



## Legislation Text

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**File #:** RES 21-760, **Version:** 1

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Recognizing May 2021 as Jewish American Heritage Month and honoring the contributions of Jewish Americans to Saint Paul.

WHEREAS on April 20, 2006 President George W. Bush proclaimed the month of May as Jewish American Heritage Month; and

WHEREAS annual proclamations have been made since then by Presidents Bush, Obama, Trump and most recently by President Joe Biden on April 30, 2021; and

WHEREAS a small group of German Jewish Reform families in Saint Paul were the first Jewish settlers in Minnesota; and

WHEREAS they founded the first synagogue in the state, Mount Zion Hebrew Association (now known as Mount Zion Temple) in 1856, two years before Minnesota achieved statehood; and

WHEREAS another wave of two hundred Russian Jewish refugees, fleeing the persecution of Czar Alexander III, came to Saint Paul in 1882 where many settled on the lower West Side; and

WHEREAS in 1893, the Hebrew Ladies Benevolent Society established an Industrial School to teach new skills and “American ways” to the Jewish refugees on the West Side Flats; and

WHEREAS by 1897, the school, now known as the Neighborhood House, began catering to adults as well, and it was quickly realized the needs of the community extended beyond the Jewish population and in 1903, it reorganized to become a non-sectarian center, providing a number of services to the residents of the West Side Flats; and

WHEREAS in 1972, Saint Paul elected its first Jewish Mayor, Larry Cohen, for a position that had until then been an Irish Catholic stronghold; and

WHEREAS in 2020, the Jewish population of Minneapolis and Saint Paul was 64,800, a growth rate of 23% since 2004; and

WHEREAS Jewish Americans and their families have built lives in Saint Paul for well over a hundred and fifty years and have played essential parts in the civic and community life of our city; now, therefore, be it

RESOLVED that the Saint Paul City Council recognizes May as Jewish American Heritage Month and it expresses its appreciation for the many contributions that Jewish Americans have made to the City of Saint Paul.