

No. R-158. House concurrent resolution recognizing May 2023 as Jewish American Heritage Month in Vermont.

(H.C.R.125)

Offered by: All Members of the House

Offered by: Senators Kitchel and Ram Hinsdale

Whereas, in 1654, after their expulsion from Recife, Brazil, six Jewish families sailed to the Dutch community of New Amsterdam, where, after initial official resistance, they started the first North American Jewish community, and

Whereas, in 1790, President George Washington sent a letter to the Hebrew Congregation of Newport, Rhode Island, in which he famously wrote, “For happily the Government of the United States gives to bigotry no sanction, to persecution no assistance, requires only that they who live under its protection should demean themselves as good citizens,” and

Whereas, Joshua Vita Montefiore was the first known Jew to settle in Vermont, arriving in 1835, and by the 1840s, a scattering of individual Jews and Jewish families lived in northern Vermont, and

Whereas, the first Jewish community in Vermont was established in Poultney in the 1870s, where it remained until it relocated to Rutland in 1906, and

Whereas, a more enduring Jewish community was established in Burlington in the 1880s, where, in 1885, it established Congregation Ohavi Zedek, the oldest Jewish congregation in the State, and

Whereas, Jewish Americans in Vermont and throughout the nation, despite encountering numerous instances of discrimination, have played leading roles in many fields of endeavor, and

Whereas, in 2006, pursuant to a proclamation that President George W. Bush issued, Jewish American Heritage Month was established, and, in the wake of the sharply rising incidents of antisemitism in the United States—which, according to the Anti-Defamation League, numbered in excess of 3,600 in 2022, the highest since the statistic was first monitored in 1979—an appreciation of the heritage and culture of Jewish Americans becomes especially timely, and

Whereas, President Joseph R. Biden has issued a 2023 proclamation in recognition of Jewish American Heritage Month, and various federal cultural institutions are commemorating this observance, now therefore be it

Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives:

That the General Assembly recognizes May 2023 as Jewish American Heritage Month in Vermont, and be it further

Resolved: That the Secretary of State be directed to send a copy of this resolution to the Jewish Communities of Vermont organization.