



*Senate of Pennsylvania*

***Senator Anthony H. Williams***

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**DATE:** February 24, 2012  
**TO:** All Senators  
**FROM:** Senator Anthony H. Williams  
**SUBJECT:** Co-sponsorship of Legislation: **Holocaust and Genocide Education**

In the very near future, I will be introducing legislation to amend the Public School Code, 24 P.S. §15-1511 and §16-1605, in order to require public and nonpublic schools to provide instruction on the Holocaust and other acts of genocide.

According to the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, the Holocaust was the systematic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of approximately six million Jews by the Nazi Regime. When the Nazi Regime took power of Germany in 1933, the European Jewish population was over nine million. By the end of the Regime in 1945, not only were two out of every three European Jews murdered as a result of the “Final Solution,” but about 200,000 Roma (Gypsies) and almost 200,000 mentally or physically disabled patients were killed. The “Final Solution” was a Nazi strategy devised to eliminate all Jews and other races that the Regime found to be “inferior.” It was genocide. Following World War II, the United Nations adopted the Genocide Convention to prevent such atrocities from ever taking place again; however, since both the Holocaust and the adoption of the Genocide Convention, genocides have continued to occur in several countries such as Cambodia (1975-79), Rwanda (1994) and Bosnia (1992-95).

Presently, twelve states have regulations encouraging or recommending the teaching of the Holocaust and genocide, but only five states have enacted statutes to require the instruction of the Holocaust and genocide in the classroom. These states include California, Florida, Illinois, New Jersey and New York. My legislation would provide for instruction, from grades six through twelve, on the history of the Nazi atrocities committed from 1933 through 1945 and an understanding that genocide is a consequence of prejudice and discrimination.

If you wish to co-sponsor this legislation, please contact Shannon A. Sargent, Esq., at 787-5970 or email [ssargent@pasenate.com](mailto:ssargent@pasenate.com).