

1 **CONCURRENT RESOLUTION RECOGNIZING THE 100TH**
2 **ANNIVERSARY OF THE SETTLEMENT OF CLARION,**
3 **UTAH**

4 2015 GENERAL SESSION

5 STATE OF UTAH

6 **Chief Sponsor: Jon Cox**

7 Senate Sponsor: Jim Dabakis

8
9 **LONG TITLE**

10 **General Description:**

11 This concurrent resolution of the Legislature and the Governor recognizes the 100th
12 anniversary of the settlement of Clarion, Utah.

13 **Highlighted Provisions:**

14 This resolution:

- 15 ▶ recognizes the 100th anniversary of the settlement of Clarion, Utah.

16 **Special Clauses:**

17 None

18
19 *Be it resolved by the Legislature of the state of Utah, the Governor concurring therein:*

20 WHEREAS, for centuries European Jews were prohibited from owning land and were
21 forced to abandon an agrarian existence for a more urban way of life;

22 WHEREAS, by the middle of the 19th Century, Jewish reformers advocated the Jews'
23 return to a "purer life" based on occupations that required manual labor;

24 WHEREAS, in 1911, the Jewish Agricultural and Colonial Association of Philadelphia
25 purchased 6,085 acres of land and water rights in southern Sanpete County from the Utah State
26 Land Board for an agricultural experiment that they named Clarion;

27 WHEREAS, members of the association who traveled to Utah reported to their friends
28 and neighbors back east that the soil was fertile, that they were given official assurance that the
29 Piute Canal would soon be completed as a new source of irrigation water, and that Clarion

30 would meet the needs and aspirations of would-be farmers;

31 WHEREAS, Clarion land was settled in phases, beginning with the arrival of 12 men
32 who worked collectively to prepare the land for planting and irrigation, and was divided into
33 family farmsteads as more settlers arrived;

34 WHEREAS, at its high point, more than 200 men, women, and children lived in the
35 Jewish colony and cultivated over 2,800 acres of land;

36 WHEREAS, Clarion became one of the largest Jewish agrarian colonies west of the
37 Appalachian Mountains;

38 WHEREAS, the Clarion colonists found that life in arid Utah was different from the
39 promises made by their leaders and Utah state officials, as the soil proved to be very poor and
40 only productive with extensive irrigation;

41 WHEREAS, the Piute Canal, a necessary source of water for the farmers, was not
42 finished until 1918, two years after the demise of Clarion;

43 WHEREAS, colonists' morale was weakened by early and late frosts, heavy floods,
44 crop failures, inexperience, and internal dissension;

45 WHEREAS, the deaths of two farmers and the loss of two babies in 1915 further
46 weakened the colonists' will to stay in Clarion, and when the colony could not make payment
47 on the land, the state of Utah foreclosed;

48 WHEREAS, most colonists returned to their former homes in eastern cities while a few
49 Jewish families, unwilling to give up on their dream, settled land near Clarion where they
50 successfully farmed into the late 1920s;

51 WHEREAS, for the Jewish settlers who came to Utah, Clarion was not just a
52 theoretical experiment – it was a real opportunity, for themselves and their families, to escape
53 the poverty and stress of life in the ghettos of eastern cities;

54 WHEREAS, these colonists had sounded a clarion call to all Jews to return to the land
55 for spiritual and physical revival;

56 WHEREAS, in Utah, they believed that they had found a haven from the violence of
57 the European pogroms and the poverty of American cities;

58 WHEREAS, the hurdles to success in Utah proved too high and the Jewish farmers
59 could not sustain their experiment nor lead a movement of Jews back to the soil; and

60 WHEREAS, that they failed is their history, that they dreamed and struggled against
61 insurmountable odds is their legacy:

62 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Legislature of the state of Utah, the
63 Governor concurring therein, recognizes the 100th anniversary of the settlement of Clarion,
64 Utah, and urge the citizens of the state to remember the determination, fortitude, and sacrifice
65 of those who struggled to start a new life there.

66 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Legislature and the Governor recognize that the
67 story of the settlers of Clarion is one of hope and determination to better themselves and a
68 people.