



THE ASSEMBLY
STATE OF NEW YORK
ALBANY

September 11, 2026

Honorable Claudia Tenney
2230 Independence Ave SW
Washington, DC 20515

RE: Support for National Park Designation for Fort Ontario and Safe Haven
Holocaust Refugee Shelter Museum.

Dear Rep. Tenney:

The purpose of my letter is to express my support to designate Fort Ontario and Safe Haven Holocaust Refugee Shelter Museum in Oswego, New York, as a National Park.

Fort Ontario holds a unique and significant place in American history. From its role in the French and Indian War and the American Revolution to its extraordinary service as the only site in the U.S. to house refugees fleeing the Holocaust during World War II—its history has helped shaped our nation.

From 1944 to 1946, Safe Haven welcomed nearly 1,000 refugees as they fled war-torn Europe. President Franklin D. Roosevelt established the shelter as an example for allied countries to follow and to accept refugees within their own borders. The Fort is said to be where the Holocaust came to America because, in many cases, it was the first time the American public and members of the press encountered victims who survived the horrifying Nazi reign. After their arrival in Oswego, their personal stories of survival circulated in newspapers all across the country and helped educate Americans about the starvation, torture, and persecution. In 1989, Safe Haven, Inc. was founded with the mission of honoring and keeping alive the stories of the Holocaust. This museum has enabled the region, the state, and a larger international community to learn of its significance but National Park status would help its story reach more people throughout the world.

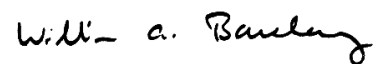
In addition, Fort Ontario has played a significant role in military history since 1756. Throughout the American Revolution, it served as a major British military supply route to other

posts in the upper Great Lakes region. In 1796, the fort was turned over to the United States and later rebuilt to how we know it today.

Today the Fort is supported by the New York State Parks and Historic Sites Department and hosts many events including Wreaths Across America, living history re-enactments of both Revolutionary and Civil Wars, tours for local schools, and a variety of lectures and events. Safe Haven benefits from caring, dedicated volunteers that work to preserve and promote its history but having the National Park status would enable both the Fort and the museum to elevate its status, draw visitors from throughout the world, and bring the type of attention it deserves to make it a true tourist destination.

The centuries of military, cultural and humanitarian significance merits the recognition and protection afforded by this status and for these reasons and others, I fully support the efforts to designate it as a National Park. If I may be of additional assistance, please do not hesitate to reach out to my office.

Very truly yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Will A. Barclay". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Will Barclay
120th Assembly District

WAB/km