

Members:
(alphabetical order)

Agudath Israel
World Organization
אגודת ישראל העולמית

American Jewish Committee
הוועד היהודי האמריקאי

American Gathering/
Federation of Jewish
Holocaust Survivors
האסיפה האמריקאית
של ניצולי שואה

American Jewish Joint
Distribution Committee
הוועדה היהודית אמריקאית
המשותפת להקצאות (גוינט)

B'nai B'rith International
בני ברית העולמי

Center of Organizations
of Holocaust Survivors in Israel
מרכז הארגונים של ניצולי
שואה בישראל

Conference of European Rabbis
ועידת רבני אירופה

Conference on Jewish
Material Claims
Against Germany
הועידה של תביעות יהודיות
חומריות מגרמניה

EJC/ECJC
Joint European Delegation
המועצה האירופאית
של קהילות יהודיות/הקונגרס היהודי
האירופאי/משלחת אירופאית משותפת

Jewish Agency for Israel
הסוכנות היהודית לארץ ישראל

World Jewish Congress
הקונגרס היהודי העולמי

World Zionist Organization
ההסתדרות הציונית העולמית

Advocates on behalf of Jews in
Russia, Ukraine, the Baltic
States & Eurasia
הוועד הלאומי למען יהודים
ברוסיה, אוקראינה והמדינות
הבלטיות ואירואסיה

April 6, 2016

The Honorable John Cornyn
The Honorable Charles Schumer
The Honorable Ted Cruz
The Honorable Richard Blumenthal

Dear Senators,

I am writing to you in strong support of the "Holocaust
Expropriated Art Recovery Act of 2016."

In addition to our efforts regarding restitution of immovable
property in the former communist countries, the World
Jewish Restitution Organization (WJRO) in cooperation with
the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany
(Claims Conference) works worldwide toward the restitution
of Jewish-owned art, Judaica and other cultural property
stolen or destroyed during the Holocaust. This includes such
cultural property held in the United States.

We have for many years encouraged U.S. museums to live
up to the spirit of the Washington Conference Principles, the
Terezin Declaration, and the Guidelines of the American
Alliance of Museums (AAM). It has become clear,
however, that when such art is located in the United States,
federal legislation is needed to help ensure that the victims
of Nazi-confiscated art theft will have their claims
considered on the merits.

This past year we issued a *Report Concerning Current
Approaches of United States Museums to Holocaust-Era Art
Claims*, authored with the pro-bono assistance of the
American law firm Dickstein Shapiro LLP. The report
demonstrated that major U.S. museums have recently been

asserting defenses, such as statute of limitations, to avoid resolving on the merits claims by Holocaust victims and their heirs for the restitution of art looted by the Nazis. Use of these procedural defenses is an attempt to defeat claims for the restitution of art stolen by the Nazis by avoiding any adjudication of the substance of those claims. The report called for the enactment of legislation to extend statutes of limitation for Holocaust-era restitution claims.

(See <http://wjro.org.il/cms/assets/uploads/2015/12/ReportMuseums.pdf>)

We therefore greatly applaud and strongly support your efforts through this legislation to ensure that justice is afforded to Holocaust victims of Nazi art theft by affording them the opportunity to press their cases on the merits. Enactment of this legislation will also ensure that the United States continues its moral leadership in this area.

Thank you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Gideon Taylor". The signature is written in dark ink on a light-colored background.

Gideon Taylor
Chair of Operations
World Jewish Restitution Organization