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January 31, 2018

Consul General Maciej Golubiewski
 Consulate General of the Republic of Poland in New York
 233 Madison Avenue
 New York, NY 10016

Maciej
 Dear Consul General Golubiewski,

As the representative organization for New York's 1.4 million member Jewish community, the Jewish Community Relations Council of New York (JCRC-NY) is deeply disturbed by draft legislation concerning the Holocaust, which passed the Sejm of the Republic of Poland on Friday, January 26, 2018.

There is no doubt that Nazi Germany engineered and perpetrated the murder of 6 million European Jews – nearly half of them Poles – largely by establishing extermination camps on occupied Polish soil. While some righteous Poles provided assistance to their Jewish neighbors and established resistance groups against the Nazis, others bear direct or indirect responsibility for crimes perpetrated against the Jews during the Second World War. Polish anti-Semitism in the 1930s and 1940s is as well-known as the anti-Jewish pogroms that occurred in at least 15 eastern Poland towns and cities during and after the Holocaust in which thousands of Jews were murdered by Polish citizens. We cannot, in good conscience, ignore their memory.

The legal prohibition of such acknowledgement would be historically inaccurate and a gross misrepresentation of the role played by Poles during the Holocaust. If passed, it would embolden those who promote Holocaust denial and decidedly handicap Holocaust research in Poland. As the Spanish philosopher George Santayana notably said, "Those who do not remember the past are condemned to repeat their mistakes." Governments must shed light on their own painful history in order to build an inclusive, tolerant, and understanding society.

We sincerely hope that this legislation does not become law. Such revisionism amounts to a historical injustice and fails to serve the interests of the Polish people at large. We encourage the Polish government to actively pursue Holocaust education to better inform complex discussions about Poland's actions during World War II.

Sincerely,

Michael S. Miller
 Executive Vice President and CEO

Noam Gilboord
 Director, Israel and Int'l Affairs

JCRC-NY is a Proud Partner of the UJA-Federation of New York.

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