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Statement for the Record of Congresswoman Brown

House Natural Resources National Parks, Forests, and Public Lands Subcommittee
Hybrid Legislative Hearing

Thank you, Chairman Neguse and Ranking Member Fulcher, for holding today's legislative hearing to consider H.R. 7618, a bipartisan bill to recognize the Kol Israel Foundation Holocaust Memorial as a national memorial.

Surviving Holocaust victims dedicated the Kol Israel Memorial more than sixty years ago. Located in Bedford Heights, Ohio, the memorial honors the six million Jewish victims of the Nazi regime and its allies and collaborators. Notably, at the foot of the memorial lies six coffins filled with mementos of their loved ones and ashes from the death camps of Europe. Since then, survivors and their families have continuously cared for what is likely the oldest memorial of its kind in the United States.

Given its historical significance, the Kol Israel Memorial deserves to be recognized by Congress. Designating this site as a national memorial ensures that future generations understand the true legacy of this dark chapter in history and reminds us that we must stand against rising antisemitism today.

This legislation comes at no cost to taxpayers and does not establish the memorial as a unit of the National Park Service. The Kol Israel Foundation will retain the oversight and responsibility for the memorial, as it has for six decades.

On May 11, 2022, the Senate Energy and Natural Resources National Parks Subcommittee held a legislative hearing on the Senate companion measure, which Senators Sherrod Brown and Rob Portman led. Additionally, members of my community, the Ohio Governor, the Ohio General Assembly, and prominent local and national stakeholders like the Jewish Federation of Cleveland, the Anti-Defamation League, and the American Jewish Committee have all endorsed my bill, H.R. 7618.

As the Representative serving Ohio's 11th Congressional District, I am honored to represent our district's celebrated Jewish community. Each person, and every victim, has their own story. Now is our opportunity to honor the victims of the Holocaust who call this country home and to remember their bravery, heroism, and everlasting legacy. I thank the Committee for taking swift action on H.R. 7618 on a bipartisan basis.

Sincerely,



Shontel M. Brown
Member of Congress