

2013-J2987

LEGISLATIVE RESOLUTION honoring the memory of Rabbi Michoel Ber Weissmandl for his efforts in the United States to save the European Jewish populace during World War II

WHEREAS, From time to time this Legislative Body takes note of certain extraordinary individuals of remarkable courage and strength of character who risked their own lives for others, and stood with fortitude for freedom and humanity; and

WHEREAS, It is the sense of this Legislative Body to pay tribute to the memory of individuals of remarkable courage and strength of character, whose purposeful lives embodied the spirit of the principles upon which this Nation was founded, and who made their life's work the support and furtherance of those principles; and

WHEREAS, Attendant to such concerns, and in full accord with its longstanding traditions, this Legislative Body is justly proud to honor the memory of Rabbi Michoel Ber Weissmandl in the United States to save the European Jewish populace during World War II; and

WHEREAS, Rabbi Michoel Ber Weissmandl was instrumental in providing the United States with situational awareness of the Jews in Europe, specifically regarding Auschwitz, the largest and most notorious of the Nazi concentration camp networks, which ultimately led to a halt to the deportations of the remaining Hungarian Jewry; and

WHEREAS, Rabbi Michoel Ber Weissmandl's daring efforts to save the Jews of Slovakia from extermination at the hands of the Nazis during the Holocaust included helping to establish the "Working Group," an underground organization which raised funds to negotiate ransom with German and Slovakian officials in order to delay mass deportations and, via the famous Europa Plan, to secure the release of Jews; and

WHEREAS, Rabbi Michoel Ber Weissmandl was also able to smuggle letters

and telegrams to leaders with abilities he hoped would help save the Jews of Europe, including President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Winston Churchill and alerting them to the progressive Nazi destruction of European Jewry; in addition, he provided actionable intel in terms of where the railroads and crematoriums should be bombed; and WHEREAS, The courage, wisdom and tenacity of this determined man laid the groundwork for several rescue missions, including the Mantello Mission, and the Wallenberg Mission, which freed tens of thousands of Hungarian Jews; and

WHEREAS, Rabbi Michoel Ber Weissmandl's combined actions, by some accounts, has amounted to being responsible for as many as two-thirds of the Holocaust survivors living in Brooklyn; and

WHEREAS, Today, more than 55 years after his death, the bravery and willingness of Rabbi Michoel Ber Weissmandl to fight for the lives of his fellow human beings, and to secure the very existence of future generations of European Jews, continues to inspire, and is deserving of the highest honor by all defenders of freedom; and

WHEREAS, This Legislative Body is pleased to have this opportunity to express its highest admiration for Rabbi Michoel Ber Weissmandl; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That this Legislative Body pause in its deliberations to honor the memory of Rabbi Michoel Ber Weissmandl in the United States to save the European Jewish populace during World War II.