

I am writing to support SB 664. It mandates Oregon school districts provide education about genocide and the Holocaust, one of the profound tragedies of our age. I am writing as an American Jew and a promoter of all that is good in humanity.

The Holocaust, or Shoa as my people call it, was an expression of great evil. It did not occur in a vacuum. There have been many similar acts of genocide before the Holocaust, and sadly, since then. Yet there are those who deny or minimize the Holocaust, even though it is well documented an event as can be found.

I have been privileged to meet Holocaust survivors and look into their eyes. I have visited the Oregon Holocaust Memorial and the Oregon Jewish Museum in Portland and Yad Vashem in Israel. I have felt the great sadness to which these memorials bear witness.

I subscribe to the concept of “never again.” As George Santayana wrote, “Those who cannot remember the past are condemned to repeat it.” Educating children about the Holocaust and other acts of genocide is a powerful and appropriate way to help prevent such activities from happening again. I think that as decent Oregonians, we have an ethical responsibility to teach our children about these events.

It is for these reasons that I support SB 664.

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