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HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 788

Offered January 23, 2009

Designating April 21 in 2009, and in each succeeding year, the first day of the Days of Remembrance, as the Day of Remembrance in Virginia.

Patrons—Watts, Ebbin, Eisenberg and Englin

Referred to Committee on Rules

WHEREAS, "Holocaust," a word of Greek origin meaning "sacrifice by fire," was the systematic, bureaucratic, state-sponsored persecution and murder of approximately six million Jews by the Nazi regime and its collaborators; and

WHEREAS, during the era of the Holocaust, Nazi authorities targeted Jews and other groups for persecution and annihilation; and

WHEREAS, the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum reports that "in 1933, the Jewish population of Europe stood at over nine million, and most European Jews lived in countries that Nazi Germany would occupy or influence during World War II; that by 1945, the Germans and their collaborators killed nearly two out of every three European Jews as part of the 'Final Solution,' the Nazi policy to murder the Jews of Europe; that although Jews were the primary victims of Nazi racism, other victims included 200,000 Roma (Gypsies), and at least 200,000 mentally or physically disabled patients, mainly Germans, living in institutional settings, were murdered in the so-called Euthanasia Program; that between two and three million Soviet prisoners of war were murdered or died of starvation, disease, neglect, or maltreatment; that non-Jewish Polish intelligentsia were targeted for killing, and millions of Polish and Soviet civilians were deported for forced labor in Germany or in occupied Poland, where these individuals worked and often died under deplorable conditions; and that other victims of the Nazi regime included homosexuals, other persons whose behavior did not match prescribed social norms, thousands of political opponents and religious dissidents," and thousands of American and Allied forces soldiers who made the ultimate sacrifice for the cause of freedom; and

WHEREAS, therefore, the United States Congress has established the Days of Remembrance as the nation's annual commemoration of the Holocaust, and the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum is the nation's permanent living memorial to the victims; and

WHEREAS, the internationally recognized date for Holocaust Remembrance Day, or Yom Hashoah, is based on the Hebrew calendar and is the date on which Israel commemorates the victims of the Holocaust; and

WHEREAS, in 2009, the observance of the Days of Remembrance will begin on April 21, and the actual date of the observance changes when Yom Hashoah falls on a Friday or a Sunday, in accordance with legislation establishing the event by the Knesset; and

WHEREAS, remembering the victims of the Holocaust is noble and praiseworthy, and recalling this defining moment in human history facilitates personal reflection on the consequences of silence and indifference to the suffering of others, inspires the human race to remember that righteousness prevails over evil, and encourages citizens to appreciate and value freedom and democratic principles; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That April 21 in 2009, and in each succeeding year, the first day of the Days of Remembrance, be designated as the Day of Remembrance in Virginia in memory of the victims of the Holocaust, and in honor of the survivors, rescuers, and liberators; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates post the designation of this day on the General Assembly's website.

INTRODUCED

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