



Legislation Text

File #: Res 0194-2014, **Version:** *

Res. No. 194

Resolution calling upon the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign into law legislation that would prohibit companies and their affiliates who profited from the Holocaust and have not yet paid restitution, from being awarded government contracts.

By Council Members Kallos, Levine, Johnson, Cabrera, Chin and Koslowitz

Whereas, According to an estimate by Francis Nicosia in the Columbia Guide to the Holocaust, the total death toll of the Holocaust, which was perpetrated by Nazi Germany and its allies, was over 17 million people, including 6 million Jews, 3 million Soviet Prisoners of War, 2 million ethnic Poles, and 1.5 million Romani; and

Whereas, Such a large and complex killing infrastructure would not have been possible without the collaboration of major corporations that also profited significantly from their involvement; and

Whereas, According to investigative journalist Edwin Black, these corporations included, among others, IBM, which created the punch card system that allowed the Nazis to track prisoners as they were captured and transported to concentration camps, and similar allegations have been made at Yad Vashem, the Holocaust memorial in Israel, against corporations such as the pharmaceutical company Bayer, which was part of IG Farben that tested lethal chemicals on concentration camp prisoners, and Siemens, which helped construct concentration camps and profited from the use of slave labor; and

Whereas, Although in the aftermath of World War II some of the executives at German corporations were tried and sentenced at the Nuremberg trials for their collaboration, many foreign collaborators were not held to account for their horrendous actions, and many of the companies have either not paid any restitution to their victims and their families, only paid a token amount, and/or have not admitted to any guilt or liability even

though their current size and success is in part based on the large profits that they secured during the war; and

Whereas, This is a gross injustice that must be corrected, both to address the crimes of the past, and to ensure that corporations know that they will be held to account if they engage in similar collaborations in the future; and

Whereas, An important way to hold these corporations to account would be to change New York State procurement law to disallow any company or its affiliate that profited from the Holocaust and has not paid proper restitution from being awarded a state or local government contract; and

Whereas, Maryland State Senator Joan Conway has introduced Senate Bill 754 in the Maryland State Senate which would prohibit government agencies in Maryland from entering into contracts with private entities that participated in the Holocaust but have not paid reparations to its victims; and

Whereas, New York State should join this movement to ensure that victims and their families are compensated, and to help ensure that corporations are held accountable for their actions in the future; now, therefore, be it

Resolved, That the Council of the City of New York calls upon the New York State Legislature to pass, and the Governor to sign into law legislation that would prohibit companies and their affiliates who profited from the Holocaust and have not yet paid restitution, from being awarded government contracts.

AM
LS 1080
4/25/2014