

BY E-MAIL

December 17, 2021

Fred Eisenberger
Mayor
City of Hamilton
2nd floor
71 Main Street West
Hamilton, Ontario L8P 4Y5

Re: Request to Declare every May as Jewish Heritage Month in the City of Hamilton

Dear Mayor Eisenberger

I recently completed my mandate as City Councillor having served the people of Montreal and of my Snowdon district for 39 consecutive years. It has been a great honour to do so and I take pride in my accomplishments that have contributed to the public good.

I have since been appointed National Director of the League for Human Rights of B'nai Brith Canada. One of my first projects in that capacity, is the promotion of Jewish Heritage Month.

A growing part of Hamilton's population is Jewish. Like Jews everywhere in Canada in 2021, Jewish residents of your municipality have not been immune to a growing wave of antisemitism. Indeed, the situation became so appalling nationally earlier this year that the Government of Canada convened a National Summit on Antisemitism in order to strengthen the response of local authorities and public security agencies to these incidents of vandalism and violence targeting the Jewish community.

Government response culminated with a strong statement by Prime Minister Justin Trudeau on October 13 at the Malmo International Forum to Combat Antisemitism with a robust pledge for a national strategy to combat hate, the implementation of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's definition of antisemitism, promoting Holocaust education and combatting Holocaust denial while making permanent and fully funded the position of Special Envoy on Preserving Holocaust Remembrance and Combatting Antisemitism.

B'nai Brith has offered its expertise to the Government and Special Envoy and has launched a four-point program to translate the pledge from a promise that gives hope to one with concrete achievements.

We have also launched a national campaign to urge cities to adopt motions that will recognize every May as Jewish Heritage Month in their territory. We are now presenting a request for such a motion to you in the hope that you will ask Hamilton Council to adopt it at an upcoming meeting.

.../2



In 2018 Parliament enacted "An Act respecting Canadian Jewish Heritage Month" designating the month of May as Canadian Jewish Heritage Month thereby recognizing the important contributions that Jewish Canadians have made to Canada's social, economic, political, and cultural fabric.

Attached please find a copy of that bill as well as a suggested text that your Council might adopt.

The Jewish community has a long and proud history in Canada and has made significant contributions to the wellbeing, growth, and prosperity of Canada. Jews have excelled in a wide range of endeavours including the arts, sciences, the law, architecture, media, finance, entertainment, and business significantly contributing to Canadian life while having to overcome systemic barriers of discrimination that endured until quite recent times in Canadian history.

Parliament has declared that a Canadian Jewish Heritage Month would provide an opportunity to remember, celebrate and educate future generations about the inspirational role that Jewish Canadians have played and continue to play.

In the context of a pandemic that has fostered hate and targeted Jews, B'nai Brith, as Canada's pre-eminent Jewish human rights organization, is inviting municipalities to enhance Parliament's declaration of the Canadian Jewish Heritage Month by adopting their own motions to recognize and celebrate an annual Jewish Heritage Month every May.

We thus urge Hamilton to adopt the motion and to work with the Jewish community to ensure the celebration of Jewish Heritage Month every May through exhibits and performances highlighting Jewish history and culture to take place at City Hall and elsewhere in the municipality.

We would be pleased to meet with you, virtually or otherwise, to discuss further. We are pleased to provide a suggested text.

Yours truly,



Marvin Rotrand
National Director
League for Human Rights
B'nai Brith Canada

Encls.

MOTION TO DECLARE EVERY MONTH OF MAY AS JEWISH HERITAGE MONTH IN THE CITY OF HAMILTON

Whereas a growing part of the population of the City of Hamilton is Jewish;

Whereas the Jewish population of the City of Hamilton reflects the rich and varied history of the Jewish people comprising a population tracing its origins to many different parts of the world and embracing the many different traditions and practices within Judaism;

Whereas Statistics Canada notes that the Jewish population in the country is approximately 400,000 people, more than 1% of the total Canadian population, making it the fourth-largest Jewish population in the world;

Whereas the Jewish community has a long and proud history in Canada and has made significant contributions to the wellbeing, growth and prosperity of Canada while overcoming tremendous obstacles;

Whereas Jews have excelled in a wide range of endeavours including the arts, sciences, the law, architecture, media, finance, entertainment and business significantly contributing to Canadian life;

Whereas the month of May is meaningful for the Jewish community around the world;

