

TOWNSHIP OF TEANECK
BERGEN COUNTY, NJ

104-2021

**AUTHORIZING THE DISPLAY OF THE STAR OF DAVID FLAG ON
TOWNSHIP OWNED FLAGPOLES WITHIN VOTEE PARK AS A FORM
OF GOVERNMENT EXPRESSION**

WHEREAS, acts of hatred and violence against members of the Jewish community have been on the rise in our area and the Township Council wishes to affirm the inherent right of its Jewish residents to live without fear of attacks and hatred; and

WHEREAS, the Township Council has issued Resolution 49-2019 rejecting hate within the township of Teaneck; and

WHEREAS, the rise of Antisemitic actions against Jewish residents in the municipality and throughout our State have risen to dangerous levels, and

WHEREAS, the recipients of such attacks have been targeted merely for support of the State of Israel; and

WHEREAS the flag that is used to target Jews through antisemitic attacks, is seen as a source of symbolism and pride, carried in support of causes of Justice such as Pride Marches, Women's Rights Marches and BLM Marches, by Jews around the globe; and

WHEREAS, bigotry, discrimination, oppression, racism, and imputations of dual loyalty threaten American democracy and have no place in American political discourse; and

WHEREAS, April 15, 2021, the 5th of Iyar, 5781, of the Hebrew calendar, marks the 73rd anniversary of the founding of the modern State of Israel; and

WHEREAS, the desire of the Jewish people to establish an independent modern State of Israel is the outgrowth of the existence of the historic land of Israel established three thousand years ago in the city of Jerusalem and in the land of Israel; and

WHEREAS, on November 29, 1947, the United Nations General Assembly voted to partition the British Mandate of Palestine and, through that vote, to create the State of Israel; and

WHEREAS, three years after the end of World War II and the death of six million Jews in the Holocaust, David Ben Gurion's Declaration of Independence for Israel, made on May 14, 1948, fulfilled a yearning that had remained unrealized for over two millennia; and

WHEREAS, the people of Teaneck have shared an affinity with the people of Israel and the bonds of friendship and cooperation which have existed between Israel and New Jersey for the past seventy-three years and have enriched the cultural diversity of our state's tapestry; and

WHEREAS, the first public display of the Star of David in the Township took place on March 26, 1948 in Whittier School during a presentation entitled, "Jews Belong In Palestine"; and

WHEREAS, the Teaneck Chapter of the American Jewish Congress was formed in September 1953 to among other goals, unite American Jews, to preserve and extend the democratic way of life and to eliminate all forms of racial and religious discrimination; and

WHEREAS, Adolf and Ann Robison were co-chairpersons of Teaneck's 25th anniversary celebration of the State of Israel and were instrumental in the establishment of the State of Israel Bonds Committee headquarters in Teaneck for which dignitaries such as Eleanor Roosevelt and virtually every Israeli foreign minister, ambassador and leading members of the US Senate have appeared; and

WHEREAS, on May 21, 1973, the Township Celebrated the 25th Anniversary of the Founding of the State of Israel with Color Guard, Marches, events and dignitaries from the State and local branches, including the planting of a ceremonial pin oak on the municipal green, accepted by Mayor Burr; and

WHEREAS, the Township of Teaneck has held proclamations in support of the subsequent anniversaries of the State of Israel, including the 50th Anniversary in 1998; and

WHEREAS, Benjamin and Regina Gordon who settled here in 1929 as Teaneck's first Zionists, fighting for the Jewish people against racism and oppression were instrumental in the abolition of restrictive rules in place against selling homes to Jewish residents as seen in newspaper headlines such as the March 8, 1945's Bergen Record front page feature: Jew Buys Ridgewood Home; Agent Escapes \$2,100 Fine; Realtor Board Votes 8-7 Not To Invoke So-Called Ridgewood Code - Family To Move In This Spring and the March 9, 1945 Bergen Record article entitled: "Ridgewood Bias Hit by Hebrews, 15 Delegates at Meeting Hint at Legal Action; and

WHEREAS, David and Ann Synes moved to Teaneck in 1937 and helped establish the Bergen County Coordinating Committee at the Bergen County YMHA for the purpose of bringing refugees into the country, was an active participant in Teaneck's three-week food and clothing drive for the struggling young country after the creation of the State, securing merchandise at his supermarket on Cedar Lane and encouraging other establishments in the township to supply vehicles for the collection and private citizens to donate essentials such as cartons and trucks, which were flown out of Teterboro Airport in a plane supplied by Teaneck's first Jewish Councilman, Adolf Robison; and

WHEREAS, Adolf Robison served as an officer in the Haganah, was awarded the Israel Army's decoration - Itur Lochmi Medinat Yisrael and was a member of the American Veterans of Israel before becoming the first Jewish member of the Teaneck Council where he waged battles against unfair real estate sales and discriminatory housing practices as are recounted in Reginald G. Damerall's book "Triumph in a White Suburb"; and

WHEREAS, Teaneck has been home to many residents and veterans of the State of Israel, such as residents Rudolph and Irene Bloch who fought in the 1948 War of Liberation in Israel where Rudy served as a medic for the Palmach Brigade from 1948-49 under the command of Yitzhak Rabin before returning to Teaneck and becoming chief therapist at Mount Sinai and Hackensack Hospitals, specializing in the rehabilitation of nursing home patients; and

WHEREAS, prior to his tenure as Mayor and Senator, Matthew Feldman worked tirelessly obtaining arms to send to State of Israel when it was fighting its War for Independence and worked in Teaneck to bring groups together; and

WHEREAS, St. Anastasia's Parish Council unanimously passed a resolution stating: "Resolved that the Parish Council, on behalf of the people of St. Anastasia's Church in Teaneck, expresses its concern over

recent U.N. resolutions on Zionism, and that this concern along with a condemnation of every form of anti-Semitism be communicated to the Jewish communities of Teaneck.”; and

WHEREAS, the American Jewish Committee supported the establishment of Israel, United States recognition of the State, and its admission to the United Nations through the work of Teaneck families such as: Abraham, Cowan, Feder, Feldman, Feldstein, Gissen, Goldfarb, LeBoff, Maier, Mendelowitz, Norman, Preuss, Robinson, Rothschild, Singman and Weinberg families, among others; and

WHEREAS, pursuant to Ordinance No. 28-2019 adopted on September 10, 2019, the Township Council established a policy with respect to the display of flags on Township owned flagpoles on public buildings and in public parks and playgrounds by which, in addition to the Flag of the United States, the Township of Teaneck may display such additional flags on Township owned flagpoles on public buildings and in public parks and playgrounds as the Township Council may authorize by resolution as a form of government speech, provided the display of same shall not show religious preference; and

WHEREAS, the Township Council wishes to permit the display of the Flag of the State of Israel upon Township owned flagpoles as a form of government expression;

NOW, THEREFORE, be it Resolved that the Township Council of the Township of Teaneck hereby proclaims April 15, 2021 as THE 73ND ANNIVERSARY OF ISRAEL'S INDEPENDENCE COMMEMORATION DAY; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that by the Township Council of the Township of Teaneck, that, in addition to the Flag of the United States and such other flags as may be authorized by resolution or ordinance of the Township Council, Flag of the State of Israel may be displayed upon the flagpoles owned by the Township of Teaneck at Votee Park as a form of government expression during the month of May 2021 in honor Israel Independence Day.