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Oregon Senate Unanimously Passes Bill Establishing Holodomor Remembrance Day

Senate Bill 583 would create an annual day of remembrance for the intentional starving of the Ukrainian people by the Soviet Union from 1932 to 1933

SALEM – Yesterday, the Oregon Senate unanimously passed [Senate Bill 583](#) – sponsored by Senate President Rob Wagner (D-Lake Oswego) – which designates the fourth Saturday of every November as Holodomor Remembrance Day. The Holodomor, which means "death by starvation" in Ukrainian, was an intentional famine of the people of Ukraine by Joseph Stalin and the Soviet Union from 1932 to 1933.

The bill aims to raise awareness of one of the greatest losses of human life in the 20th century.

“There are many lessons to learn from the Holodomor, but one I hope we can all take to heart is the importance of taking action, any action, to combat injustice when we are faced with it,” **Senate President Rob Wagner (D-Lake Oswego)** said. “While it’s too late to stop the famine, we can make sure that we never forget.”

Through the policies of forced agricultural collectivization and grain seizures, which were enforced by state-sponsored brutality, between 4 million and 7 million Ukrainians starved to death while the grain grown in their fields was being sold by the Soviet Union around the world.

Historical records indicate the purpose of the famine was to destroy the will of the Ukrainian people to oppose Soviet rule.

“Even though our government’s not perfect, we have a very good system in place that brings checks and balances and keeps tyranny at bay if we are vigilant,” **Sen. Kim Thatcher (R-Keizer)** said. “Let’s be vigilant and remember what happened to these Ukrainians back in 1932 and 1933 and not let this repeat ever again, anywhere.”

Today, the United States and 23 other countries recognize the Holodomor as a genocide, while Russia still denies it ever occurred.

“If we care about people remembering the Holocaust, we have to care about every other genocide just as we are caring today and demonstrating that the people of this state care deeply about the Holodomor and the ongoing plight of the Ukrainians,” **Sen. Elizabeth Steiner (D-Portland/Beaverton)** said.

The passage of SB 583 comes as Russia is again committing atrocities against the people of Ukraine. In the year since the war began, Ukrainian children have been abducted to re-education camps, likely war crimes were committed by Russian soldiers in cities such as Bucha, and Russian artillery has targeted civilians on countless occasions.

“It’s important for us to remember how genocide happens because you have to stop it before it begins,” **Sen. Brian Boquist (I-rural Polk and Yamhill counties)** said. “The people who are seeing death in person and smelling death in person ... know that you must stop it before it begins.”

Listen to the full remarks [here](#). The bill now moves to the House of Representatives.

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