

## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION NO. 1036

*Commemorating the lives and legacies of the Jewish victims of the Holocaust.*

Agreed to by the House of Delegates, February 21, 2017

Agreed to by the Senate, February 23, 2017

WHEREAS, between 1939 and 1945, six million European Jews were systematically murdered in what became known as the Holocaust, the deadliest genocide in human history; and

WHEREAS, Adolf Hitler and the Nazi Party rose to power in Germany on a campaign of antisemitism and nationalism; and the Nazis vilified the Jewish people, fomented acts of violence against Jews, and insisted on boycotts of Jewish-owned stores; and

WHEREAS, Nazi Germany implemented the discriminatory Nuremberg Laws, forcing Jews to register and wear a yellow star; and Jews throughout Europe were rounded up and forced into ghettos and concentration camps, where they were starved and kept in miserable conditions; and

WHEREAS, Jewish men, women, and children were tortured and humiliated by their Nazi captors and were the unwilling victims of gruesome and cruel experiments that served no medical purpose; and

WHEREAS, more than a million Jewish men, women, and children were shot dead by the Einsatzgruppen death squads, who shot them dead en masse; and

WHEREAS, millions of Jewish men, women, and children were murdered in gas chambers by the Nazi regime; and

WHEREAS, more than six million Jews, including at least 1.5 million children, were murdered in the Holocaust by the Nazi regime and its European allies; and

WHEREAS, the number of Jews murdered in the Holocaust constituted more than one-third of the world Jewish population at the time; and

WHEREAS, the extermination of the Jews was the primary purpose of the Holocaust, and the Holocaust must be remembered and continue to be taught in Virginia's schools; and

WHEREAS, recently deceased Holocaust survivor Elie Wiesel urged the world to oppose all genocide with the phrase "Never Again!"; and

WHEREAS, the Virginia Holocaust Museum in Richmond, the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C., and Yad Vashem in Jerusalem have gathered and displayed abundant and irrefutable evidence of the Holocaust; and

WHEREAS, many survivors of the Holocaust settled in the Commonwealth, bringing with them personal stories of the hardships, subhuman living conditions, and other atrocities during the Holocaust, which they have courageously revisited to educate future generations on the supreme importance of opposing the persecution, hatred, bigotry, and genocide of any group of people; and

WHEREAS, Holocaust survivors, such as Liviu Librescu, a professor who willingly gave his own life to save numerous lives during the Virginia Tech massacre, became inspirational leaders throughout the Commonwealth, making many lasting contributions to their communities and creating legacies which live on in their children and grandchildren; and

WHEREAS, anyone or any institution that rejects the Jewish component of the Holocaust or refuses to acknowledge that Jews were the primary target of the Holocaust is participating in Holocaust denial and must be condemned; and

WHEREAS, communities throughout the Commonwealth, the United States, Israel, and the world commemorated International Holocaust Remembrance Day on January 27, the anniversary of the liberation of Auschwitz-Birkenau, the largest extermination camp; and will commemorate Yom HaShoah or Holocaust Remembrance Day on April 23 - April 24, 2017, to remember the lives lost during the Holocaust and honor the survivors of the Holocaust; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED by the House of Delegates, the Senate concurring, That the General Assembly hereby commemorate the memory of the six million Jews murdered in the Holocaust and the lives and legacies of Holocaust survivors; and, be it

RESOLVED FURTHER, That the Clerk of the House of Delegates prepare a copy of this resolution for presentation to the Virginia Holocaust Museum as an expression of the General Assembly's respect for the lives lost during the Holocaust and admiration for the courage and perseverance of the survivors of the Holocaust.

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