

**STATEMENT FROM SUSAN B. TUCHMAN ON BEHALF OF
THE ZIONIST ORGANIZATION OF AMERICA,
SUBMITTED TO THE NEW YORK CITY COUNCIL'S
COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION IN CONNECTION WITH ITS
HEARING ON "EXAMINING ANTISEMITISM ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES,"
HELD ON JUNE 30, 2022**

Submitted July 4, 2022

Introduction

The Zionist Organization of America (ZOA) welcomes the opportunity to submit this statement to the New York City Council's Committee on Higher Education, in connection with the Committee's examination of campus antisemitism at the City University of New York (CUNY). As this statement will show, campus antisemitism at CUNY is a longstanding and serious problem. Jewish students have been threatened, harassed and intimidated, causing many of them to fear expressing their Jewish identity openly, including their support for their religious and ancestral homeland, Israel. Sometimes, it has caused Jewish students to fear for their physical safety.

CUNY officials have known about these problems for years, but they have failed to take the necessary steps to protect Jewish students and provide them with a learning environment that is not hostile to them as Jews and supporters of Israel. The ZOA respectfully urges the New York City Council to take whatever steps are within its power and authority to ensure that Jewish and pro-Israel students have the safe and welcoming learning environment at CUNY that every student deserves, including by implementing the recommendations set forth below.

About the ZOA

Founded in 1897, the ZOA is the oldest pro-Israel organization in the United States, playing a key role in mobilizing American support for the establishment of the State of Israel. Under the leadership of such illustrious presidents as U.S. Supreme Court Justice Louis Brandeis, Rabbi Dr. Abba Hillel Silver, and current National President Morton A. Klein, the ZOA has been on the front lines of Jewish activism, fighting for the rights of the Jewish people and for a safe and secure Israel. The ZOA carries out its work through its Government Relations Department; its campus department, ZOA Campus; its Center for Law and Justice; and its office

in Israel. The ZOA's regional offices provide educational programming and advocate for Israel in communities throughout the U.S.

The ZOA's Role in Protecting Jewish Students from Antisemitic Harassment and Intimidation

The ZOA has been a leader in fighting all forms of antisemitism in schools and on college campuses – including anti-Israel and anti-Zionist sentiment that crosses the line into antisemitism.¹

In October 2004, the ZOA filed a groundbreaking complaint with the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights (OCR) on behalf of Jewish students at the University of California, Irvine. The complaint alleged that Jewish students had faced years of antisemitic harassment, intimidation and discrimination at UC Irvine, which the university administration knew about but failed to address, in violation of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.² The ZOA's complaint was the first case of antisemitic harassment that OCR ever agreed to investigate under Title VI.

In 2005, the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights – an independent, bipartisan fact-finding federal agency that investigates, reports on, and makes recommendations about civil rights issues – held its first-ever hearing on campus antisemitism. The ZOA's Susan Tuchman was one of three witnesses invited to brief the U.S. Commission on Civil Rights on the nature and extent of

¹ While of course not all criticism of Israel is antisemitic, the U.S. government has adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism, which recognizes that some anti-Israel and anti-Zionist sentiment crosses the line into antisemitism. See Exec. Order No. 13899, 84 Fed. Reg. 68779 (Dec. 11, 2019), at <https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2019/12/16/2019-27217/combating-anti-semitism>. U.S. Secretary of State Antony Blinken confirmed that the Biden administration "enthusiastically embraces" the IHRA definition, including the examples of antisemitism that relate to Israel. See Melissa Weiss, *Biden Admin 'Enthusiastically Embraces' Full IHRA Definition of Antisemitism*, Jewish Insider, Mar. 1, 2021, at <https://jewishinsider.com/2021/03/tony-blinken-biden-ihra-definition-antisemitism/>.

² Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (42 U.S.C. § 2000d et seq.) prohibits discrimination based on race, color, and national origin in programs and activities receiving federal financial assistance. A violation of Title VI could result in a loss of federal funding.

campus antisemitism and potential remedies to effectively address the problem. The briefing led to landmark findings and recommendations by the Commission, which were included in a detailed report to the President and the U.S. Congress – including that anti-Zionism and anti-Israelism may be manifestations of antisemitism, that Jewish students should be protected from antisemitic harassment under Title VI, and that publicly-funded schools have the legal obligation to protect them. In addition, as a result of the briefing, the Commission undertook a nationwide public education campaign to end campus antisemitism.

Historically, OCR was not enforcing Title VI to protect Jewish students. Title VI prohibits discrimination based on “race, color, or national origin” in federally funded programs and activities. OCR considered Jews to be a religious group only – and not also an ethnic group – and thus outside the protections of the law. The ZOA led a six-year battle to ensure that Title VI would be enforced to protect Jewish students, in the same way that this law had protected other ethnic and racial groups for close to 50 years. In March 2010, 12 other Jewish organizations joined the ZOA in sending a letter to the Secretary of Education, urging the Department of Education to enforce Title VI to protect Jewish students from antisemitic harassment and intimidation. On October 26, 2010, OCR issued a “Dear Colleague” letter that finally made it clear that Jewish students would be protected under Title VI.³

In 2018, the ZOA again played a key role in inspiring more effective legal protections for Jewish students. Triggered by the ZOA’s Title VI action against Rutgers University, OCR declared that it would begin using the IHRA working definition of antisemitism when it assessed antisemitic bias in Title VI cases. With this declaration, OCR would have much needed

³ See <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/letters/colleague-201010.pdf>.

guidance on how antisemitism is expressed today, so that it could more effectively address the problem.⁴

The ZOA has a long history of working closely with Jewish students on campuses across the country, building their knowledge of and support for Israel, and giving them the tools they need to respond to the anti-Israel misconceptions and outright lies that are promoted by students, student groups, and even faculty on campus. We have advocated for and helped Jewish students facing a hostile antisemitic environment at many schools across the U.S., including but not limited to Brooklyn College and other CUNY schools; New York University; Rutgers University; the University of California, Irvine; the University of California, Berkeley; the University of Michigan; Northeastern University; Duke University; the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill; Case Western University; and Florida State University.

Longstanding Antisemitism at the CUNY Schools

Jewish and pro-Israel students have faced antisemitism at the CUNY schools for many years. In 2013, the ZOA filed a Title VI action against Brooklyn College after four Jewish students were forcibly ejected from an anti-Israel BDS program at the college. They were allegedly removed because they had been disruptive; even a college spokesperson tarred their reputations with this accusation. But in fact, as Brooklyn College later publicly admitted, the four Jewish students were ousted without justification. Their expulsion was motivated by the fact that these four Jewish students did not support BDS; expelling them was a way to prevent them from expressing their anti-BDS, pro-Israel views. As a result of the ZOA's Title VI action,

⁴ These protections were affirmed in President Donald Trump's Executive Order on Combating Anti-Semitism, issued on December 11, 2019. The Executive Order requires that Title VI be enforced to protect Jews from discrimination in programs and activities that receive federal funding. It also requires that when federal agencies enforce Title VI, they must consider the IHRA working definition of antisemitism, without infringing on any rights protected under federal law or the First Amendment.

Brooklyn College publicly apologized to the four Jewish students by name and acknowledged the wrongdoing by college employees who stood by without intervening when these Jewish students were wrongly forced to leave the anti-Israel program simply because they opposed BDS and supported Israel.

