

Legislation Text

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In solemn remembrance of the eleven lives lost on October 27, 2018 at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and recognizing the need for unity amidst a historic rise in anti-Semitic incidents and pronounced divisiveness in America.

WHEREAS, On October 27, 2018, eleven Jewish worshipers were murdered at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh; and

WHEREAS, We honor the memory of David Rosenthal, 54; his brother Cecil Rosenthal, 59; Sylvan Simon, 86, and his wife Bernice Simon, 84; Joyce Fienberg, 75; Richard Gottfried, 65; Jerry Rabinowitz, 66; Daniel Stein, 71; Melvin Wax, 88; and Irving Younger, 69. The eldest victim was Rose Mallinger, 97; and

WHEREAS, The Anti-Defamation League calls the killings at Tree of Life Synagogue the single deadliest attack on American Jewry; and

WHEREAS, According to the Anti-Defamation League, there has been a historic 60 percent rise in anti-Semitic incidents from 2016 to 2017, the biggest single-year increase in reported anti-Jewish hate since they started tracking such data almost 40 years ago; and

WHEREAS, Founded in 1864, the Tree of Life is Pittsburgh's oldest Jewish congregation, and is Conservative. Three congregations use the building, and the central sanctuary can house more than a thousand people; and

WHEREAS, The Dor Hadash <<http://www.latimes.com/nation/la-na-pittsburgh-congregation-leaders-20181028-story.html>>, a Reconstructionist congregation rented space in the building, and had partnered with HIAS, a Jewish aid organization dedicated to assisting refugees; and

WHEREAS, HIAS has helped more than 4.5 million people escape persecution and HIAS Pennsylvania resettles 100-200 refugees each year from conflict zones across the world, without regard to race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation, or the like. Refugees are selected by the Department of Homeland Security, and HIAS helps refugees with the basics of making a new life here in Philadelphia; and

WHEREAS, As Rabbi Jeffrey Myers of the Tree of Life Synagogue said, "When American citizens cannot freely and safely worship in their house of worship and celebrate the Sabbath, it concerns me because it challenges the safety and security of all Americans in any house of worship"; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, THAT THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF PHILADELPHIA, Hereby solemnly remembers the eleven lives lost on October 27, 2018 at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and recognizing the need for unity amidst a historic rise in anti-Semitic incidents and pronounced divisiveness in America.