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HOUSE RESOLUTION

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WHEREAS, There has been a dramatic increase of incidents targeting minority populations all over the United States, with repeated rhetoric and harassment of Jews, Muslims, refugees, LGBTQ, and communities of color, creating a climate of pervasive fear and anxiety; and

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WHEREAS, Over the last two months in Illinois and throughout the United States, there has been a dramatic increase in crimes of hate directed at Jews and Muslims, including acts of desecration; and

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WHEREAS, The JCC Association of North America reports over 160 Jewish Community Centers and Jewish day schools in the United States and Canada have received bomb threats in the last two months; and

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WHEREAS, In January alone, over 48 Jewish Community Centers in 27 states received bomb threats and, on February 27, there were 31 incidents of bomb threats called into 23 JCCs and eight Jewish day schools in Alabama, Arizona, California, Delaware, Florida, Indiana, Maryland, Michigan, New Jersey, Nevada, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Virginia, Washington State, and Calgary (Canada); and

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1           WHEREAS, Five waves of reported threats have been recorded,  
2           and in the last wave, 100 incidents were recorded at 81  
3           locations (inclusive of JCCs and Jewish day schools) in 33  
4           states and two Canadian provinces, including two Jewish  
5           Community Centers in Illinois, in Hyde Park and Lake Zurich;  
6           and

7           WHEREAS, Two Jewish cemeteries, located in St. Louis,  
8           Missouri and Philadelphia, Pennsylvania were vandalized, with  
9           headstones overturned, crumbled and destroyed, and swastikas  
10          written on graves; and

11          WHEREAS, Jewish agencies were also being targeted, with two  
12          recorded bomb threats called into the Anti-Defamation League  
13          headquarters in the New York City, New York and San Francisco,  
14          California regional offices, both of which were evacuated; and

15          WHEREAS, The Loop Synagogue in downtown Chicago was the  
16          target of vandalism; the suspect, who has been arrested, broke  
17          a window and placed swastikas on the door of the synagogue; and

18          WHEREAS, Swastikas were found in the men's bathroom at the  
19          Northbrook Public Library, a frequent occurrence since  
20          November of 2016; and

21          WHEREAS, A swastika was found carved into a bench at the

1 Illinois Holocaust Museum and Education Center, which welcomes  
2 and educates about 1,000 students and staff and members of the  
3 general public each day; and

4 WHEREAS, The FBI reported 5,818 hate crimes in 2015, up by  
5 6% over the previous year, and with anti-Muslim hate crimes up  
6 by 67%; and

7 WHEREAS, The State of Illinois remains committed to  
8 religious freedom and the full protection of the United States  
9 and Illinois Constitutions for all people, and will fight  
10 vigorously to defend against any actions to the contrary; and

11 WHEREAS, The State of Illinois recognizes an assault on any  
12 one race, religion, or culture is an assault on all, and  
13 condemns racism, xenophobia, homophobia, Islamophobia,  
14 anti-Semitism, and all other forms of hate, and is committed to  
15 honor and protect all Illinois residents, regardless of race,  
16 ethnicity, religion, immigration status, and all other  
17 communities targeted by such hateful and disturbing acts; and

18 WHEREAS, The United States of America has a proud history  
19 of accepting its residents, regardless of ethnic origins,  
20 religious affiliation, or country of origin, and for fighting  
21 against intolerance, bigotry, evil, violence, and segregation;  
22 therefore, be it

1           RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE ONE  
2 HUNDREDTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we  
3 condemn these evil acts of fearmongering and desecration, that  
4 we will respond to these despicable actions with swift and  
5 decisive conviction and action, provide full support to the  
6 victims, and join in partnership with law enforcement and other  
7 State agencies to denounce further evil acts to combat any  
8 future threats based on hate to all in the great State of  
9 Illinois; and be it further

10           RESOLVED, That suitable copies of this resolution be  
11 delivered to Governor Bruce Rauner, Attorney General Lisa  
12 Madigan, the Director of the Illinois State Police, and all 102  
13 States' Attorneys in the State of Illinois.