



2024 PARTY PLATFORM RECOMMENDATIONS

JULY 2024

Background:

About the ADL (Anti-Defamation League)

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. For decades, ADL has fought against bigotry and antisemitism by monitoring and exposing extremist groups and movements that spread hate and commit acts of violence. ADL carries out its mission through a network of 27 Regional and Satellite Offices in the United States and abroad.

As a 501(c)(3) organization ADL may not involve itself in campaigns for public office. But, every four years, as both parties craft their party platforms for the election and beyond, ADL shares a comprehensive statement of its policy views on a wide array of issues in which it is engaged.

The policy recommendations encompass the broad range of issues that are important to ADL.

Antisemitism in the United States. 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. Incidents increased in all major Audit categories. Assault incidents increased by 45% to 161 incidents, vandalism increased 69% to 2,177 incidents and harassment increased 184% to 6,535 incidents.

The dramatic increase in incidents took place primarily in the period following the [October 7 Hamas attack in Israel](#). Between October 7 and the end of 2023, ADL tabulated 5,204 incidents – more than the incident total for the whole of 2022. Even prior to October 7, there were monthly increases in February (402), March (471), April (432), May (437) and September (513). Each of these months broke the prior record for most incidents recorded in a single month, set in November 2022 (394). Antisemitic incidents also increased year-over-year in all major location categories. Incidents at K-12 schools increased by 135% to 1,162 incidents. Incidents at Jewish institutions jumped by 237% to 1,987, driven mostly by massive waves of hoax threats directed at synagogues and other institutions in the summer, fall and winter. And incidents on college and university campuses spiked by a staggering 321% to 922 incidents, most of which occurred after the October 7 terrorist attacks.

DHS and the FBI have repeatedly identified domestic terrorism as the most persistent and lethal terrorist threat to the homeland, yet the federal government continues to allocate resources and attention disproportionately to international terrorist threats.

Recommendations:

As you draft the party platform, ADL urges the following recommendations be taken into consideration:

Rising antisemitism must be addressed as the unique form of hate that it represents.

According to the FBI, the Jewish community represents 2.4 percent of the U.S. population, yet antisemitism drove 53.1 percent of religiously motivated hate crimes. Even this staggering data fails to capture the full-lived experience of the Jewish community at a time of rising hate. Antisemitism must be recognized as both part and parcel of all forms of hate, but also as a stand-alone, historic challenge requiring heightened sustained attention. As the national conversation in 2020 appropriately highlighted Asian American, Native Hawaiian, and Pacific Islander (AANHPI) hate during the COVID-19 pandemic, antisemitism must be recognized at this moment.

The historic National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism must be prioritized in the party platform. A whole-of-government, whole-of-society approach to addressing hate should be elevated as a priority to reflect the urgency of this critical work and the moment we are in. The party must commit to continue to prioritize, elevate and entrench this work deeply within its infrastructure – so that no future government can ignore the blight of antisemitism. That includes establishing a national coordinator to counter antisemitism, a dedicated interagency task force to counter antisemitism that will coordinate efforts across the federal government, and a better understanding of the threat that antisemitic violent extremism and online antisemitism pose to our national security. Each federal agency has an important part to play in combating antisemitism, ensuring that policies and actions across the government are aligned with this objective. Twenty-four agencies committed to more than 100 specific policies in the National Strategy, ensuring the widest number of agencies are engaged and accountable in this vital mission.

Domestic violent extremism and the increasing normalization of extremism across the political spectrum are a persistent and lethal threat to the homeland and our democratic institutions. We must dedicate resources to address the challenges at hand and on the scale that they continue to present themselves. We also must establish permanent offices to track, monitor and protect our communities, while protecting civil liberties. As domestic violent extremism continues to rise, we must expand the government’s knowledge, and that of the general public, on the threat and best practices to counter it. We must support and enhance cutting-edge academic research into countering domestic extremism.

Funding assistance from federal, state, and local governments has provided crucial support for security hardening and enhancements for our nation’s non-profit institutions, including religious institutions. This responds to the continuing targeting by violent extremists of synagogues, mosques, churches, temples and other houses of worship and religious gathering places. We must increase nonprofit security grant funding to protect nonprofits and religious organizations to harden their physical security against rising threats.

Fighting hate crimes is a critical task, especially when manifestations of antisemitism and other forms of hate, racism, and bigotry are growing at a very disturbing rate. However, the Federal Bureau of Investigation (FBI) hate crime statistics for 2022 continue to convey low – and steadily declining – participation from law enforcement agencies. At a time when many communities across the country feel increasingly vulnerable to bias-motivated crimes and extremist-fueled attacks, funding is required to improve data collection and reporting as a necessary step in the fight to address hate-motivated violence. There must also be a greater emphasis on addressing biased-based crimes and resolving gaps in data collection and reporting. The Department of Justice should be conditioning federal funding for large law enforcement agencies on credible hate crime reporting to the FBI or meaningful hate crime prevention, outreach, and awareness initiatives by such agencies.