In 2016, again backed by CUNY students, the ZOA sent a letter to CUNY's chancellor and board of trustees, describing in detail the antisemitic harassment and intimidation that Jewish students were enduring at four CUNY schools – Hunter College, Brooklyn College, the College of Staten Island and John Jay College – and urging CUNY to take several specific steps to remedy the problems.⁵ Triggered by the ZOA's letter, CUNY's Chancellor commissioned an independent investigation into the antisemitism allegations. The investigation confirmed that CUNY had been plagued by many incidents of antisemitism, including but not limited to the following:

- At a rally at CUNY's Hunter College, organized by the anti-Israel and antisemitic student group that calls itself "Students for Justice in Palestine" (SJP), protestors chanted "Jews out of CUNY" and "Death to Jews," and repeatedly chanted "Long live the intifada!" and "There is only one solution: Intifada revolution!" Calling for an intifada is a call to murder Jews.
- Protestors cursed at and threatened Jews at the Hunter rally, with comments such as "Is that all you can do, come along, take for your people, Jewish people, come along, you racist sons of bitches"; "Go back home, and get the fuck out of my country"; and "We should drag the Zionists down the street."

⁵ See <https://zoa.org/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/Letter-to-CUNY-Chancellor-and-Board-of-Trustees-2-22-16.pdf>.

- At CUNY's Brooklyn College, a student's mother was harassed by an SJP member simply because she was cleaning offensive anti-Israel chalking off the sidewalk which was illegally drawn there in the first place. A Jewish student who did not endorse SJP's positions was repeatedly harassed by an SJP member who sent her alarming messages, including, "I hope you don't walk alone on campus." Another Jewish student was threatened by an SJP student simply because she refused an anti-Israel flyer. Members of the Israel Club were called "dirty Jews" and similar expletives.
- In the classroom, a Brooklyn College professor called Israelis "assassins" and "baby killers," another made disparaging comments when Jewish students had to miss class for a religious holiday, and yet another skipped over the Holocaust in a history class, dismissively telling his students, "You all know this story."
- At CUNY's John Jay College of Criminal Justice, SJP threatened the Muslim Student Association (MSA) for co-hosting an event with Hillel, even though the event was about the New York Police Department and had nothing to do with Israel or the Middle East conflict. The threats worked; fearful, the MSA dropped its sponsorship, writing to the Hillel director, "We fear for your safety and ours." In addition, a student with an Israeli flag patch on his backpack was called a Zionist pig and had a water bottle thrown at his head.
- At CUNY's College of Staten Island, a Jewish student carrying a sign to promote harmony on campus was told by another student that "I wouldn't hug a Jew." When an anti-Israel student disrupted another student's class presentation on women in the Israel Defense Forces, shouting that Israeli soldiers were "killers," the professor did not

intervene. Both a Hillel student and the Executive Director of Hillel were bullied and harassed on Facebook.⁶

The investigators acknowledged that these and other antisemitic incidents caused Jewish students to feel harassed, threatened, and unsafe, and made some of them fearful of openly identifying as Jewish on campus. Nevertheless, the investigators justified the incidents as protected speech which they claimed CUNY could not punish – even though CUNY’s own written rules prohibit such conduct and authorize sanctions for it.

All CUNY students and student organizations are required to comply with the “Henderson Rules.”⁷ The Henderson Rules provide, in relevant part:

- That no member of the academic community shall “intentionally obstruct and/or forcibly prevent others from the exercise of their rights” (Rule 1).
- That “[e]ach member of the academic community . . . has the right to advocate his position without having to fear abuse, physical, verbal, or otherwise, from others supporting conflicting points of view” (Rule 5).⁸

The penalties for violating these rules include suspension and expulsion. Yet CUNY failed to enforce the rules when Jewish students were harassed and threatened. And in their report, the investigators never discussed these rules or explained why they were not and should not have been enforced.

⁶ See Barbara Jones and Paul Shechtman, “Report to Chancellor Milliken on Allegations of Anti-Semitism,” Sept. 6, 2016, at <https://www.cuny.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/4/page-assets/news/newswire/assets/CUNYReport.pdf>.

⁷ See CUNY Board of Trustees By-Laws, Article XV, Section 15.1, at https://policy.cuny.edu/bylaws/text/#Navigation_Location.

