

My name is Evelyn Banko. For many years I have been a speaker, a donor, a board member of the Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education, a docent at the Holocaust Memorial and a retired educator. Thank you for this opportunity to testify today in support of the cultural projects put forward by the Cultural Advocacy Coalition to receive Community Resource Economic Funding through the State Budget.

I want to emphasize how important this expansion is for our visitors especially children and adolescents.

I have spoken to thousands of students and adults for the past 27 years about my experiences as a survivor and that of my family members that perished in the Holocaust. Our group of survivors has dwindled to only a few of us that were children during that time. Thankfully the second and third generation are providing opportunities to make certain these personal histories continue to be told

Hate crimes in the United States and around the world are becoming more prevalent and the lessons of the Holocaust are more important than ever.

The importance of having the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education that creates exhibits and develops curriculum to teach the lessons of the Holocaust and other atrocities, is extremely relevant to our community. Media, speakers and exhibits emphasize the consequences of hate and discrimination that occurred in the past and continues today. Explanation, collaboration and conversation helps visitors to recognize what can be done in the present to prevent it from happening again.

The museum already has a small space for Holocaust Education and another that tells of Oregon's past discrimination against Native Americans, Asians, Blacks, Jews, and others throughout the years and what we, as students and adults, can do to help to alleviate hate in any form.

The enlargement of the Oregon Jewish Museum and Center for Holocaust Education would create a much bigger space that explains and reflects on Oregon History in a way that is even more educational, interactive and meaningful.

We can provide additional programs to meet the needs of our community and hopefully effect positive changes by providing education on what each of us can do to become more actively anti-racist.

Thank you