Whereas in 2018 Parliament adopted Bill S-232 "An Act respecting Canadian Jewish Heritage Month" designating the month of May as Canadian Jewish Heritage Month thereby recognizing the important contributions that Jewish Canadians have made to Canada's social, economic, political and cultural fabric;

Whereas Parliament declared that the Canadian Jewish Heritage Month would provide an opportunity to remember, celebrate and educate future generations about the inspirational role that Jewish Canadians have played and continue to play in communities across the country;

Whereas B'nai Brith, a Jewish human rights organization that has been active nationally in Canada since 1875, has invited municipalities to enhance Parliament's declaration of the Canadian Jewish Heritage Month by adopting their own motions and promoting the celebration of the heritage month within their territory each May;

It is moved by

Seconded by

That the City of Hamilton declare that commencing May 2022 every month of May be celebrated as Jewish Heritage Month in the municipality;

That City Council recognize the contributions of the Jewish community to the success of Canada;

That City Council mandate the City Clerk and municipal services to ensure the celebration of Jewish Heritage Month every May through exhibits and performances highlighting Jewish history and culture to take place at City Hall and elsewhere in the municipality.

First Session, Forty-second Parliament,
64-65-66-67 Elizabeth II, 2015-2016-2017-2018

Première session, quarante-deuxième législature,
64-65-66-67 Elizabeth II, 2015-2016-2017-2018

STATUTES OF CANADA 2018

LOIS DU CANADA (2018)

CHAPTER 5

CHAPITRE 5

An Act respecting Canadian Jewish Heritage
Month

Loi instituant le Mois du patrimoine juif
canadien

ASSENTED TO

MARCH 29, 2018

BILL S-232

SANCTIONNÉE

LE 29 MARS 2018

PROJET DE LOI S-232

SUMMARY

This enactment designates the month of May in each and every year as “Canadian Jewish Heritage Month”.

SOMMAIRE

Le texte désigne le mois de mai comme « Mois du patrimoine juif canadien ».

CHAPTER 5

An Act respecting Canadian Jewish Heritage Month

[Assented to 29th March, 2018]

Preamble

Whereas the Jewish population in Canada is approximately 400,000 people, making it the fourth-largest Jewish population in the world;

Whereas the Canadian Jewish community has made significant contributions to the growth and prosperity of Canada while overcoming tremendous obstacles;

Whereas the month of May is meaningful for the Jewish community around the world;

Whereas, by designating the month of May as Canadian Jewish Heritage Month, the Parliament of Canada recognizes the important contributions that Jewish Canadians have made to Canada's social, economic, political and cultural fabric;

And whereas Canadian Jewish Heritage Month would provide an opportunity to remember, celebrate and educate future generations about the inspirational role that Jewish Canadians have played and continue to play in communities across the country;

Now, therefore, Her Majesty, by and with the advice and consent of the Senate and House of Commons of Canada, enacts as follows:

Short title**Short title**

1 This Act may be cited as the *Canadian Jewish Heritage Month Act*.

CHAPITRE 5

Loi instituant le Mois du patrimoine juif canadien

[Sanctionnée le 29 mars 2018]

Préambule

Attendu :

que la population juive au Canada compte près de 400 000 personnes, ce qui fait d'elle la quatrième plus grande au monde;

que la communauté juive canadienne a contribué de façon importante à la croissance et à la prospérité du pays malgré qu'elle ait dû surmonter des obstacles considérables;

que le mois de mai revêt une importance particulière pour la communauté juive du monde entier;

que, en désignant le mois de mai comme Mois du patrimoine juif canadien, le Parlement du Canada reconnaît l'apport substantiel des Canadiens juifs au patrimoine social, économique, politique et culturel du pays;

que le Mois du patrimoine juif canadien est l'occasion de se souvenir du rôle inspirant que les Canadiens juifs ont joué et continuent de jouer dans les collectivités partout au Canada, de le célébrer et d'en transmettre l'importance aux générations à venir,

Sa Majesté, sur l'avis et avec le consentement du Sénat et de la Chambre des communes du Canada, édicte :

Titre abrégé**Titre abrégé**

1 *Loi sur le Mois du patrimoine juif canadien.*

Canadian Jewish Heritage Month

Canadian Jewish Heritage Month

2 Throughout Canada, in each and every year, the month of May is to be known as “Canadian Jewish Heritage Month”.

Mois du patrimoine juif canadien

Mois du patrimoine juif canadien

2 Le mois de mai est, dans tout le Canada, désigné comme « Mois du patrimoine juif canadien ».