⁸ See CUNY Rules for Maintenance of Public Order,” at <https://www.cuny.edu/about/administration/offices/ovsa/policies/rules-for-maintenance-of-public-order/>.

Furthermore, the investigators failed to make any recommendations about how CUNY should more effectively protect Jewish students and ensure that they felt safe and welcome, as was their legal right. They did not address the recommendations the ZOA had made to CUNY, which included the following:

- (1) That CUNY require education and training about antisemitism in all its forms for students, administrators and faculty, so that there would be greater understanding of the breadth of the problem and how antisemitism may be expressed, including relating to Israel;
- (2) That administrators more forcefully condemn antisemitism in all its forms, whenever it occurs, including by specifically describing what the perpetrators said and did, and by condemning the perpetrators;
- (3) That administrators work harder to identify the violators of CUNY's rules and punish wrongdoers for their misconduct, so that the CUNY community will finally see that the administration takes antisemitism seriously and will do its best to combat it; and
- (4) That CUNY investigate SJP's conduct (including its sources of funding to confirm that funds were being obtained lawfully and that SJP was not receiving funds or other material support from groups and individuals with ties to terrorists or terrorist activities), and if the evidence warrants, then revoke the group's registered status in accordance with CUNY rules and policies. At a minimum, SJP should be placed on strict, supervised probation (as was the consequence for SJP at Northeastern University),⁹ until this group

⁹ See "Northeastern U. Reinstates Students for Justice in Palestine Chapter," Jewish Telegraphic Agency, Apr. 24, 2014, at <https://www.jta.org/2014/04/24/united-states/northeastern-u-reinstates-students-for-justice-in-palestine-chapter>.

demonstrated that it would respect and abide by the rules and standards that apply to everyone else.

The Problems at CUNY Continue

Jewish Students Continue to Feel Threatened and Intimidated

In May 2022, the New York Jewish Week reported that at John Jay College on Israel's Independence Day, a classmate charged toward a Jewish student and his group of friends while they were seated on the grass, wearing Israeli flags. The Jewish student said, "It was like he was intentionally invading our space. He was running, jumping over our heads, to intimidate us."¹⁰

This student also reported that students are afraid to wear "anything that would show that they're Jewish," such as a kippah or a Star of David. "They're afraid of the repercussions from people on campus. People on campus might actually hurt them."¹¹

The executive director of the Hillel at Baruch College told the New York Jewish Week about another report this semester of a student's experience wearing a kippah at John Jay College. The Hillel director said, "A Jewish student is walking through the hallways wearing their kippah. People say to him, 'You are an oppressor.' No one asked him his opinion on Israel. It's complete and overt antisemitism."¹²

¹⁰ Jacob Henry, "Anti-Israel Commencement Speaker Sparks Another Antisemitism Debate at CUNY," May 20, 2022, at <https://www.jta.org/2022/05/20/ny/anti-israel-commencement-speaker-sparks-another-antisemitism-debate-at-cuny>.

¹¹ See n.10.

¹² See n.10. That criticism of Israel and Zionism is often masking Jew-hatred was also evident when a group of students disrupted a Faculty Council meeting at Brooklyn College in February 2016. When the chairperson told the disrupters that they were out of order, we were informed that the disrupters called him a "Zionist pig." According to the investigators commissioned by CUNY's Chancellor, a student shouted "Zionist Jew" or "Zionist" at the chairperson. In any event, whoever shouted at the chairperson could not know whether the chairperson – who was a computer science professor – was a Zionist. What the disrupters did know – because the chairperson wore a kippah – was that the chairperson was a Jew.

Antisemitism at the CUNY School of Law

In 2020, a student at the CUNY School of Law posted a video on social media in which she threatens to light someone on fire because he is wearing a sweatshirt bearing the emblem of the Israel Defense Forces. The ZOA contacted the dean of the law school and identified several CUNY policies that this law student appeared to have violated. We urged the dean to investigate, discipline the student consistent with CUNY policies, and report this student to law enforcement to determine whether she may have violated New York's criminal laws.

