HOUSE RESOLUTION NO. 2019-4699, by Representative Appleton

WHEREAS, Joshua Gortler, a longtime resident of Washington State, has tirelessly shared his experiences as a Holocaust survivor with citizens of our state, especially students of all ages, in the service of truth and understanding, and has brought honor to Washington State by his visionary leadership of award-winning services to the elderly; and

WHEREAS, Joshua's childhood was disrupted, as a 3-year old Jewish boy, by the Nazi invasion of his Polish hometown, Tomaszow Lubelski, in 1939; and

WHEREAS, Joshua and his family barely escaped one of the most horrific genocides the world has ever known by fleeing across a border, finding refuge in Siberia and Uzbekistan; and

WHEREAS, Joshua and his family tried to return to their home town of Tomaszow but found themselves unwelcome, spent six years in displaced persons camps in Germany, and finally received visas to come to the United States in 1951; and

WHEREAS, After arriving in the United States as a 15-year old with no English skills and limited formal education, Joshua went on to earn his Bachelor's and Master's degrees in social work from Yeshiva University, which granted him an honorary Doctorate in 2014 for his work in elder care; and

WHEREAS, Since 1969, Joshua has served Seattle senior citizens by building the Kline Galland Home and The Summit at First Hill into award-winning facilities. Upon his retirement in 2007 as CEO of The Kline Galland Center and Affiliates, he became President of The Kline Galland Foundation to ensure the continuation of this high-quality care; and

WHEREAS, By volunteering as a speaker for Seattle's Holocaust Center for Humanity, Joshua is sharing with young people, including at-risk youth in detention centers in King and Kitsap Counties, his lifetime experiences as a Holocaust survivor who turned a life of hardship into a successful career as a community leader; and

WHEREAS, Joshua is a living survivor of the Holocaust and is a renowned humanitarian and author who understands the importance of protecting our freedoms and caring for people at risk in our society; and

WHEREAS, Joshua has dedicated his life to helping others who have experienced oppression, and conveyed the message that each person can make a positive difference in this world;

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, That the House of Representatives, on behalf of the people of the State of Washington, recognize and honor the life of Joshua Gortler and his monumental contributions to the understanding of remembrance, freedom, and democracy in our State; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, That copies of this resolution be immediately transmitted by the Chief Clerk of the House of Representatives to Joshua Gortler.