



## **ADL Public Testimony in Support of Oregon Senate Bill 664**

Good afternoon. My name is Matthew Kahl and I am here as a representative of the Anti-Defamation League, Pacific Northwest Region. Thank you for the opportunity to testify in support of Oregon Senate Bill 664.

ADL was founded in 1913 under the mission to stop the defamation of the Jewish people and secure fair and just treatment for all. In Oregon and the greater Pacific Northwest, ADL responds to hate incidents in our communities, delivers anti-bias education in our schools, and advocates for policies that protect the civil rights of all.

As the number of living Holocaust survivors and eyewitnesses falls, there are alarming lapses in knowledge about the Holocaust throughout the country. In a survey released in April 2018, forty-nine percent of millennials cannot name a single concentration camp. Thirty-one percent of Americans believe that two million Jews or fewer were killed in the Holocaust, far fewer than the six million Jews and millions of others who perished. Fifty-two percent of Americans are unaware that Hitler came to power through a democratic election.

ADL has continued efforts to commemorate and educate about the Holocaust through supporting various educational initiatives. This includes a key program, Bearing Witness, where ADL has trained over 2,000 Catholic school educators across the country, primarily focused on equipping these educators to teach about the Holocaust. However, these efforts can only go so far.

The Holocaust is a horrific chapter in world history and now it is more important than ever that survivor stories be told to audiences across the State of Oregon.

That is why ADL is wholly supportive of Senate Bill 664.

We feel that the intent of this legislation is a good first step in educating on the atrocities of the Holocaust and genocide. Teachers face many barriers in teaching about the Holocaust, including: a lack of awareness of where to find resources



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and a lack of knowledge for how to incorporate the subject into their curricula. This bill looks to address these barriers by working through the Oregon Department of Education, which will standardize such curricula and ensure that the subject is taught in an effective manner.

Senate Bill 664 will send a strong message that Oregon recognizes the importance of Holocaust and genocide education at the highest level. ADL stands ready to assist the State of Oregon in crafting effective policy and looks forward to serving as a resource to help the state implement this important legislation.

ADL is supportive of this crucial bill. I appreciate your time and look forward to any questions that you may have.