To the ZOA's knowledge, CUNY Law took none of these steps and downplayed the seriousness and dangerousness of the law student's conduct. Without describing the conduct or condemning it, CUNY Law simply posted a statement on Twitter that "CUNY Law stands against hate and antisemitism." The message described the law student's conduct as "provocative and hurtful to many in our community and beyond who have seen it." But it was far more than that, possibly criminal and certainly frightening and threatening to every Jew at CUNY Law who supports Israel.

Then the Dean withdrew this weak statement and actually apologized for issuing it, calling it a "mistake." The Dean justified the law student's conduct as an exercise of her First Amendment right to express her opinion.¹³ Threatening to light someone on fire for supporting Israel is not protected speech under the First Amendment.

¹³ CUNY Law legitimized this law student's threatening conduct again on June 30, 2021. In a statement issued by the interim dean, CUNY Law claimed that this law student was being "vilified" for her "pro-Palestinian student activism." See https://www.law.cuny.edu/newsroom_post/statement-on-palestinian-activism/.

When our efforts to get CUNY Law to take effective and appropriate action proved fruitless, the ZOA filed a Title VI action against the school in October 2020. In January 2022, OCR notified the ZOA that it was investigating these allegations of the complaint.¹⁴

It would be reasonable to think that at a time when the law school is under federal investigation for failing to respond effectively to a hostile antisemitic environment, CUNY Law would be extra-vigilant in ensuring a safe and welcoming environment for Jewish and pro-Israel students. But that is not what occurred.

CUNY Law not only justified the conduct of a law student who threatened to light someone on fire because he was wearing an IDF sweatshirt. CUNY Law rewarded and gave a prominent platform to this law student – someone who also openly calls for the death of Zionists, calls for Israel’s destruction, and supports and promotes terrorism against Jews.¹⁵ The student was a speaker at CUNY Law’s commencement ceremony on May 13, 2022.

This law student was treated like a celebrity at the CUNY Law commencement, posing for a photo on stage and greeted with resounding cheers and applause. She used the podium that CUNY Law gave her to continue to demonize Israel and to complain that she has been victimized – by a so-called “campaign of Zionist harassment by well-funded organizations with ties to the Israeli government and military.”¹⁶

¹⁴ The ZOA’s Title VI complaint also included allegations about a Jewish student at CUNY Law who ultimately left the school after enduring what she described as a “campaign of harassment” by student groups, other students and even faculty, simply because she had expressed her Jewish identity by supporting Israel. These allegations are also the subject of another Title VI complaint that OCR is investigating separately.

¹⁵ This law student’s horrific antisemitic record has been documented in detail by an organization called Canary Mission, which investigates and records hatred expressed against the U.S., Israel and Jews by individuals and groups across the political spectrum. See <http://canarymission.org/>.

¹⁶ The video of the law student’s commencement speech can be viewed here: <https://twitter.com/SAFE/CUNY/status/1525697281328140290>.

CUNY may try to evade responsibility for featuring this law student at commencement, by claiming that it was the student government, not the CUNY administration, which selected her to speak. But it is impossible to imagine that if the student government had selected an anti-Black racist to speak, or someone with a record of threatening and intimidating women or the LGBTQ community, CUNY would have stood by and allowed a bigot to be featured at CUNY Law's commencement. In any of those situations, CUNY surely would have stepped in and prevented an open bigot against Blacks, women, or the LGBTQ community from speaking – and would have been right to do so.¹⁷

CUNY Law is the only publicly funded law school in New York City. Not a single penny of taxpayer money should be going to support a school that legitimizes, rewards, and gives a prominent platform to a student who openly promotes antisemitism or any other form of bigotry. In a recent article published by the Jewish Telegraphic Agency, a Jewish CUNY student (who feared retribution if he were publicly identified) described the hostile antisemitic environment that this law student is creating at CUNY Law: “It’s one thing to have a political

