

Congress of the United States

Washington, DC 20515

September 23, 2026

The Honorable Marco Rubio
Secretary
Department of State
2201 C St. NW
Washington, DC 20520

Dear Secretary Rubio,

As members of the Congressional Jewish Caucus, we write to urge you to immediately appoint a new Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues (SEHI) and to preserve SEHI as a distinct, permanent office led by a dedicated career State Department official.

Since its establishment in 1999, the Office of the Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues has been the only office in the federal government solely devoted to pursuing justice for Holocaust survivors and advocating on their behalf. The office has also been supported on a bipartisan basis in Congress and administrations of both parties have actively affirmed its importance. For decades, SEHI has worked with foreign governments, international institutions, and Jewish organizations to pursue restitution and compensation for survivors and their families, recover Nazi-looted property, preserve Holocaust memory, and address unresolved Holocaust-era obligations. As the number of living Holocaust survivors continues to decline, this work is only becoming more urgent.

That is why we oppose any effort to consolidate or eliminate SEHI and are troubled by the reported plan for the Office of the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism (SEAS) to absorb the SEHI office.

SEHI and SEAS have clearly distinct mandates and responsibilities. SEAS is responsible for confronting contemporary antisemitism around the world, while SEHI focuses on Holocaust-era restitution, historical justice, remembrance, and accountability. These missions are complementary, but they are not interchangeable. Both are full-time responsibilities that require full-time principals with unique areas of focus and full-time staff with unique expertise. Combining them would not streamline efficiency or eliminate any meaningful duplication; it would risk diminishing the focus, experience, and institutional capacity necessary for each.

The effort is also especially troubling given the highly specialized nature of SEHI's work and the longstanding success of having it led by a career diplomat with the expertise and continuity necessary to conduct sensitive restitution negotiations. The SEHI portfolio requires deep institutional knowledge, advanced diplomatic acumen, and sustained relationships with governments and international organizations. This unique mandate needs an independent office, fully integrated within the Bureau of European and Eurasian Affairs, and without additional or perhaps superseding agenda items both with external interlocutors and internal stakeholders.

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Strong institutions must outlast individual officeholders and administrations. We are troubled by the suggestion that the plan to merge these offices may be motivated, at least in part, by a desire to expand the influence of certain personnel within the State Department.

Jewish organizations across the ideological and institutional spectrum have recognized the importance of maintaining a dedicated SEHI. In their letter to you, leading organizations including the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany, World Jewish Restitution Organization, American Jewish Committee, Anti-Defamation League, B'nai B'rith International, and more urged you to appoint a senior diplomat promptly and preserve the uniqueness of this important office.¹ Their concern is shared by former SEAS² and Holocaust experts³ who understand that preserving the distinct mission of SEHI is not bureaucratic duplication—it is an essential part of the United States' commitment to Holocaust survivors and their families.

We urge you to heed their call and to reject any effort to eliminate, consolidate, or dual-hat the SEHI position. Instead, we ask that you appoint, as soon as possible, a senior career State Department official whose sole and full-time responsibility is serving as Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues. That official should have the seniority, diplomatic experience, and specialized expertise necessary to negotiate complex restitution and compensation matters and to maintain the relationships that SEHI has built over decades.

This appointment should be made with urgency. The recent departure of Special Envoy Germain creates a vacancy at precisely the moment when continuity is most important. There are fewer Holocaust survivors with each passing year. Every delay risks losing opportunities for restitution, accountability, and historical preservation that may never return.

The United States created SEHI because Holocaust survivors and their families require a dedicated advocate within our government. That need has not diminished. It has become more urgent. We urge you to put an end to the effort to consolidate these offices and to appoint a new, dedicated, career Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues without delay.

Sincerely,



Jerrold Nadler
Member of Congress



Bradley Scott Schneider
Member of Congress

¹ <https://www.jta.org/2026/06/18/united-states/trump-envoys-push-to-eliminate-standalone-holocaust-office-divides-jewish-leaders>

² <https://www.jta.org/2026/06/29/ideas/i-served-america-in-the-fight-against-antisemitism-heres-why-that-fight-is-at-risk>

³ <https://www.jta.org/2026/06/18/united-states/trump-envoys-push-to-eliminate-standalone-holocaust-office-divides-jewish-leaders>

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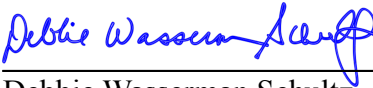
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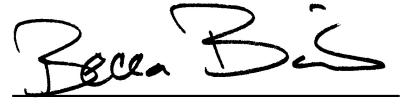
Eugene Simon Vindman
Member of Congress



Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress



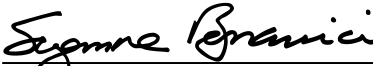
Becca Balint
Member of Congress



Sara Jacobs
Member of Congress



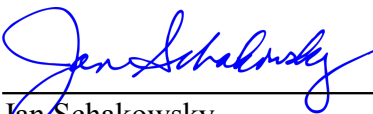
Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress



Suzanne Bonamici
Member of Congress



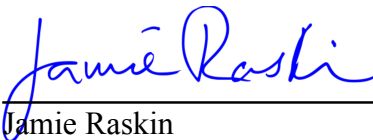
Greg Landsman
Member of Congress



Jan Schakowsky
Member of Congress



Jared Moskowitz
Member of Congress



Jamie Raskin
Member of Congress



Mike Levin
Member of Congress

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A black ink signature of Dan Goldman, consisting of a large, stylized 'D' followed by a series of connected loops and a final horizontal stroke.

Dan Goldman
Member of Congress

A blue ink signature of Kim Schrier, featuring a cursive 'K' and 'S' followed by a horizontal line.

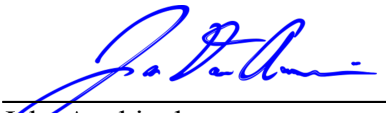
Kim Schrier, M.D.
Member of Congress

A black ink signature of Laura Friedman, written in a cursive script.

Laura Friedman
Member of Congress

A blue ink signature of Lois Frankel, written in a cursive script.

Lois Frankel
Member of Congress

A blue ink signature of Jake Auchincloss, featuring a cursive 'J' and 'A' followed by a horizontal line.

Jake Auchincloss
Member of Congress