

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

January 31, 2018

President Andrzej Duda
Chancellery of the President of the Republic of Poland
ul. Wiejska 10
00-902 Warszawa
Poland

Dear President Duda,

As Co-Chairs of the Bipartisan Taskforce for Combating Anti-Semitism, we are alarmed by legislation recently passed by the Sejm and awaiting consideration by the Senate that would criminalize references to Polish complicity in Nazi war crimes against Jews during the occupation of Poland during World War II.

We are deeply concerned that this legislation could have a chilling effect on dialogue, scholarship, and accountability in Poland about the Holocaust, should this legislation become law. Additionally, it is highly troubling that this law was passed on International Holocaust Remembrance Day, a day on which the world speaks openly about the horrors of the Holocaust to ensure such atrocities never happens again.

As we all know, Poland suffered terribly under the brutal occupation by Nazi Germany from 1939 to 1945. In this time, Poland's population was devastated through the murder of almost two million non-Jewish and three million Jewish Poles. Thousands of Polish citizens risked their lives to save Jews during this period, and more than 6,600 have been rightfully recognized as "Righteous Among the Nations" by Yad Vashem.

But, we must acknowledge the numerous documented instances of Poles aiding the Nazis, directly and indirectly, in the murder of innocent Jews. To criminalize anyone who acknowledges this reality would be an injustice. A focus on education, not criminalization, about inaccurate and harmful speech would be more beneficial in resolving this critical issue.

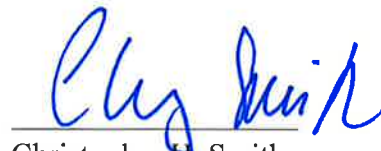
Free speech and open debate are the lifeblood of all democratic countries, especially relating to issues that are the most difficult to reconcile. With rising anti-Semitism throughout Europe, the region is strengthened by Poland's leadership on Holocaust research, such as the work of the Museum of the History of Polish Jews. Passing this legislation is inconsistent with this admirable legacy.

Therefore, we hope that you will speak out against this bill and veto it should it come to your desk. We look forward to engaging with you on this important issue and look forward to your response.

Sincerely,



Nita M. Lowey
Member of Congress



Christopher H. Smith
Member of Congress




Eliot L. Engel
Member of Congress



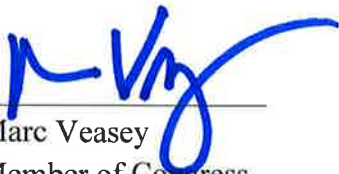
Ileana Ros-Lehtinen
Member of Congress



Ted Deutch
Member of Congress



Kay Granger
Member of Congress



Marc Veasey
Member of Congress



Peter Roskam
Member of Congress