¹⁷ Contributing to the hostile antisemitic environment at CUNY Law is the faculty's recent endorsement of the CUNY Law student government's anti-Israel BDS resolution, which was also endorsed by numerous student groups at the school. See <https://docs.google.com/document/d/1dm4Sv9QsbzgyrOhpVABkEZuLskrkcWp9MgjiQRDsG4/edit>. The resolution falsely accuses Israel of “apartheid,” “genocide,” and “war crimes,” and accuses CUNY of being “complicit” in these alleged wrongs through its work with Israeli academic institutions. In addition, the resolution names and criticizes Hillel and other student groups for supporting Israel. Notably, this BDS resolution that faculty and student groups have all rallied behind does not target and condemn Russia or China or any other truly human-rights-abusing country. The resolution singles out, condemns and seeks to punish the one and only Jewish state in the world, Israel – as well as the Jewish students and student groups that support Israel. That is antisemitism, according to the IHRA working definition of antisemitism. By endorsing this resolution, faculty are actively participating in marginalizing Jewish and pro-Israel students and making them feel like pariahs at their school. CUNY Chancellor Matos Rodriguez rejected the resolution after the student government passed it. See Dion J. Pierre, “CUNY Chancellor Rejects Law Student Call to End Academic Ties with Israel,” *The Algemeiner*, Dec. 13, 2021, at <https://www.algemeiner.com/2021/12/13/cuny-chancellor-rejects-law-student-call-to-end-academic-ties-to-israel/>. To the ZOA's knowledge, the CUNY Law administration has not yet condemned the faculty or the resolution or made it clear that the resolution is antisemitic and against CUNY's values.

person who you don't agree with. But she calls for the actual murder of Jews. It's really setting a precedent that CUNY is OK with having people in their school who are out to hurt us.”¹⁸

It is not okay. It cannot be okay. The ZOA thanks Councilwoman Vernikov for her recent momentous decision to pull \$50,000 in funding that had been allocated to CUNY Law. The ZOA also thanks Councilman James F. Gennaro who stated: “Let the record show that my office is severing all ties with CUNY Law School effective immediately. I will no longer entertain any funding requests from CUNY Law School, nor will my office be partnering with this institution for any future events or initiatives. And I call upon all CUNY Law School alumni to withhold donations and support for this citadel of hate. My message is loud and clear: It is my obligation to challenge and defeat anti-Semitism wherever I see it.”¹⁹

The ZOA's Recommendations

Councilmembers Vernikov and Gennaro have sent the much-needed message to CUNY that if you tolerate antisemitism, you will bear the negative consequences. The ZOA respectfully urges this Committee and the rest of the New York City Council to take every additional step it can to send the same message to CUNY, including but not limited to the following.

First, we ask you and the rest of the New York City Council to withhold financial and all other support to CUNY, until CUNY finally starts responding to antisemitism forcefully and effectively. That means withholding funds and refusing to support or partner with CUNY on programs, events, and other initiatives.

¹⁸ Jacob Henry, “Anti-Israel Commencement Speaker Sparks Another Antisemitism Debate at CUNY,” Jewish Telegraphic Agency, May 20, 2022, at <https://www.jta.org/2022/05/20/ny/anti-israel-commencement-speaker-sparks-another-antisemitism-debate-at-cuny>.

¹⁹ Queens Jewish Link, May 25, 2022, at <https://www.queensjewishlink.com/index.php/opinion/76-your-say-readers-write/6631-your-say-readers-write-108>.

Second, urge CUNY to adopt the IHRA working definition of antisemitism and to use this definition when CUNY enforces its rules and policies and considers whether actions are motivated by antisemitic bias. The definition is excellent, reflecting the experiences of Jews today, including on our college campuses. The definition includes contemporary examples of antisemitism, including antisemitism related to Israel.

