

111TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. CON. RES. 154

Expressing the sense of Congress that African-Americans and Jewish-Americans share common historical experiences and a commitment to a society free from hatred and violence.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JUNE 15, 2009

Mr. HASTINGS of Florida submitted the following concurrent resolution; which was referred to the Committee on the Judiciary

CONCURRENT RESOLUTION

Expressing the sense of Congress that African-Americans and Jewish-Americans share common historical experiences and a commitment to a society free from hatred and violence.

Whereas the tragic shooting of Special Police Officer Stephen Tyrone Johns at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum in Washington, DC, on June 10, 2009, was an act of violence profoundly affecting both the African-American and Jewish-American communities;

Whereas Officer Johns, an African-American, was allegedly killed by a White supremacist while defending an institution devoted to Jewish history and dedicated to eradicating all forms of hatred and violence;

Whereas Officer Johns' murder sadly demonstrates an historic commonality between the African-American and Jewish communities, that of being the target of senseless acts of hate-motivated violence;

Whereas the events at the Holocaust Museum remind us that the African-American and Jewish-American communities must continue to work together to realize the common goal of combating hatred, intolerance, and violence with education, community-building, and a commitment to work together to improve our world;

Whereas African-Americans and Jewish-Americans have a long and proud tradition of working together to eliminate all forms of racism, xenophobia, and anti-Semitism, and to build communities of toleration, acceptance, mutual respect and understanding, and appreciation for diversity of backgrounds and life experiences;

Whereas this tradition of joint activism includes the founding of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, the fight against Nazism, the expansion of civil rights, and the struggle against poverty;

Whereas by standing together, African-Americans and Jewish-Americans present a powerful front to advance acceptance and understanding, and to make progress on alleviating many of the great social inequalities in the United States, including poverty, discrimination, disparities in education and health, and improving underprivileged and underserved communities;

Whereas the attempt to eliminate prejudice requires that all people in the United States develop respect and acceptance of cultural differences and to continue the dialogue across ethnic, cultural, and religious boundaries;

Whereas there is growing awareness of the need to complement tough hate crime laws and vigorous enforcement, which can deter and address violence motivated by bigotry, with education and training initiatives designed to reduce prejudice; and

Whereas it is the long standing policy of the United States Government to stand firm against crimes of hatred wherever and whenever they occur and to ensure justice: Now, therefore, be it

1 *Resolved by the House of Representatives (the Senate*
2 *concurring), That—*

3 (1) Congress—

4 (A) honors the sacrifice of Special Police
5 Officer Stephen Tyrone Johns in his defense of
6 the staff and visitors of the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum; and

7 (B) views this special relationship as an
8 opportunity for dialogue for all people who seek
9 ways of fighting injustice and securing dignity
10 for all; and

11 (2) it is the sense of Congress that—

12 (A) the African-American and Jewish-
13 American communities should continue to work
14 together to combat all forms of hate-inspired violence; and

15 (B) leaders and individuals in both communities should make an increased effort to

- 1 meet regularly to discuss matters of mutual in-
- 2 terest and concern.

