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ADL Foundation

Michael Sheetz, President

July 10, 2024

The Honorable Charles E. Schumer
Majority Leader
322 Hart Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Mitch McConnell
Republican Leader
317 Russell Senate Office Building
United States Senate
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Majority Leader Schumer and Republican Leader McConnell:

Since 1913, the mission of ADL (Anti-Defamation League) has been to “stop the defamation of the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment to all.” ADL is dedicated to combating antisemitism, extremism, and hate in all forms – from across the ideological spectrum.

We are currently facing the worst crisis of antisemitism in a generation in the United States and around the world. Each year, ADL tracks incidents of antisemitic harassment, vandalism and assault in the United States. Since 1979, we have published this information in an annual Audit of Antisemitic Incidents. In 2023, ADL tabulated 8,873 antisemitic incidents across the United States. This represents a 140% increase from the 3,698 incidents recorded in 2022 and is the highest number on record since ADL began tracking antisemitic incidents in 1979. In fact, ADL tracked more incidents in 2023 than in the previous three years combined.

Rising antisemitism threatens not only the Jewish community, but all Americans. Once we permit this hatred to exist or target one group, it will only be a matter of time before other groups are targeted.

To help protect our country from antisemitism, I urge you to support the inclusion of two key pieces of legislation that combat rising antisemitism in the National Defense Authorization Act (NDAA) substitute or manager’s amendment.

S.4091 - The Countering Antisemitism Act

The Countering Antisemitism Act (S.4091) will strengthen desperately needed federal efforts and ensure that the current administration and any future administration are focused on fighting antisemitism.

The bill would establish a domestic National Coordinator to Counter Antisemitism and a dedicated Task Force to Counter Antisemitism that will help to coordinate efforts to fight this hate across federal agencies. The Countering Antisemitism Act would require

the Department of Education to designate a senior official to advise and oversee the Department's efforts to counter antisemitic discrimination at colleges and universities. The bill would also promote Holocaust education, help us understand the threat of antisemitic violent extremism, as well as the spread of antisemitism online, celebrate Jewish life by designating Jewish American Heritage Month, and more. The bill provides a well-rounded, whole-of-government and whole-of-society approach to keep American Jews safe at this critical time for the American Jewish community.

S.4127 - Antisemitism Awareness Act of 2024

The Antisemitism Awareness Act (S.4127) will cement the policy of the current and prior administrations, interpreting Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 to protect Jewish students to the extent that they face discrimination based on perceived racial, national, or ethnic characteristics.

The bill requires the Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights to take into consideration the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Working Definition of Antisemitism when reviewing or investigating complaints of discrimination based on race, color, or national origin. As embraced in the National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism and used by the State Department and the Department of Education, ADL considers the IHRA Working Definition the preeminent definitional tool for antisemitism today, offering critical guidance regarding its modern manifestations. This definition has been adopted by more than 1,200 entities worldwide, including more than 40 countries, more than 35 U.S. states, more than 90 U.S. cities and municipalities, and more. The Antisemitism Awareness Act would ensure that the Department of Education continues the policy that has been in place since at least 2019.

Thank you for your urgent attention to this matter. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me personally or to my staff to discuss this matter further.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jonathan Greenblatt". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Jonathan" being more prominent than the last name "Greenblatt".

Jonathan Greenblatt
CEO and National Director
ADL (Anti-Defamation League)