



September 16, 2020

Sunset Advisory Commission  
Attn: THGC  
P.O. Box 13066  
Austin, Texas 78711

Dear Sunset Advisory Commission:

The Dallas Holocaust and Human Rights Museum is a grateful beneficiary of the Texas Holocaust and Genocide Commission (“THGC”). With THGC’s support, the Museum increases awareness of the Holocaust and other genocides for Texas students, educators, and the public. THGC has helped the Museum create, conserve, and increase public access to educational resources that inspire students, visitors, and the community to be Upstanders against hatred, prejudice, and indifference, and stand up for the rights of others.

THGC has historically played a vital role in making important programs, projects, and initiatives possible at the Museum. As this support stretches nearly a decade, we would like to highlight for the Sunset Commission some of the most recent accomplishments made possible with the support of the Texas Holocaust and Genocide Commission.

In 2018, the Museum undertook conservation and restoration of the Museum’s seminal artifact, a Holocaust-era Belgian boxcar, the first one brought to the United States. This was made possible with funds from THGC. The THGC also provided funding so that the Museum could clean, pack, and preserve concentration camp uniforms to be safely displayed in the Museum. Because of this support, these artifacts will be critical teaching tools in the Museum for years to come.

THGC supported the creation and production of ten large-scale graphic novels for the Museum’s *Ten Stages of Genocide* gallery. Each of these stages, as defined by Dr. Gregory Stanton, are illustrated in a graphic novel that tells a story of how that stage affected individuals in the context of a historical genocide. These graphic novels raise awareness among students and visitors about genocides and educate them on how genocide occurs. Copies are available in a digital version and print version to educate students across the state, region, and country.

Most recently, THGC granted funding for equipment for Virtual Student Field Trips of the Museum. With this support, the Museum was able to purchase equipment, which could not have been afforded amid COVID-19 revenue losses, to bring the important lessons about the history of the Holocaust, the emergence of human rights after the war, the history of genocide, and America’s own civil rights journey to students, whether they continue virtual learning or resume classroom learning.

The purpose of THGC remains important, as a recent *U.S. Millennial Holocaust Knowledge and Awareness Survey*, commissioned by the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, revealed a concerning lack of basic Holocaust knowledge among U.S. Millennials and Gen Z. Although more than 40,000 concentration camps and ghettos existed in Europe during the Holocaust, 55% of respondents in Texas and 48% of national respondents could not name a single camp or ghetto. Approximately half, 49%, of U.S. Millennials and Gen Z have witnessed Holocaust denial or distortion on social media. 59% of national respondents stated they believe something like the Holocaust could happen again. Among respondents, 80% believe it is important to teach about the Holocaust.

Governor Abbott's wisdom in adding Holocaust Remembrance Week for Texas schools has increased the important role of THGC, as schools and educators will need resources to provide students with fact-based, meaningful, and life-changing Holocaust and genocide education. Learning our history and being aware of our past is vital to ensuring that "never again" means something. Education is the key to our future - from it we learn hope, we garner strength, and we inspire future generations to accept nothing less than a better world for us all.

The Texas Holocaust and Genocide Commission holds a unique and important role in educating the state of Texas, without which there would be a significant lack in education and funding for education which will be felt across the state and region. In order for Holocaust education mandates to significantly impact students, there must be funding to support teacher training and curriculum for this education.

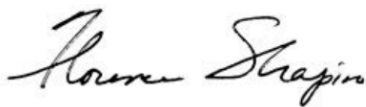
Sincerely,



Mary Pat Higgins  
President and CEO



Frank Risch  
Board Chair



The Honorable Florence Donald Shapiro  
Immediate Past Board Chair



Kerri Cleghorn Lai, CFRE  
Chief Advancement and External Affairs Officer