



Susan Wengraf
Councilmember District 6

CONSENT CALENDAR
May 23, 2023

To: Honorable Mayor and Members of the City Council

From: Councilmember Wengraf (Author), Mayor Arreguín (Co-Sponsor),
Councilmember Taplin (Co-Sponsor), Councilmember Hahn (Co-Sponsor)

Subject: Support for H.R.603 - HEAL Act

RECOMMENDATION

Adopt a Resolution in support of H.R.603 (Gottheimer) - Holocaust Education and Antisemitism Lessons Act or the HEAL Act and send it to the author, Rep. Josh Gottheimer, with copies to Rep. Kathy Manning, Rep. Barbara Lee and Senator Dianne Feinstein.

FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

None.

BACKGROUND

H.R. 603, a bipartisan bill with over 100 co-sponsors would direct the Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, D.C. to conduct a study on Holocaust education efforts in public schools nationwide. The study would determine which states and school districts require or do not require Holocaust education in their curriculum and which offer optional Holocaust education. The study would identify standards and requirements schools mandate on Holocaust education, the types and quality of instructional materials used to teach, and the approaches used by schools to assess what students learn. The Holocaust Memorial Museum would report the results of the study to Congress.

There is mounting evidence that knowledge about the Holocaust is beginning to fade. A 2020 survey¹ measuring Holocaust awareness in the U.S. found that roughly two-thirds of those asked did not know how many Jewish people died. The survey of Americans between 18 and 40 also found that 48% could not name one concentration camp or ghetto.

According to recent analysis², a majority of U.S. states do not have laws requiring public school students to learn about the horrors of the Holocaust.

¹ [Most states lack laws requiring Holocaust and genocide education \(axios.com\)](https://www.axios.com/2020/08/11/most-states-lack-laws-requiring-holocaust-and-genocide-education-2020-08-11/)

² Ibid.

Congressmember and lead sponsor, Josh Gottheimer (NJ-5) said of the bill, "We all have an obligation to teach future generations about this evil. We have an obligation to try to heal our communities. We have an obligation to teach about this stain of hatred, so that it never happens ever again."

Congressmember Bonnie Watson Coleman (NJ-12) stated, "At a time when the teaching of history is under attack, the lessons of the Holocaust are more urgent now than ever before." She added that, "Antisemitism is experiencing a frightening resurgence in the United States and across the globe. Recent remarks by well-known public figures threaten to stoke the same fires of hate that brought the Nazi Party to power and resulted in genocide."

Congressmember Kathy Manning (NC-6) proclaimed, "It is vitally important to teach students about the history of the Holocaust and antisemitism and to empower them to recognize and confront hate whenever they see it. As we face rising antisemitism, it is critical to expand education nationwide about the history and unique nature of antisemitism, the conspiracy theories and scapegoating that have incited hatred and violence for centuries, and led to the Holocaust. Education and understanding are a critical antidote to the spreading of misinformation and hate,"

The City of Berkeley has a deep commitment to recognizing and understanding the importance of Holocaust history and education in efforts to combat rising antisemitism. For the past twenty years the City has supported an annual [Holocaust Remembrance Day Program](#) for community members. Berkeley was also instrumental in the United Against Hate Campaign, initiated in 2017, in response to white supremacist rallies in the region.

ENVIRONMENTAL SUSTAINABILITY

No direct impact on environmental sustainability.

CONTACT PERSON

Councilmember Wengraf

Council District 6

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Attachments:

1: Resolution

2: H.R.603 - HEAL Act

RESOLUTION NO. ##,###-N.S.

SUPPORT FOR H.R. 603 - HEAL ACT

WHEREAS, there is mounting evidence that knowledge about the Holocaust is beginning to fade; and

WHEREAS, the Anti-Defamation League found Antisemitic Incidents in the U.S. at their highest number in 2021 since they started tracking in 1979; and

WHEREAS, the majority of states in the U.S. do not have laws requiring public school students to learn about the horrors of the Holocaust; and

WHEREAS, Congresswoman Kathie Manning (NC-6) eloquently stated, “As we face rising antisemitism, it is critical to expand education nationwide about the history and unique nature of antisemitism, the conspiracy theories and scapegoating that have incited hatred and violence for centuries, and led to the Holocaust”; and

WHEREAS, the HEAL Act will direct the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum to conduct a study on current Holocaust education efforts in the U.S and provide the report to Congress as a first step.

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Council of the City of Berkeley that it unanimously supports H.R. 603 – Holocaust Education and Antisemitism Lessons Act (HEAL Act).

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the City of Berkeley held its 20th Annual Holocaust Remembrance Day Program on April 16, 2023 to honor survivors, remember those who perished and remind us all to never forget the atrocities nor let them happen again.

Exhibits

A: City of Berkeley's 20th Annual Holocaust Remembrance Day Program:

<https://youtu.be/texUkWVoHlc>

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(Original Signature of Member)

118TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. _____

To require a study on Holocaust education efforts of States, local educational agencies, and public elementary and secondary schools, and for other purposes.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Mr. GOTTHEIMER introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on _____

A BILL

To require a study on Holocaust education efforts of States, local educational agencies, and public elementary and secondary schools, and for other purposes.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the "Holocaust Education
5 and Antisemitism Lessons Act" or the "HEAL Act".

