

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

May 12, 2010

The Honorable John Conyers, Jr.  
Chairman  
House Judiciary Committee  
2138 Rayburn HOB  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Conyers:

We are writing to request that the Judiciary Committee hold a hearing on H.R. 4596, the Holocaust Insurance Accountability Act. We commend you for your cosponsorship of this important legislation. As you know, this bill would help Holocaust survivors and heirs recover on policies sold by insurance companies to their families before WWII, but where benefits have never been paid.

Recent court decisions have held that states do not have the authority to assist survivors of the Holocaust to recover benefits from policies lost or stolen before and during these tragic events, finding that such actions are preempted by "federal executive policy." This is not only unjust to Holocaust survivors and victims' families, but allows global insurers to retain billions of dollars in unjust enrichment.

Furthermore, the proposition that citizens' rights to pursue traditional claims under state laws – such as recovery on unpaid insurance policies – can be preempted through statements of executive branch officials, encroaches on Congressional prerogatives and contravenes core values of federalism. We believe this Committee should address these unprecedented court decisions and restore the proper balance of power.

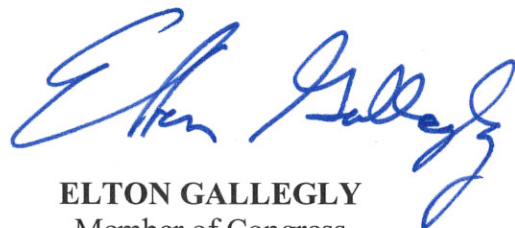
Opponents of H.R. 4596 argue that legislation is unnecessary because the International Commission on Holocaust Era Claims (ICHEIC) was responsible for processing survivors' insurance claims. The ICHEIC process was seriously flawed and data show that only a fraction of the amounts owed by insurance companies may have been paid. A hearing would provide an important forum for the views of Holocaust survivors and families whose rights have been denied.

As you know, nearly 65 years have passed since the end of World War II. Most Holocaust survivors are now in their 80s, and many are suffering in poverty and poor health. We have a moral obligation to work without any further delay to consider this legislation and bring a proper level of transparency and closure to survivors and heirs, by restoring their rights and allowing them to pursue justice in the American courts.

Sincerely,



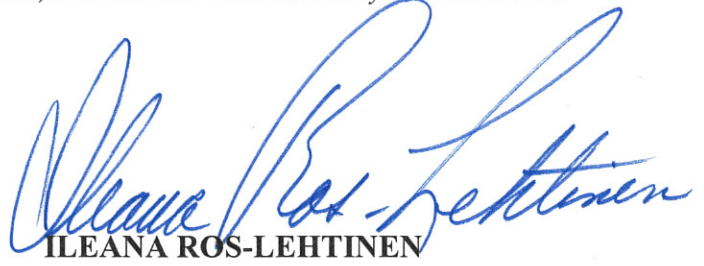
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Member of Congress



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