

R E S O L U T I O N

WHEREAS, Jewish Americans have helped shape Chicago since the first Jewish immigrants arrived in the 1840s, contributing to the City's economic, civic, cultural, and social development; and

WHEREAS, early Jewish Chicagoans played a foundational role in building Chicago's commercial sector, with immigrant entrepreneurs establishing Chicago businesses that helped define Chicago's reputation as a national center for retail, manufacturing, and commerce; and

WHEREAS, Jewish residents significantly contributed to the development of Chicago's civic and social-service infrastructure, founding essential institutions such as Michael Reese Hospital, which provided critical health care and social support for generations of Chicagoans; and

WHEREAS, Mount Sinai Hospital, founded in 1912 as Maimonides Hospital to serve Eastern European Jewish Immigrants and reopened in 1919 with a commitment to community-centered care, has grown into a major social safety net hospital on Chicago's West Side, currently a level-1 trauma center and providing vital programs in maternal and child health, community-based services, and emergency medicine, maintaining its role as an anchor healthcare institution and safety-net hospital for some of Chicago's most underserved communities; and

WHEREAS, Jewish Chicagoans have historically been central to labor activism, particularly among Eastern European Jewish immigrants who energized the city's garment and manufacturing sectors and helped organize labor protections for industrial workers during Chicago's growth into a national economic powerhouse; and

WHEREAS, Jewish cultural and educational institutions, numerous historic synagogues, and vibrant neighborhood cultural hubs in areas such as Maxwell Street, Bronzeville, Lawndale, and West Ridge have enriched Chicago's artistic, intellectual, and multicultural landscape; and

WHEREAS, Chicago-born Viola Spolin, daughter of Russian-Jewish immigrants, whose theater games, developed while working with immigrant communities on Chicago's West Side and at Hull House, laid the foundation for modern improv and directly shaped the creation of The Second City through her son Paul Sills, establishing Chicago as the historic and ongoing home of globally influential improv figures; and

WHEREAS, Jewish-American athlete Sid Luckman, longtime quarterback of the Chicago Bears from 1939 to 1950, revolutionized professional football by mastering and advancing the T-formation offense, leading the Bears to four NFL championships (1940, 1941, 1943, 1946) and earning recognition as one of the greatest long-range passers of his era; and

WHEREAS, Chicago-born American-Israeli activist Rachel Goldberg-Polin became one of the most prominent voices advocating for the release of hostages taken during the October 7, 2023 Hamas attacks, following the abduction and later murder of her son, Hersh, and carried her message to world leaders, the United Nations, major international media platforms, and national gatherings, making her a leading symbol of courage, perseverance, and conscience on the world stage; and

WHEREAS, Chicagoan Hannah G. Solomon, founder of the National Council of Jewish Women, distinguished herself as a pioneering leader whose lifelong dedication to organizing communities for social improvement advanced civic welfare on local, national, and international levels; and whose profound contributions, including the establishment of the Jewish Women's Congress, her leadership in expanding social services for women and immigrants, her collaboration with key reformers such as Jane Addams, and her advocacy for child welfare, public health, and community reform, have left an enduring legacy of principled service; and

WHEREAS, Julius Rosenwald, philanthropist, president of Sears, Roebuck & Company, and founder of the Julius Rosenwald Fund, devoted his wealth to advancing educational opportunity and social progress for all, and directed more than \$70 million toward public schools, colleges, universities, museums, Jewish charities, and African American institutions; and partnered with Booker T. Washington to found over 5,000 "Rosenwald Schools" across the rural South through a matching-grant model that empowered local Black communities and transformed access to education during segregation, through the Rosenwald Fund; and he further strengthened America's cultural and intellectual landscape by awarding fellowships to African American artists, writers, scholars advancing a generation of leaders whose contributions shaped the arts, civil rights, and public life; and

WHEREAS, generations of Jewish-American Chicagoans have contributed and continue to contribute to every aspect of life in our beloved city; now, therefore,

BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the Mayor and Members of the City Council of the City of Chicago, assembled this twentieth day of May 2026, do hereby designate the month of May 2026 as Jewish American Heritage Month; formally recognize and honor the historic and ongoing contributions of Jewish Americans who have helped build and strengthen the City's commercial enterprises, cultural institutions, civic leadership, and social fabric; and reaffirm our commitment to supporting and celebrating the Jewish community, combating antisemitism in all its forms, and continuing to uplift the legacy of Jewish Americans in Chicago; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the people of Chicago are encouraged to celebrate Jewish American Heritage Month through education, reflection, and the promotion of cultural understanding, in recognition of the profound and lasting contributions of Jewish Americans to our City and the nation.