6 **SEC. 2. STUDY AND REPORT ON HOLOCAUST EDUCATION.**

7 (a) STUDY.—Beginning not later than 180 days after
8 the date of the enactment of this Act, the Director of the

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1 United States Holocaust Memorial Museum (referred to
2 in this Act as the “Director”) shall conduct a study on
3 Holocaust education efforts in States, local educational
4 agencies, and public elementary and secondary schools.

5 Such study shall include an examination of—

6 (1) all States;

7 (2) a nationally representative sample of local
8 educational agencies; and

9 (3) a representative sample of schools within
10 the local educational agencies being studied.

11 (b) ELEMENTS.—In conducting the study under sub-
12 section (a), the Director shall—

13 (1) determine whether States and local edu-
14 cational agencies require Holocaust education as
15 part of the curriculum taught in public elementary
16 and secondary schools;

17 (2) identify States and local educational agen-
18 cies that have optional Holocaust education as part
19 of the curriculum taught in public elementary and
20 secondary schools;

21 (3) identify each State’s standards and local
22 educational agency’s requirements relating to Holo-
23 caust education and summarize the status of the im-
24 plementation of such standards, including—

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1 (A) the existence of a centralized appa-
2 ratus at the State or local level that collects and
3 disseminates Holocaust education curricula and
4 materials;

5 (B) the existence of Holocaust education
6 professional development opportunities for pre-
7 service and in-service teachers; and

8 (C) the involvement of informal edu-
9 cational organizations in implementing Holo-
10 caust education, including museums and cul-
11 tural centers;

12 (4) determine whether public elementary and
13 secondary schools use the following strategies in
14 their Holocaust education, including through the
15 qualitative and quantitative analysis of such indica-
16 tors as—

17 (A) in-class discussion;

18 (B) educational activities conducted out-
19 side the classroom, including homework assign-
20 ments and experiential learning involving State
21 and local organizations, such as museums and
22 cultural centers;

23 (C) project based learning;

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1 (D) educational materials and activities
2 that are developmentally appropriate and
3 taught through a trauma-informed lens; and

4 (E) integration of lessons from the Holo-
5 caust across the curriculum and throughout the
6 school year;

7 (5) identify the types of instructional materials
8 used to teach students about the Holocaust, includ-
9 ing the use of primary source material;

10 (6) identify—

11 (A) the duration of the periods in which
12 Holocaust education is taught in public elemen-
13 tary and secondary schools; and

14 (B) the comprehensiveness of the Holo-
15 caust education curriculum taught in such
16 schools, as indicated by the extent to which the
17 curriculum addresses all elements and aspects
18 of the Holocaust; and

19 (7) identify the approaches used by such
20 schools to assess outcomes using traditional and
21 nontraditional assessments, including assessments
22 of—

23 (A) students' knowledge of the Holocaust;
24 and

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1 (B) students' ability to identify and ana-
2 lyze antisemitism, bigotry, hate, and genocide in
3 historical and contemporary contexts.

4 (c) REPORT.—

5 (1) IN GENERAL.—Following the completion of
6 the study under subsection (a), the Director shall
7 prepare and submit to Congress a report on the re-
8 sults of the study.

9 (2) DEADLINE FOR SUBMITTAL.—The report
10 under paragraph (1) shall be submitted not later
11 than the earlier of—

12 (A) 180 days after the completion of the
13 study under subsection (a); or

14 (B) three years after the date of the enact-
15 ment of this section.

16 (d) DEFINITIONS.—In this Act:

17 (1) ESEA TERMS.—The terms “elementary
18 school”, “local educational agency”, “secondary
19 school”, and “State” have the meanings given those
20 terms in section 8101 of the Elementary and Sec-
21 ondary Education Act of 1965 (20 U.S.C. 7801).

22 (2) HOLOCAUST.—The term “Holocaust” has
23 the meaning given that term in section 3 of the
24 Never Again Education Act (Public Law 116–141;
25 36 U.S.C. 2301 note).

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1 (3) HOLOCAUST EDUCATION.—The term “Holo-
2 caust education” means educational activities that
3 are specifically intended—

4 (A) to improve students’ awareness and
5 understanding of the Holocaust;

6 (B) to educate students on the lessons of
7 the Holocaust as a means to raise awareness
8 about the importance of preventing genocide,
9 hate, and bigotry against any group of people;
10 and

11 (C) to study the history of antisemitism,
12 its deep historical roots, the use of conspiracy
13 theories and propaganda that target the Jewish
14 people, and the shape-shifting nature of anti-
15 semitism over time.

16 (4) PROJECT BASED LEARNING.—The term
17 “project based learning” means a teaching method
18 through which students learn by actively engaging in
19 real-world and personally meaningful projects.

Support for H.R.603 - HEAL Act

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