

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, May has been nationally designated as Jewish American Heritage Month, celebrating nearly four centuries of Jewish contributions to America's history, society, and culture; and

WHEREAS, the first American Jewish community in the Nation began in 1654 when 23 Jewish passengers arrived in New Amsterdam (now New York City) after fleeing antisemitism and persecution in Portuguese-controlled Brazil; and

WHEREAS, Jewish residents began arriving in Chicago in the 1830s, and in the many years that followed, Jewish Americans have contributed significantly to the cultural, social, and economic fabric of our great City, enriching the lives of all Chicagoans; and

WHEREAS, the Jewish population of Metropolitan Chicago has grown significantly over the years, reaching more than 300,000 Jewish men, women, and children as of 2020; and

WHEREAS, Jewish American Heritage Month was first established in 2006 by President George W. Bush to honor the long history of Jewish Americans and the many contributions of Jewish people to American culture, history, military, science, government, education, and all areas of American life; and

WHEREAS, May 2024 is a significant month to Jewish Americans with several important commemorations, including Yom HaShoah on May 6 and Yom HaAtzmaut on May 14; and

WHEREAS, On May 6, 2024, corresponding to the 27th day of Nisan on the Hebrew calendar, the Jewish community commemorated Yom HaShoah, which marks the beginning of the 1943 Warsaw Ghetto Uprising and mourns the murder of six million Jews by the Nazis; and

WHEREAS, the Jewish American experience has been affected dramatically by the Holocaust, with many local Jewish residents being descendants of a Holocaust survivor, victim, or refugee, and the Chicagoland area houses the Illinois Holocaust Museum—a world-renowned educational center dedicated to preserving the legacy of the Holocaust; and

WHEREAS, the proud heritage of Jewish Americans is a reminder of our nation's constitutional commitment to religious freedom and the importance of a dedication to community and history; and

WHEREAS, antisemitic activity is sharply on the rise, with hate and violence against Jewish people reaching record levels across the United States and in Chicago, including a shocking 360% increase nationwide in anti-Jewish hate incidents between October 7, 2023, and January 7, 2024; and

WHEREAS, raising awareness of the inextricable link between the Jewish American experience and the broader American history and culture is a powerful tool towards combating the rising threat of antisemitism in the United States; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, That we, the Mayor and Members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, assembled this twenty-second day of May, 2024, do hereby designate May 2024 as Jewish American Heritage Month, and express appreciation for the significant contributions

made by Jewish Americans to the diverse communities that comprises the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois, and the United States of America.