



SENATE JOINT RESOLUTION 16-036

BY SENATOR(S) Crowder and Ulibarri, Aguilar, Baumgardner, Carroll, Cooke, Donovan, Garcia, Grantham, Guzman, Heath, Hill, Hodge, Holbert, Jahn, Johnston, Jones, Kefalas, Kerr, Lambert, Lundberg, Marble, Martinez Humenik, Merrifield, Neville T., Newell, Scheffel, Scott, Sonnenberg, Steadman, Tate, Todd, Woods, Cadman;
also REPRESENTATIVE(S) Rosenthal and Sias, Arndt, Becker J., Becker K., Brown, Buck, Buckner, Carver, Conti, Coram, Court, Danielson, DelGrosso, Dore, Duran, Esgar, Everett, Fields, Foote, Garnett, Ginal, Hamner, Humphrey, Joshi, Kagan, Klingenschmitt, Kraft-Tharp, Landgraf, Lawrence, Lebsock, Lee, Leonard, Lontine, Lundeen, McCann, Melton, Mitsch Bush, Moreno, Navarro, Neville P., Nordberg, Pabon, Pettersen, Primavera, Priola, Rankin, Ransom, Roupe, Ryden, Saine, Salazar, Singer, Thurlow, Tyler, Van Winkle, Vigil, Willett, Williams, Wilson, Windholz, Winter, Wist, Young.

CONCERNING THE DECLARATION OF MAY 1, 2016,
THROUGH MAY 8, 2016, 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 physical and mental 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 heartbreaking 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, The history of the Jews in Poland dates back over 800 years; they prospered from and contributed to cultural, artistic, academic, literary, musical, philosophical, and business centers in Warsaw, Lodz, Krakow, and Vilno, as well as thousands of small villages throughout the country; and

WHEREAS, We note that a consequence of the systematic execution of Polish Jews is the near annihilation of the Yiddish language, as Yiddish was infused with the cultural heritage of Jews in Poland and throughout Europe and the United States; and

WHEREAS, We mourn the synagogues that were desecrated and destroyed by the Nazi Regime and its collaborators; and

WHEREAS, We are heartened that approximately a dozen synagogues have been renovated and are still standing in Poland; they are monuments of the Jewish faith and testaments to efforts made by others in the preservation of the Jewish culture; 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 Pawel 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 Stanislaw Grocholski; Jan Karski; Tadeusz Kosibowicz; Tadeusz Pankiewicz; Helena, Mirosława, 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 that suffered and lived through the Holocaust in Poland and throughout Europe, 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 the primary destination for many of the survivors in Europe, although Britain restricted immigration; that a massive effort was organized to smuggle Jewish refugees; 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 Senate of the Seventieth General Assembly of the State of Colorado, the House of Representatives concurring herein:

That we, the members of the General Assembly:

(1) Proclaim the week of May 1, 2016, through May 8, 2016, 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.; the University of Colorado Program in Jewish Studies;

the diplomatic mission of Israel; the Yad Vashem Museum in Jerusalem; the University of Colorado Mazal Holocaust Collection; The Elie Wiesel Foundation for Humanity; Colorado Holocaust Educators; Father Patrick Desbois and Yahad-In Unum; and the Colorado Congressional Delegation.

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