

***As a Oregon resident, I would like to see the Holocaust taught in our schools.***

I was a friend of Alter Wiener's and have known Claire Sarnowski since she was 3 years old and understand and support their tremendous efforts in ensuring this bill is passed

**Remembering World War 2 and why I support this bill.**

Three of my father's brothers served in the military. My father did not serve, he was deceased.

One Uncle was in the US Coast Guard and served in the Pacific Theatre. Torpedoed – he spent 20 plus days floating in a raft until he was fortunately rescued.

The second Uncle was an Army Air Force bombardier in New Guinea. When the Japanese invaded, he and the rest of his group were told “you are expendable”: Go by land, blow up all air fields and get to Australia the best way you can -. He spoke of seeing the Japanese army coming after them as they blew up an air field. Fortunately, they made it to Australia and continued to fight Japan until the war ended.

The third Uncle served in Germany. He was at Hitler's Eagle's Nest. This Uncle would or could not talk about the horrors he saw in Germany and the concentration camps he helped liberate. All he would say: “it should never happen again.” It haunted him.

I have been to Germany and visited two of the concentration camps: Auschwitz-Birkenau and Dachau. How terrible and sad, it cannot happen again.

In addition, I have visited the Holocaust Museum in Washington, DC. If members of the committee have not been there, it is a must see. I can still smell the awful odor of shoes (a box car full) worn and taken from people killed by the Nazis.

Fortunately, my two Granddaughters went to a private school in the State of Washington and were taught about that awful part of history. For that I am thankful and another reason I support this bill.

Those thoughts are the reasons I am writing this....nothing similar to the Holocaust can ever occur again. If the young people today do not know that history, how are they going to be able to fight dictators, government leaders or the warning signs which can indicate the potential for mass atrocity?

**AND, most Oregon school students do not know what the Holocaust was. Just ask them.**

**Why teach the Holocaust?**

- The Holocaust illustrates the dangers of prejudice, discrimination, antisemitism and dehumanization. It reveals the full range of human responses – it brings up the important considerations about society and individual motivation and pressures which lead people to act as they do - or to not act at all. A lot of this is happening in our schools and in society today. Certainly, not Hitler's youths, but similar.
- Teaching it would highlight the potential for violence and abuse of power; and what the roles fear, peer pressure, indifference, greed and resentment can play in social and political relations.
- It would also point out the dangers of prejudice, discrimination and dehumanization, and how antisemitism fueled the Holocaust and other forms of racism and intolerance.
- It should cover issues which affect societies around the world, such as the power of extremist ideologies, propaganda, and abuse of official power, group-targeted hate and violence, as well as dictatorships. Prime examples: Venezuela, and some African nations; and, don't forget the hate-filled march in Charlottesville, VA? .
- Teaching the Holocaust would develop student awareness of not only of how hate and violence can take hold; but also, how the power of resistance, resilience and solidarity in local, national, and global contexts can exist.
- It should teach about the international institutions developed in reaction to World War Two and the Holocaust. I am assuming it would include international agreements which promote and encourage respect for human and individual rights; and, equal treatment under the law; protecting citizens in any form of armed conflict; and *protecting individuals who have fled countries because of a fear of persecution*. Some citizens from South America are fleeing today from their country to our U.S.A./ Mexico border hoping to enter the USA and find freedom and relief from persecution.
- Teaching the Holocaust in Oregon schools would help students understand what the efforts of the international community are and can be in response to modern genocide. The students would learn about the Military Tribunal at Nuremberg, and the role of the United Nations.
- Education about the Holocaust can lead to a reflection on the recurrence of such crimes; the role of the international community; how to prevent and punish the crime of genocide, which would be a direct response to crimes perpetrated by organizations similar to the Nazis.

*And, most importantly, the role of the individual to make sure such horror doesn't happen again.*

Thank you for listening and taking affirmative action on The Holocaust/Genocide Education Bill, Senate Bill 664 .

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