

Senate Fiscal Agency
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SFA



BILL ANALYSIS

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Senate Bill 315 (as passed by the Senate)
Sponsor: Senator Thaddeus G. McCotter
Committee: Government Operations

Date Completed: 3-21-01

RATIONALE

In 1951 the Knesset (Israel's Parliament) declared the 27th day of Nisan of the Hebrew calendar as Holocaust and Ghetto Revolt Remembrance Day, in memory of the millions of people who were systematically enslaved and killed during the Holocaust. Other nations also have declared this date a day of remembrance. In 1980, the U.S. Congress established the 27th day of Nisan as Holocaust Remembrance Day. It has been suggested that the State also declare this day as Holocaust Remembrance Day, and a week in April as the Days of Remembrance in Michigan.

CONTENT

The bill would create a new act to establish the 27th day of Nisan as Holocaust Remembrance Day, and to establish the period beginning on the Sunday before that date through the following Sunday as the Days of Remembrance in Michigan, "in memory of the victims of the Holocaust, and in honor of the survivors, as well as the rescuers and liberators".

The bill states that, "A key date in the history of the Holocaust is April 19, 1943, the beginning of the Warsaw ghetto uprising, when Jews, using homemade bombs and stolen or bartered weapons, resisted death camp deportation by the Nazis for 27 days. This date, which in the Hebrew calendar is the twenty-seventh day of Nisan, has been established by the United States congress as a national Holocaust remembrance day, and the week surrounding this date has been established as the Days of Remembrance."

Supporting Argument

The horrors visited upon European Jewry and other groups by Nazi Germany and its collaborators during the Holocaust have been well-documented. By establishing a Remembrance Holocaust Day and a week-long Days of Remembrance in Michigan, this State would join similar national and international

The bill also contains the following statements:

The legislature recognizes that the horrors of the Holocaust should never be forgotten. The Holocaust was the state-sponsored, systematic persecution and annihilation of European Jewry by Nazi Germany and its collaborators between 1933 and 1945. In addition to the murder of some 6,000,000 Jews, millions more, including the handicapped, Poles, Gypsies, homosexuals, Jehovah's Witnesses, prisoners of war, and political dissidents, also suffered grievous oppression and death under Nazi tyranny.

The legislature encourages individuals, educational institutions, and social, community, religious, labor, and business organizations to pause on Holocaust remembrance day and during the Days of Remembrance and reflect upon the terrible events of the Holocaust, so that as a society we will remain vigilant against hatred, persecution, and tyranny and actively rededicate ourselves to the principles of individual freedom in a just society.

ARGUMENTS

(Please note: The arguments contained in this analysis originate from sources outside the Senate Fiscal Agency. The Senate Fiscal Agency neither supports nor opposes legislation.)

observances, which encourage citizens to recognize and remember the tragedy of the Holocaust. These observances also serve to remind people of what can happen when bigotry, indifference, and hatred are allowed to control in a civilized society. In addition, a remembrance day encourages people to reflect on what was done, and what could have been

done, to save the victims of the Holocaust. As the bill states, Holocaust Remembrance Day not only memorializes the victims, but also honors the liberators, rescuers, and survivors.

This year, the 27th day of Nisan coincides with April 19. Because the Hebrew calendar is not aligned with the secular calendar, the 27th of Nisan will fall on other dates in future years, such as April 9 in 2002, April 29 in 2003, April 18 in 2004, and May 5 in 2005. To recognize the actual Hebrew date, the bill would establish the 27th of Nisan as Holocaust Remembrance Day.

In the past, legislative resolutions apparently have established a Holocaust Remembrance Day for particular years. By establishing the day in statute, the bill would ensure that Holocaust Remembrance Day and the Days of Remembrance were recognized every year.

Legislative Analyst: G. Towne
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FISCAL IMPACT

The bill would have no fiscal impact on State or local government.

Fiscal Analyst: B. Bowerman

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This analysis was prepared by nonpartisan Senate staff for use by the Senate in its deliberations and does not constitute an official statement of legislative intent.