

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

HOUSE RESOLUTION

No. 849 Session of 2020

INTRODUCED BY FRANKEL, BURGOS, RYAN, A. DAVIS, ULLMAN, MURT, HOHENSTEIN, BIZZARRO, TOEPEL, KINSEY, McNEILL, FREEMAN, SAINATO, GREINER, JAMES, SOLOMON, SCHMITT, ROTHMAN, SAPPEY, KAUFFMAN, RAVENSTAHL, PICKETT, KULIK, KORTZ, D. MILLER, MILLARD, SCHLOSSBERG, HARKINS, McCARTER, STEPHENS, WILLIAMS, BROWN, LONGIETTI, YOUNGBLOOD, BOYLE, HILL-EVANS, SAYLOR, MENTZER, SANCHEZ, CIRESI, ROZZI, O'MARA, BRIGGS, STAATS, McCLINTON, GALLOWAY, DONATUCCI, READSHAW, WARREN, HOWARD, SCHLEGEL CULVER, SCHWEYER, KIRKLAND, NEILSON AND GAYDOS, APRIL 17, 2020

REFERRED TO COMMITTEE ON STATE GOVERNMENT, APRIL 17, 2020

A RESOLUTION

1 Designating April 19 through 26, 2020, as "Days of Remembrance
2 of the Victims of the Holocaust" and recognizing April 21,
3 2020, 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

13 WHEREAS, The Nazi's suspension of basic civil rights occurred
14 within days of Hitler's accession to power in January 1933; and

1 WHEREAS, From 1933 until the outbreak of war in 1939, the
2 first six years of Adolph Hitler's dictatorship in Germany, Jews
3 felt the effects of more than 400 decrees and regulations that
4 restricted all aspects of their public and private lives; and

5 WHEREAS, In 1933, the Jewish population in Europe was
6 estimated to be more than 9 million; and

7 WHEREAS, By 1945, the Nazis and their collaborators killed
8 nearly two out of every three European Jews as part of their
9 "Final Solution"; and

10 WHEREAS, Millions of other individuals, including Roma
11 (Gypsies), individuals with disabilities, gays and lesbians,
12 Jehovah's Witnesses, Soviet prisoners of war, political
13 dissidents and nearly 2 million Poles, were also targeted for
14 destruction or decimation for racial, ethnic or national
15 reasons; and

16 WHEREAS, This Commonwealth was founded on the principles of
17 religious freedom and tolerance; and

18 WHEREAS, The people of this Commonwealth should remember the
19 atrocities committed by the Nazis so that these horrors are
20 never repeated; and

21 WHEREAS, The people of this Commonwealth should continually
22 rededicate themselves to the principle of equal justice for all;
23 and

24 WHEREAS, The people of this Commonwealth should remain
25 vigilant against all tyranny and recognize that bigotry provides
26 a breeding ground for tyranny to flourish; and

27 WHEREAS, In the 1930s and the 1940s, Pennsylvanians rescued
28 children from Europe, led efforts to publicize the horrors of
29 the Holocaust during the war, liberated concentration camps and
30 prosecuted those who committed these evil acts in the Nuremberg

1 Trials; and

2 WHEREAS, Nearly 1,000 Pennsylvanians who are Holocaust
3 survivors have contributed their oral histories of the Holocaust
4 to the USC Shoah Foundation, created by Steven Spielberg, and
5 have told their stories in schools and in communities across
6 this Commonwealth; and

7 WHEREAS, Pennsylvanians have established Holocaust museums,
8 educational programs, monuments and commemorations throughout
9 this Commonwealth, engaging Jews, Christians, Muslims and all
10 people of good will; and

11 WHEREAS, With the help of the children and grandchildren of
12 Holocaust survivors and liberators, Pennsylvanians can continue
13 to rededicate themselves to the principle of equal justice for
14 all; and

15 WHEREAS, The General Assembly passed Act 70 of 2014 to
16 provide for curriculum guidelines that would complement the
17 stories of Pennsylvania's Holocaust survivors and the efforts of
18 their children and grandchildren to teach our students about the
19 Holocaust; and

20 WHEREAS, A recent survey reported that 710 of the State's 775
21 school entities now provide age-appropriate education on the
22 Holocaust, genocide and human rights violations as a standing
23 part of their curricula; and

24 WHEREAS, April 21, 2020, which corresponds to the 27th day of
25 Nisan on the Hebrew calendar, has been designated
26 internationally as a "Day of Remembrance of Victims of the Nazi
27 Holocaust" and is also known as Yom Hashoah; and

28 WHEREAS, This date further coincides with the anniversary of
29 the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising in German-occupied Poland which
30 occurred from April 19 through May 16, 1943; and

1 WHEREAS, It is appropriate for the people of this
2 Commonwealth to join in the international commemoration of this
3 solemn event; and

4 WHEREAS, The massacre of close to a dozen of Pennsylvanians
5 of Jewish faith killed in the largest anti-semitic hate crime in
6 the history of the United States reminds us that the hate
7 manifested in the Holocaust can still lead to almost unspeakable
8 violence in any generation; and

9 WHEREAS, By marking this occasion and honoring the memory of
10 the millions of victims of the Holocaust, the House of
11 Representatives hopes to overcome prejudice and inhumanity
12 through education, vigilance and resistance; therefore be it

13 RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives designate April
14 19 through 26, 2020, as "Days of Remembrance of the Victims of
15 the Holocaust" and recognize april 21, 2020, as "Holocaust
16 Remembrance Day" in Pennsylvania.