

## Enrolled

# House Concurrent Resolution 17

Sponsored by Representative SOLLMAN, Senator WAGNER; Representatives NERON, PRUSAK

Whereas Alter Wiener was born on October 8, 1926, in Chrzanów, Poland, to Mordechai-Markus and Pearl Wiener; and

Whereas when Alter Wiener was 13 years old, his father was murdered by German forces following their invasion of Poland in September 1939; and

Whereas in June 1942, German soldiers gave Alter Wiener just three minutes to prepare and pack before deporting him to the Blechhammer forced labor camp; and

Whereas in February 1943, Alter Wiener's stepmother and stepbrother were deported to the Auschwitz concentration camp and murdered; and

Whereas Alter Wiener was imprisoned in five different forced labor camps under brutal conditions over a three-year period, and he said that he awoke every day not knowing if it would be the day he was killed; and

Whereas while Alter Wiener was a captive at the Gross Masselwitz forced labor camp, a German woman jeopardized her life by smuggling him a sandwich every day for 30 days, and he later said of her kindness and heroism: "Her gesture I will never forget, it fortified my belief that people must be judged by their merits, and not by their ethnicity (in the same vein I aver that not all Germans were active participants in the Holocaust)"; and

Whereas Alter Wiener had been a prisoner at the Waldenburg concentration camp for nine months and he weighed just 80 pounds when the camp was liberated by Soviet armed forces on May 9, 1945; and

Whereas after his liberation, Alter Wiener returned to Poland in search of his relatives and found that only five cousins had survived the Holocaust and that 123 family members had perished; and

Whereas Alter Wiener lived in Israel for 14 years, and he married and had two children; and

Whereas Alter Wiener and his family moved to New York in 1960 to be close to his surviving cousins, and he became a citizen of the United States in 1966; and

Whereas Alter Wiener graduated from elementary school when he was 35 years old and from high school at age 36, and he received an honorary bachelor's degree from Warner Pacific University and an honorary law degree from Lewis & Clark Law School; and

Whereas after moving to Hillsboro, Oregon, in 2000, Alter Wiener began to give presentations on his life story and his experiences during the Holocaust at Century High School in Hillsboro; and

Whereas Alter Wiener made nearly a thousand appearances, speaking at schools, universities, synagogues, churches, prisons, companies, book clubs, charitable events and elsewhere to tell his story and spread his message; and

Whereas Alter Wiener received more than 89,000 letters after his presentations, mostly from students, with words of appreciation for his message of love, compassion, perseverance and living life to the fullest and telling him that he had helped to prevent their suicide, to stay in school, to respect their parents or to be grateful for what they had; and

Whereas in 2007 Alter Wiener published his memoir, *From a Name to a Number*, which was adapted in 2014 into an award-winning children's book by Trudy Ludwig, *Gifts from the Enemy*; and

Whereas in September 2018, Alter Wiener told his story to Oregon legislators, appearing before a committee on behalf of a bill that would require education about the Holocaust and genocide in Oregon schools; and

Whereas Alter Wiener gave his final presentation at Lakeridge High School in Lake Oswego, Oregon, on December 5, 2018; and

Whereas Alter Wiener's presentations helped educate many thousands of Oregonians about the horrors of the Holocaust but also inspired his listeners to never lose hope and to have love for our fellow human beings; and

Whereas Alter Wiener passed away on December 11, 2018, in Hillsboro; and

Whereas Alter Wiener was preceded in death by his wife and is survived by his sons, Martin and Ron, daughters-in-law, Elaine and Doreen, grandchildren, Allyson, Charles, Jeremy, Frankie, Benjamin and Jake, and great-grandchildren, Azriel and Samara; now, therefore,

**Be It Resolved by the Legislative Assembly of the State of Oregon:**

That we, the members of the Eightieth Legislative Assembly, celebrate the life of Alter Wiener, and we recognize and honor his contributions to the people of this state; and be it further

Resolved, That a copy of this resolution shall be presented to the family of Alter Wiener as an expression of our sympathy and condolences.

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Adopted by House March 12, 2019

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Timothy G. Sekerak, Chief Clerk of House

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Tina Kotek, Speaker of House

Adopted by Senate May 21, 2019

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Peter Courtney, President of Senate