The IHRA definition is widely accepted. It has been adopted by the U.S. government, by more than 30 other countries around the world, and by more than half the states in the U.S. On June 12, 2022, New York Governor Kathy Hochul issued a proclamation embracing the IHRA working definition, correctly noting that it “is a vital resource in the struggle against antisemitism, and that will facilitate constructive discourse, further understanding and enable a more thoughtful response to this harmful behavior that impacts us all.”²⁰

Some universities have already adopted the IHRA working definition of antisemitism.²¹ Given that CUNY Law has interpreted and justified open calls for the murder of Zionists, open calls for Israel’s destruction, and open support for terrorism and violence against Jews as “activism,” and does not see all this for exactly what it is – Jew-hatred – CUNY sorely needs this definition. CUNY cannot possibly effectively address antisemitism if it does not understand the problem in all its forms, including when antisemites try to camouflage their Jew-hatred as legitimate criticism of Israel.

²⁰ See Aaron Bandler, “NY Gov Issues Proclamation Embracing IHRA Definition of Antisemitism,” Jewish Journal, June 14, 2022, at <https://jewishjournal.com/news/united-states/349287/ny-gov-issues-proclamation-embracing-ihra-definition-of-antisemitism/>.

²¹ For example, Florida State University has adopted the IHRA definition. In a statement to the FSU university about FSU’s efforts to combat antisemitism, President John Thrasher noted that “[w]hile freedom of speech is of paramount importance on a college campus, so is creating a climate of acceptance and appreciation for the value and richness of the many cultures and ideas that make Florida State University such an excellent academic experience.” See <https://news.fsu.edu/news/university-news/2020/08/12/a-message-from-president-john-thrasher-an-update-on-antisemitism-and-religious-discrimination/>.

Third, we ask that you urge CUNY to institute mandatory training for staff, students and faculty on antisemitism, using the IHRA definition as a guide. The CUNY community must understand the full breadth of the problem of antisemitism and how it is expressed today, including antisemitism relating to Israel.

Fourth, we recommend that you urge CUNY to publicly and forcefully condemn campus antisemitism whenever and however it is expressed at CUNY. All too often, we have seen weak condemnations of antisemitism, and they are linked to condemnations of other forms of bigotry. If an antisemitic incident occurs at CUNY, then the CUNY administration should clearly and forcefully condemn it and the perpetrators. In addition, the condemnation should give antisemitism the singular focus it deserves.

Fifth, we urge CUNY to finally start vigorously enforcing CUNY policies when they are violated, using the IHRA working definition of antisemitism as a guide. As described above, CUNY already has policies in place that protect Jewish students from being harassed and threatened because they are Jews and support Israel. If CUNY maintains these policies, then CUNY must stand behind them and finally strongly enforce them. Wrongdoers who threaten, harass and create a hostile environment for Jewish and pro-Israel students must be disciplined so that the CUNY community will finally see that the administration takes antisemitism seriously and is taking concrete, forceful steps to combat it.

Finally, we urge you to contact the Office for Civil Rights and let OCR know that you are deeply concerned about the hostile environment for Jewish and pro-Israel students at CUNY Law and the school's continuing failure to effectively address the problem. Let OCR know that you expect a prompt and thorough investigation of the ZOA's Title VI complaint, and that you

and your constituents are depending on OCR to ensure that Jewish students' civil rights are fully protected under the law.

All of these recommendations are reasonable and doable. If implemented, CUNY Law will be more effectively responding to campus antisemitism. And Jewish and pro-Israel students will feel safer and freer to express their Jewish identity openly and proudly, including their support for their religious and ancestral homeland, Israel.

Conclusion

Thank you again for holding this important hearing and considering the serious issue of campus antisemitism. Jewish students at CUNY and at every college and university in New York City and in this country should be afforded a safe and welcoming learning environment. That is what every student deserves. We urge the New York City Council to implement the foregoing recommendations and to take all other steps within its power and authority to help achieve that goal.

Respectfully submitted,

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