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SENATE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, During Jewish American Heritage Month, it is
3 fitting for Illinoisans to commemorate and celebrate the
4 essential contributions, sacrifices, and accomplishments that
5 Jewish Americans have made and continue to make in the State;
6 and

7 WHEREAS, Jewish American history spans more than 350
8 years, dating back to the colonial era, and is woven through
9 every part of American history to the present day; and

10 WHEREAS, Jewish people played an integral role in
11 supporting American independence and the religious freedom
12 guaranteed by the U.S. Constitution; and

13 WHEREAS, In the mid-1800s, a wave of German Jewish
14 immigrants, fleeing persecution and economic hardship in
15 search of safety and new opportunity, arrived in the United
16 States; this wave of immigration led to the expansion of
17 Jewish communities across the nation; and

18 WHEREAS, In the late 1800s and early 1900s, Jewish
19 immigration to the United States increased in response to
20 rising antisemitism in Europe and particularly in response to
21 the pogroms in the Russian Empire; more than two million

1 Eastern European Jewish people immigrated to the United States
2 during this time, and these and other immigrants were welcomed
3 by Jewish American Emma Lazarus' poem "The New Colossus" that
4 is inscribed on the Statue of Liberty; and

5 WHEREAS, Beginning in the 1920s, restrictive immigration
6 policies stemmed the flow of new immigrants to the United
7 States, leading to the United States' tragic refusal to accept
8 refugees from Nazi Germany, leaving many unable to escape the
9 Holocaust; and

10 WHEREAS, Jewish Americans and Jewish immigrants to America
11 have contributed to every aspect of American culture and
12 history, including education, science, business, philanthropy,
13 politics, civil rights, and the arts; and

14 WHEREAS, There are many key Jewish American figures in
15 Illinois history, including Governor Henry Horner, Governor
16 Samuel Shapiro, Governor JB Pritzker, and philanthropist
17 Julius Rosenwald; and

18 WHEREAS, Jewish Americans' cultural backgrounds, degree of
19 religious observance, economic security, and political
20 perspectives are as diverse as the nation itself; and

21 WHEREAS, In light of heightened antisemitism in America

1 and abroad, expressed openly and violently, it is crucial that
2 the history, heritage, and culture of Jewish Americans be
3 better known, understood, and valued; and

4 WHEREAS, Jewish American Heritage Month is an opportunity
5 to celebrate the vitality and importance of Jewish Illinoisans
6 whose achievements and contributions enrich our culture,
7 commerce, governance, economy, and education and all aspects
8 of community life in the State; therefore, be it

9 RESOLVED, BY THE SENATE OF THE ONE HUNDRED FOURTH GENERAL
10 ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we declare May 2025 as
11 Jewish American Heritage Month in the State of Illinois.