



Nancy Pelosi  
Speaker of the House

August 6, 2021

Her Excellency Elżbieta Witek  
Speaker of the Sejm of the Republic of Poland  
Chancellery of the Sejm  
ul. Wiejska 4/6/8  
00-902 Warsaw

Your Excellency:

It was a great honor to join you in January 2020 for a wreath-laying ceremony at Auschwitz-Birkenau to pay tribute to the lives lost to the Holocaust and commemorate 75 years since the liberation of the concentration camp. The powerful memorial, on grounds scarred by nearly unspeakable evil, was deeply and personally moving – and it is one I will always remember.

Today I am writing to share my strong concern about legislation pending before the Sejm that would bar new claims challenging illegal property seizures during the Communist era. Even with amendments adopted by the Senate, the bill would foreclose the possibility for Jewish and non-Jewish claimants with currently pending cases to seek recovery of their property, including Polish survivors of the Holocaust who filed claims many years ago.

Property restitution and justice for Holocaust victims and survivors is a broadly supported priority for the United States Congress. We were gratified that Poland joined with 46 other countries in 2009 to endorse the Terezin Declaration on Holocaust Era Assets, committing to rectify the consequences of wrongful property seizures. Both the status quo and the pending new law run counter to prior commitments that Poland took upon itself by endorsing the Terezin Declaration.

Holocaust survivors, and other rightful owners, who fled Poland to escape Antisemitism or Communist rule have waited decades for justice resulting from the confiscation or nationalization of their property by the Communist government. I hope you will use every possible tool to ensure that this bill is not enacted into law and that no new barriers are imposed for Holocaust survivors and others seeking to recover their property or to receive just compensation.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. I look forward to your prompt response.

best regards,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Nancy Pelosi".

NANCY PELOSI  
Speaker of the House

cc: H.E. Andrzej Duda, President, Republic of Poland