



The Jewish Federations®
OF NORTH AMERICA

PASS THE TIME FOR HOLOCAUST SURVIVORS ACT (S. 2179/House Bill No. TBD) NOW

Between 1933 and 1945, the Nazis and their collaborators murdered an estimated 6,000,000 European Jews, as well as millions of others. These victims were targeted because of their religious and political beliefs, national origin, disability, or other disfavored status. Millions more were confined to concentration or work camps or displaced from their homes and spent years as refugees.

Today, there are about 80,000 Holocaust survivors living in the United States, down from 127,000 who were alive in 2010. Every Holocaust survivor is now at least 74 years of age, but most are in their mid to late 80s, their 90s or beyond. Unconscionably, one-third of all Holocaust survivors live at or below the official poverty threshold including more than half of those who emigrated from the countries of the Former Soviet Union after experiencing the twin perils of Nazism and Stalinism.

Heart conditions, bone and feet issues, and dental problems are common for Holocaust survivors, as are depression, anxiety, and sleep disorders. Many are isolated from their communities, and endure the challenges of aging alone, often without family to care for them. Holocaust survivors have needs similar to those of other older Americans, but the consequences of their premature or unnecessary institutionalization can be much more severe. The sights, sounds, and smells of institutionalization, such as unfamiliar showers, confined spaces, or restrictions on food, can trigger traumatic psychological effects in Holocaust survivors.

Passage of the Trauma-Informed Modernization of Eldercare for Holocaust Survivors Act (the TIME for Holocaust Survivors Act) will ensure that Holocaust survivors living in the United State have access to the care and services that align with their needs. Specifically, the TIME for Holocaust Survivors Act:

- Creates a definition for “Holocaust survivor” in the Older Americans Act and includes Holocaust survivors as one of the designated groups that have the greatest social need within the Older Americans Act;
- Designates a new Administration for Community Living portfolio that focuses on Holocaust survivors, has responsibility for the provision of services to Holocaust survivors within ACL, and serves as a liaison on these issues with other relevant agencies of the federal government;
- Establishes a national resource center to share best practices, distribute grant funding, and promote person-centered trauma-informed care for local nonprofit agencies that serve all older adults experiencing the long-term and adverse consequences of trauma, including trauma resulting from the Holocaust;
- Ensures that providers of nutrition services can meet the special health-related nutrition needs or other dietary needs based on religious, cultural or ethnic requirements when there is sufficient demand in a community to warrant the provision of special meals; and

- Reports annually to Congress on the status and needs of Holocaust survivors and how the aging network is identifying and serving older adults experiencing the long-term and adverse consequences of trauma.

Contact Stephan Kline, Associate Vice President for Public Policy for The Jewish Federations of North America, at Stephan.Kline@JewishFederations.org, with any questions about the TIME for Holocaust Survivors Act.