THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION
No. 274 Session of 2019

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating April 28 through May 5, 2019, as "Days of
2   Remembrance of the Victims of the Holocaust" and recognizing
3   May 2, 2019, as "Holocaust Remembrance Day" in Pennsylvania.

4   WHEREAS, The Holocaust, one of the darkest chapters in human

5 history, was the state-sponsored, systematic persecution and

6 annihilation of the European Jewry by Nazi Germany and its

7 collaborators between 1933 and 1945; and

8   WHEREAS, During the Holocaust, 6 million Jews were murdered,

9 many by bullets from the Einsatzgruppen (mobile killing units)

10 or in the gas chambers of the concentration camps; and

11   WHEREAS, The word "Holocaust" is Greek in origin and means

12 "sacrifice by fire"; and

1   WHEREAS, The Nazi's suspension of basic civil rights occurred

2   within days of Hitler's accession to power in January 1933; and

3   WHEREAS, From 1933 until the outbreak of war in 1939, the

4   first six years of Adolph Hitler's dictatorship in Germany, Jews

5   felt the effects of more than 400 decrees and regulations that

6   restricted all aspects of their public and private lives; and

7   WHEREAS, In 1933, the Jewish population in Europe was

8   estimated to be more than 9 million; and

9   WHEREAS, By 1945, the Nazis and their collaborators killed

10   nearly two out of every three European Jews as part of their

11   "Final Solution"; and

12   WHEREAS, Millions of other individuals, including Roma

13   (Gypsies), individuals with disabilities, gays and lesbians,

14   Jehovah's Witnesses, Soviet prisoners of war, political

15   dissidents and nearly 2 million Poles, were also targeted for

16   destruction or decimation for racial, ethnic or national

17   reasons; and

18   WHEREAS, This Commonwealth was founded on the principles of

19   religious freedom and tolerance; and

20   WHEREAS, The people of this Commonwealth should remember the

21   atrocities committed by the Nazis so that these horrors are

22   never repeated; and

23   WHEREAS, The people of this Commonwealth should continually

24   rededicate themselves to the principle of equal justice for all;

25   and

26   WHEREAS, The people of this Commonwealth should remain

27   vigilant against all tyranny and recognize that bigotry provides

28   a breeding ground for tyranny to flourish; and

29   WHEREAS, In the 1930s and the 1940s, Pennsylvanians rescued

30   children from Europe, led efforts to publicize the horrors of

1 the Holocaust during the war, liberated concentration camps and

2 prosecuted those who committed these evil acts in the Nuremberg

3 Trials; and

4 WHEREAS, Nearly 1,000 Pennsylvanians who are Holocaust

5 survivors have contributed their oral histories of the Holocaust

6 to the USC Shoah Foundation, created by Steven Spielberg, and

7 have told their stories in schools and in communities across

8 this Commonwealth; and

9 WHEREAS, Pennsylvanians have established Holocaust museums,

10 educational programs, monuments and commemorations throughout

11 this Commonwealth, engaging Jews, Christians, Muslims and all

12 people of good will; and

13 WHEREAS, With the help of the children and grandchildren of

14 Holocaust survivors and liberators, Pennsylvanians can continue

15 to rededicate themselves to the principle of equal justice for

16 all; and

17 WHEREAS, The General Assembly passed Act 70 of 2014 to

18 provide for curriculum guidelines that would complement the

19 stories of Pennsylvania's Holocaust survivors and the efforts of

20 their children and grandchildren to teach our students about the

21 Holocaust; and

22 WHEREAS, A recent survey reported that 710 of the State's 775

23 school entities now provide age-appropriate education on the

24 Holocaust, genocide and human rights violations as a standing

25 part of their curricula; and

26 WHEREAS, May 2, 2019, which corresponds to the 27th day of

27 Nisan on the Hebrew calendar, has been designated

28 internationally as a "Day of Remembrance of Victims of the Nazi

29 Holocaust" and is also known as Yom Hashoah; and

30 WHEREAS, This date further coincides with the anniversary of

1 the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in German-occupied Poland which

2 occurred from April 19 through May 16, 1943; and

3   WHEREAS, It is appropriate for the people of this

4 Commonwealth to join in the international commemoration of this

5 solemn event; and

6   WHEREAS, The massacre of close to a dozen of Pennsylvanians

7 of Jewish faith killed in the largest anti-semitic hate crime in

8 the history of the United States reminds us that the hate

9 manifested in the Holocaust can still lead to almost unspeakable

10 violence in any generation; and

11   WHEREAS, By marking this occasion and honoring the memory of

12 the millions of victims of the Holocaust, the House of

13 Representatives hopes to overcome prejudice and inhumanity

14 through education, vigilance and resistance; therefore be it

15   RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate April

16 28 through May 5, 2019, as "Days of Remembrance of the Victims

17 of the Holocaust" and recognize May 2, 2019, as "Holocaust

18 Remembrance Day" in Pennsylvania.