Many students in Colorado learn the history of World War II, including the Nazi genocide; and

WHEREAS, The history of Colorado's Holocaust survivors is written in books and recorded in oral history projects around the country and in Israel; and

WHEREAS, We recognize that, among the 3 million Polish Jews and 2 million Polish gentiles murdered during the Holocaust, there are many stories from which we can learn, including those from individuals like Paweł Frenkiel, a leader during the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising; Ala Gertner, who died a martyr for aiding the underground resistance; Janusz Korczak, who after many years of working with orphans in the Warsaw Ghetto refused freedom so that he could remain with his orphans when they were relocated to the Treblinka extermination camp; and many others who perished in Polish concentration camps, including Auschwitz-Birkenau, Belzec, Chelmno, Gross-Rosen, Majdanek, Plaszow, Sobibor, Stutthoff, and Treblinka; and

WHEREAS, We gratefully acknowledge the 6,620 Righteous Among the Nations, those who risked their lives during the Holocaust to save Jews from extermination by the Nazis, people such as Stanisław Grocholski; Jan Karski; Tadeusz Kosibowicz; Tadeusz Pankiewicz; Helena, Miroslawa, and Ursula Przebindowska; Oskar Schindler; Irena Sendler; Rudolf Weigl; Antonina and Jan Zabinski; and many other Poles or those working or living in Nazi-occupied Poland, whose accounts of struggle serve as lessons from which we can all learn; and

WHEREAS, We recognize there are the few remaining survivors of the Holocaust who exhibited a tremendous will to live and persevere despite the horrors they endured, yet can never forget the atrocities that were inflicted on them, their families, and their friends; and

WHEREAS, We should never forget the terrible experiences of those who suffered and lived through the Holocaust, and we are reminded of the importance of those lessons by the resurgence of anti-Semitism around the world; pernicious Holocaust denial; and recent episodes of ethnic cleansing, genocide, terrorism, crimes against humanity, wars on civilian populations, and mass killings in so many parts of the world, including Syria, Iraq, Nigeria, Bosnia, Cambodia, Rwanda, and the Sudan; and

WHEREAS, We must also recall that in the aftermath of war, Palestine, then controlled by the British, became a destination for many of the survivors in Europe; that on May 14, 1948, the State of Israel became a place of refuge for those who endured the ravages of the Holocaust; and that today, Israel is a thriving democracy and close ally and friend of the United States; now, therefore,

Be It Resolved by the House of Representatives of the Seventy-first General Assembly of the State of Colorado, the Senate concurring herein:

That we, the members of the General Assembly:

- (1) Proclaim the week of April 23, 2017, through April 29, 2017, as "Holocaust Awareness Week"; and
- (2) Declare that the people of Colorado should use these days to teach and remember the great injustices of the past and to commit to preventing such atrocities in the future.

Be It Further Resolved, That copies of this Joint Resolution be sent to the Jewish Community Relations Council of JEWISHcolorado; the Mountain States Regional Office of the Anti-Defamation League; the Colorado Coalition for Genocide Awareness and Action; the Colorado Agency for Jewish Education; the Holocaust Awareness Institute at the

University of Denver's Center for Judaic Studies; the Interfaith Alliance of Colorado; the Mizel Museum; Denver Parks & Recreation Department's Babi Yar Park; the Mountain States Regional Office of the Jewish National Fund; the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C.; and the University of Colorado Program in Jewish Studies.

Crisanta Duran
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