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STEINBERG RESPONDS TO HAYS' REMARK COMPARING ABORTION TO THE HOLOCAUST

TALLAHASSEE, Fla. -- Representative Richard Steinberg (D-Miami Beach) today called on Representative Alan Hays (R-Umatilla) to issue an immediate and formal apology to the members of the Florida House of Representatives and the citizens of Florida for a highly inappropriate remark made during deliberations on House Bill 1143, a measure dealing with abortion restrictions.

Representative Hays made a comment comparing an abortion to the atrocities of the Holocaust, offending numerous members of the Florida House of Representatives. Representative Hays is quoted as saying: "What are we as a society going to say years from now about the killing of more than 50 million babies since Roe v. Wade. How can you find the Holocaust so revolting and be opposed to this bill."

Some important facts about the Holocaust:

- It is estimated that 11 million people were killed during the Holocaust. Six million of these people were Jews.
- Nazis killed approximately two-thirds of all Jews living in Europe.

- An estimated 1.1 million children were murdered in the Holocaust.

“It is with great sadness and disgust that one of my colleagues in the Florida House of Representatives made a despicable remark that diminishes the atrocities of the Holocaust. I believe a sincere and formal apology is warranted,” said Representative Steinberg.

Representative Steinberg said that Representative Hays’ remark also demands a rebuke from House Majority Leader Adam Hasner.

Last September, Representative Hasner chastened a Democratic member of Congress who reportedly compared our country’s healthcare system to the Holocaust. On Sept. 30, 2009, Representative Hasner issued the following statement:

“Regardless of one’s position on the issue of healthcare reform, comparing the American healthcare system to the systematic murdering of over six million Jews is totally outrageous and unfit for someone holding public office. Congressman Grayson should apologize to the Jewish community and the families of those whose loved ones were brutally executed. I’d also encourage Mr. Grayson to take a walk tomorrow afternoon to the U.S. Holocaust Museum so he can witness for himself just how offensive and inappropriate his statement is.

“While his comments should offend every reasonable American, I also call on my Jewish colleagues in the Florida Legislature and Florida’s Congressional delegation to condemn his remarks and demand an apology.

“Congressman Grayson should realize that one does not apologize for an inarticulate statement with another even more hateful. He would be wise to adhere to the advice that when you are in a hole, stop digging.”

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