

**Subject:** Testimony re: The Holocaust and Genocide, SB 664

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee,

This email represents my written testimony for the Senate Education Committee's meeting on 2/20/2019 regarding Holocaust and genocide education.

It is my understanding that the Committee recently had the honor of hearing from the late Holocaust survivor Alter Wiener. I was a long-time personal friend of Mr. Wiener and know his life story well. I have attended more of his live presentations than anyone else on Earth (more than one hundred) spanning from the year 2000 until shortly before his passing in late 2018.

Prior to his passing in December 2018, he entrusted in me the movie rights to his life story as reflected in his book "64735: From a Name to a Number." I do presentations in schools and elsewhere, like Mr. Wiener did, in which I briefly describe my parents' narrow escapes from Nazi-occupied Austria, then launch into the telling of Mr. Wiener's life story as closely as possible to the way he used to tell it.

Further, I am the administrator of his website <http://alterwiener.com> and administrator of his book's Facebook page <https://www.facebook.com/fromaname>.

You can find his book on Amazon by going to [www.fromaname.com](http://www.fromaname.com). Allow me to encourage you to read some of the customer reviews in order to get an idea of how impactful the lessons from the Holocaust are on adults and children alike.

I have seen first-hand the effects Mr. Wiener's life story had on people. Of particular note is how impactful it was on school-aged children ranging from elementary school students to high school seniors. Children would often run up to him after his talk, hug him tenderly, and cry uncontrollably while saying how grateful they were to learn about the Holocaust. I know that Mr. Wiener received well over one hundred letters from students who had plans to commit suicide until they heard him speak or read his book, then changed their minds and refrained from killing themselves. They realized that their problems paled in comparison to what Holocaust prisoners went through during World War Two.

When I speak and tell Mr. Wiener's life story, I get similar reactions. I discuss how few states have Holocaust mandates in their primary education curricula, and the audiences agree with me that that is a shame. I make sure they know how lucky they are that their school feels strongly enough about the subject that they dedicate class time and/or assembly time to educate them about the Holocaust.

It is my fervent hope that the Senate Education Committee will enthusiastically pick up the ball presented by Rep. Wagner, the remarkable young Claire Sarnowski, and Mr. Wiener and bring to the Senate floor SB 664 with a Do Pass recommendation, helping make Oregon one of the proud, progressive states in which Holocaust and genocide education are mandatory.

Sen. Hass declared to me a few years ago that he is "all in." I trust that is still true and that he and the rest of the committee will recognize the importance of teaching about oppression, scapegoating, genocide, prejudice, stereotyping, and the other lessons to be learned from the Holocaust and other genocides.

Thank you for your consideration of this important matter. Feel free to contact me if you have questions or want additional information -- or if you want to invest in the movie project!

Respectfully,

Philip Mandel

Producer: "From a Name to a Number"

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