



# Holocaust Documentation and Education Center, Inc.

A LIVING MEMORIAL THROUGH EDUCATION

February 19, 2009

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The Honorable Barack Obama  
President of the United States of America  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Obama,

This letter is about our dire State-of-Emergency at the Holocaust Documentation and Educational Center, which is a non-for-profit, non-denominational institution representing the second largest Holocaust Survivor population in the United States as well as hundreds of volunteers and an incredibly devoted staff of six. For almost three decades, we have devoted our efforts and goals to teach Florida teachers and students the evils and dangers of hatred and bigotry.

Although we are not "the glitz and the blitz," we have made tremendous strides in our attempt to endow our community with A Legacy of Remembrance. We have helped other Holocaust centers' programs, initiatives, and efforts around the world get started and focused. After all these years, we understood the importance of ensuring our future, and so, we purchased a building in which we will create the first South Florida Holocaust Museum. Funding sources in the state of Florida totally dried up last year, and this year, it seems that wherever we turn - to the state, the foundations, corporations, and individuals, we hit walls.

I am a daughter of a Holocaust Survivor, and I started out at the Center 28 years ago as a volunteer and today serve as its Director. Never did I think almost three decades later, while in the midst of initial construction of the first South Florida Holocaust Museum, we would be facing possible foreclosure. Never did I think that we would have to tell our Survivors that we can't keep our promise to Remember. They not only waited all these years, they gave us their thousands of hours of eyewitness testimony including that of my late and beloved father. They gave us their precious photographs, documents, and artifacts from before and during the Holocaust - in many cases, the only remaining remnants or items from their families who perished in the Holocaust. Now what do we give them?

Acquiring the desperately needed funding through a stimulus package earmarked for the Center would mean that our volunteers, most of whom are elderly, and, of course, our extraordinary Survivors of the Holocaust would continue to have a home, a place to go to that would give meaning and purpose to their lives. It would keep our staff working and give curators, media specialists, IT persons, plumbers, electricians, general contractors, roofers, carpenters, security and maintenance personnel, window, door, and carpet specialists, and service people such as insurers and everyone else that is needed to build and run the Museum **a job and a future**. In addition, the surrounding restaurants and businesses would benefit from all those involved. Students, teachers, school bus drivers, including the community within and beyond as well as tourists, would benefit.

Located at: 2031 Harrison Street, Hollywood, Florida 33020 Telephone: (954) 929-5690 Fax: (954) 929-5635 Email: [info@hdec.org](mailto:info@hdec.org) Website: [www.hdec.org](http://www.hdec.org)

A copy of the official registration and financial information may be obtained from the Division of Consumer Services by calling toll free: 1-800-435-7352 within the state. Registration does not imply endorsement, approval of recommendation by the state.

The Honorable Barack Obama  
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Please please help us keep our doors open. We could become a pilot program through one of your community/city based stimulus packages. Yes, we have drawings and, yes, we are "shovel ready" and, yes, we have chosen a nationally renowned museum design firm called Gallagher & Associates based out of Bethesda, Maryland, which has a wonderful reputation. We are currently in the midst of planning.

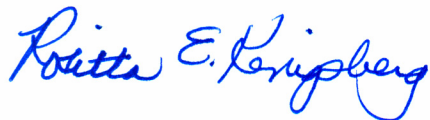
Attached please find our Case Statement explaining the need for this Museum which we know is needed today more than ever before. We need to see change, and we need to see that the Survivor's past will **Never Again** become our grandchildren's and, I mean all our grandchildren's future.

Since we are the gateway to Latin America, the Museum will be the first in the country to tell the story of the Holocaust in English and Spanish.

I could only try to imagine your incredibly challenging and difficult schedule and yet, I am confident because, as a daughter of a Holocaust Survivor, I was taught to believe in miracles. I believe you will respond to the urgency the Holocaust Documentation and Education Center is currently facing, because you, too, have and continue to believe that "Yes, we can."

I look forward to hearing from you.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Rositta E. Kenigsberg". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Rositta E. Kenigsberg  
Executive Vice President

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