



The Honorable Mike Johnson
Speaker
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Hakeem Jeffries
Minority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Steve Scalise
Majority Leader
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Katherine Clark
Minority Whip
United States House of Representatives
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Speaker Johnson, Leader Jeffries, Leader Scalise and Whip Clark,

We, the undersigned, affirm our support for H.R.7764 “[t]o establish a commission to study the potential transfer of the Weitzman National Museum of American Jewish History to the Smithsonian Institution.”

First arriving in the American colonies in 1654, Jewish Americans participated in the founding of the United States and have been pivotal actors in American life ever since, advancing our nation as business and labor leaders, educators, soldiers and sailors, artists, public officials, scientists, medical professionals—in virtually every aspect of the American endeavor.

The Smithsonian Institution educates about several of our country’s diverse communities through the establishment of museums celebrating their contributions to the American tapestry—National Museum of African American History and Culture, National Museum of the American Indian, National Museum of the American Latino, and, under study currently, National Museum of Asian Pacific American History and Culture.

The story of the American Jewish community similarly merits a Smithsonian museum. We are unfortunately at a moment in time when such a museum is not merely meritorious, but critical. The rise in antisemitism in America over recent years became so alarming that the White House issued *The U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism* last May, urging that:

government and civil **society must increase understanding and raise awareness about antisemitism**, reaching Americans wherever they are. It is essential to engage people in their communities and **through trusted networks and interlocutors** to help them identify and learn about antisemitism. **To educate the public about both antisemitism and Jewish American heritage**, we need **programming in museums**, libraries, and arts and cultural institutions, as well as

dedicated efforts by public figures, community leaders, and media outlets.

[Emphasis added]

The heinous Hamas massacre and abductions in Israel on October 7, 2023, led to a further dramatic escalation in attacks and incitement against Jewish communities worldwide that is unlikely to subside in the near future. The American Jewish community is no exception: in the months after October 7, ADL tracked a nearly 400% increase in antisemitic incidents in this country.

This Smithsonian Museum would be seen as a trusted resource by American citizens, public officials, and educators. It would inform Americans through on-site, traveling, and virtual exhibitions; live and online programming; and educational curricula and materials distributed nationwide.

The Trustees of the Weitzman National Museum of American Jewish History stand ready to transfer this institution, built and maintained primarily through private charitable support, to the American people as an official museum of the Smithsonian Institution. This could be done with minimal cost to our citizens and would stand proudly in Philadelphia, steps from where our nation was founded.

We are deeply grateful for the leadership of House Administration Chairman Steil and Ranking Member Morelle for advancing this bipartisan bill. We are encouraged by the widespread bipartisan support that H.R. 7764 has received, highlighted by its 94 cosponsors and are grateful for the leadership of the bill's lead cosponsors, Reps. Wasserman Schultz, Turner, Boyle, and Miller. This broad support underscores the vital need to move forward on this bill without delay, and we urge you to work together to swiftly bring this bill to a vote and send a strong bipartisan message of support to the American Jewish community.

We applaud The Weitzman for extending this offer, and we urge House Leadership to expeditiously bring H.R. 7764 to the floor for an immediate vote.

Thank you,

ADL (Anti-Defamation League)
Conference of Presidents of Major
America Jewish Organizations
Jewish Federations of North America
Alpha Epsilon Pi
Ameinu
American Friends of Likud
American Jewish Committee

American Jewish Congress
American Zionist Movement
BZ Media
Combat Antisemitism Movement
Hadassah, The Women's Zionist
Organization of America
HIAS
Israeli American Council

Jewish Council for Public Affairs
Jewish Women International
Maccabi USA
MERCAZ USA
NA'AMAT USA
National Coalition Supporting Eurasian
Jewry
National Council of Young Israel
Rabbinical Assembly
Rabbinical Council of America

Religious Zionists of America-Mizrachi
Union for Reform Judaism
United Synagogue of Conservative
Judaism
WIZO USA
Women's League for Conservative
Judaism
Women of Reform Judaism
Zioness
Zionist Organization of America

CC: Chairman Bryan Steil, Ranking Member Joe Morelle, Rep. Debbie Wasserman Schultz,
Rep. Mike Turner, Rep. Brendan Boyle, Rep. Max Miller.