



SENATOR FRED DYSON

SPONSOR STATEMENT

SCR 18

A Resolution Establishing August 4, 2012, as Raoul Wallenberg Remembrance Day

The purpose of this Resolution is to establish August 4, 2012, as Raoul Wallenberg Remembrance Day in commemoration of the extraordinary life and sacrifice of this Swedish diplomat, credited with saving more than 100,000 Jews during the Holocaust, on the 100th anniversary of his birth.

Raoul Wallenberg was born August 4, 1912 in Sweden. His father, Raoul Wallenberg Sr., was an officer in the Swedish Navy, and grandfather Gustav Wallenberg was the Swedish Ambassador to Japan. Raoul Wallenberg attended college in the United States, graduating from the University of Michigan in 1935 with a baccalaureate degree in Architectural Design.

In 1939 Wallenberg's business dealings brought him to Hungary, where he began to know the Hungarian Jewish community and became increasingly concerned with the fate of Europe's Jewish communities who were beginning to fall prey to Hitler's advance across Europe. In 1944 during WWII, United States Secretary of State Cordell Hull requested the cooperation of Sweden, a neutral nation, in protecting the lives of 750,000 Hungarian Jews facing extermination at the hands of the Nazis. Raoul Wallenberg agreed to the request, and went to Hungary to protect Jews and victims of the Nazis under his official profession as a Swedish diplomat.

With extraordinary courage and with total disregard for the constant danger to himself, this young diplomat out-dueled Nazi Lieutenant Colonel Adolf Eichmann in Budapest, Hungary from July through December 1944 and miraculously saved more than 100,000 innocent men, women and children from the death camps. Raoul Wallenberg then endured tragic imprisonment and death in a Soviet Gulag in violation of Wallenberg's diplomatic immunity and international law.

The late U.S. Congressman Tom Lantos, rescued by Wallenberg in Budapest, served for several years as economic adviser and chief of staff to former Alaska Congressman Mike Gravel. In 1981 President Ronald Reagan posthumously awarded Mr. Raoul Wallenberg the highest Congressional award making Wallenberg an Honorary Citizen of the United States.

SCR 19 is brought forth in honor of the courageous valor of Raoul Wallenberg whose life demonstrated moral courage and love in the face of incomprehensible evil, and showed us that one person can make a difference.

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