WHEREAS, Anti-Semitism is a virulent, disgraceful, and ancient form of hate that persists today specifically targeting Jewish people, and has resulted in violence, sometimes widespread and organized, including, but not limited to, assault, murder, and genocide, as well as discrimination, illegal harassment, and other acts inimical to a pluralistic, diverse society in which everyone’s rights and dignity are respected and upheld; and

WHEREAS, There is an alarming rise of anti-Semitism across the world and in the United States that comes from across the ideological spectrum; and

WHEREAS, Anti-Semitism is not limited to historic forms of hatred or prejudice against the Jewish people on account of their religion or ethnicity, but includes new forms such as those outlined in the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s Working Definition of Antisemitism (IHRA Definition); and

WHEREAS, The IHRA Definition is an accurate and helpful definition of anti-Semitism that has been adopted by scores of entities worldwide, including, but not limited to, governments, diverse and international religious leadership councils, international governing bodies, institutions of higher education, state departments, and more; and

WHEREAS, History teaches that anti-Semitism cannot go unchecked if a pluralistic, democratic society is to prevail, and must be combatted through various means, including education, legal avenues, and state-sponsored awareness events and days; and

WHEREAS, The State of Rhode Island is obligated to identify and condemn anti-
Whereas, adopting the IHRA Definition is a very important first step but does not suffice in combatting anti-Semitism; and

Whereas, multiple United States’ administrations have adopted the IHRA Definition, and the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island, the Rhode Island Coalition for Israel, The Sandra Bornstein Holocaust Education Center, the Chabad Center of West Bay Chai Center, and the Va’ad Harabbonim (Council of Orthodox Rabbis) have all adopted the IHRA Definition; and

Whereas, April 7-8, 2021, is Yom HaShoah, the Holocaust Remembrance Day on the Jewish calendar, and the subject of interfaith memorial events; now, therefore be it

Resolved, that this Senate of the State of Rhode Island hereby declares Yom HaShoah an annual Anti-Semitism Awareness Day beginning on April 8, 2021, and continuing to recognize indefinitely this day on each date it falls on the Jewish Calendar; and be it further

Resolved, that this Senate hereby calls on all levels of state and local government to adopt the IHRA Working Definition of Anti-Semitism, with examples, in 2021, in an effort to help lead the movement to combat the spread of anti-Semitism and further declares Anti-Semitism Awareness Day a state-recognized event; and be it further

Resolved, that the Secretary of State be and hereby is authorized and directed to transmit duly certified copies of this resolution to Mr. James Pious, Chair, the Jewish Alliance of Greater Rhode Island, Ms. Mary Greene, President, The Sandra Bornstein Holocaust Education Center, the Chabad of West Bay Chai Center, Rabbi Raphael Schochet, Va’ad Ha’ad Harabbonim, the Rhode Island Coalition for Israel, and Rabbi Yossi Laufer, Co-Director, Chabad of West Bay Chai Center.