As we combat rising antisemitism, we must use precise language to describe what we are seeing accurately. Anti-Zionism has become a convenient facade, a mask under which to disguise antisemitic hate. To be clear, anti-Zionism is the negation of the Jewish state and the Jewish right to self-determination and is distinct from criticism of Israeli actions and policies. Defacing synagogues and Jewish homes are not legitimate acts of protest or expressions of critique. They are acts of targeted hate directed towards members of the Jewish community because of our faith, our ethnicity, and our identity. As embraced in the National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism and as used by the State Department and the Department of Education, ADL considers the [IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism](#) to be the preeminent definitional tool for antisemitism today, offering critical guidance regarding its modern manifestations.

Social media has become an accelerator and mass spreader of hate and requires a concerted whole of government response. Government must ensure that hateful rhetoric and mis/disinformation cannot proliferate unabated online, and urge digital social platforms to be more transparent in protecting users. Online hate and harassment continue to proliferate at alarming speeds, touching half of Americans personally. ADL's Center for Technology and Society (CTS) conducts an annual [Online Hate and Harassment survey](#) to assess bias-motivated online harassment. The 2024 survey uncovered concerning results. Among adults, more than half (56 percent) reported being harassed online in their lifetime, up from 52 percent in 2023, and 40 percent in 2022. Twenty-two percent of respondents recorded experiencing severe types of harassment – defined as including physical threats, sustained harassment, stalking, sexual harassment, doxing, and/or swatting – in the past 12 months alone, up from 18 percent in 2023, and 12 percent in 2022. Data from the same survey also shows that marginalized or minority groups – including Jews, women, people of color, LGBTQ+ people, and those with disabilities – experience hate-based online harassment (i.e., targeted attacks or abuse of marginalized people because of their race, ethnicity, religion, gender, sexuality, physical appearance, identity, or disability) at disproportionately high levels. Overall, we need to increase the accountability of tech companies for their dynamic role in the normalization and proliferation of hate and harassment online and improve access to justice, as well as prevention efforts, for victims and targets of digital abuse. We must support initiatives to promote transparency and accountability of social media platforms and online gaming companies and develop a comprehensive transparency framework for all digital social platforms. We must increase efforts to better support targets of cybercrimes and address the serious issues of online hate, stalking, and abuse.

Finally, we should promote better programs to combat online hate and harassment and improve overall digital literacy.

We must ensure that college and university campuses are hospitable and safe for Jewish students. The Department of Education must be equipped with the resources necessary to protect Jewish students and faculty on campus, including the enforcement of Title VI, funding for the Office for Civil Rights (OCR), and implementation of Executive Order 13899, so that the Department of Education has the full capacity to investigate complaints alleging antisemitic harassment and discrimination. We also recommend the designation of a senior official within OCR to serve as the Secretary's primary advisor on efforts to counter antisemitic discrimination at institutions of higher education. In addition, the party platform should commit to promoting Holocaust education across the country, starting in K-12 schools, which are also undergoing historic rises in antisemitic incidents. ADL research has shown that Holocaust education, which provides a context in which to learn about the danger of what can happen when hate and indifference in the face of the oppression of others go unchallenged, has a direct relationship to lower long-term antisemitic beliefs.

Rising global antisemitism must be prioritized alongside domestic antisemitism. For decades, ADL has worked to support Jewish communal organizations globally including through the formation of the J7 Large Communities Task Force Against Antisemitism, representing the seven largest diaspora Jewish communities, to address the global rise in antisemitism. We urge the party to continue to prioritize its global leadership in fighting antisemitism. This year marks the 30th Anniversary of the bombing of the AMIA Jewish community center in Buenos Aires, masterminded by Iran. The dangers posed by global antisemitism – and the continued threats of people motivated by antisemitism, and state sponsors of terror directed against Jews ring as true today as they did then. Support for the U.S. State Department's Offices of the U.S. Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism and Special Envoy for Holocaust Issues must remain a national priority.

Support for a strong U.S.-Israel relationship and a peaceful resolution to conflict in the region is of paramount importance. Israel is the national homeland of the Jewish people; the overwhelming majority of Jewish people around the globe, regardless of political orientation, consider a connection to Israel a part of their Jewish identity. We thank the party for its continued support for a Jewish, democratic state in Israel, and its work to ensure Israel can effectively confront the historic security challenges it continues to face in the aftermath of October 7th. We also endorse efforts to pursue a long-lasting peace between Israel and its neighbors, including through sustaining and expanding the Abraham Accords, and working towards a two-state solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The platform must make clear that the U.S.-Israel bond remains unbreakable and that as Israel continues to face dire threats from Iran and its proxies Hamas and Hezbollah, the U.S. will be steadfast in its support of its longtime ally. We urge the party to be forceful in calling for Hamas to release all hostages – including the 5 Americans who were kidnapped on October 7th. We recognize the humanitarian suffering in Gaza, and mourn the loss of life of innocent Israelis and Gazans. Hamas, with the backing of its patron Iran, must be held responsible for launching this war, for its ongoing wanton disregard for the lives and safety of Gazan civilians, and for its refusal to agree to the ceasefire proposal endorsed by Israel, the U.S. and others.

We implore you to resist the loud voices trying to draw a false moral equivalence between the terrorist organization Hamas – who brutally kidnapped, raped, and murdered innocent Israeli civilians – and our ally Israel as it fights to protect itself. And, while Israel’s actions can be criticized, just as any other state, the use of demonizing and incendiary rhetoric and labels, which delegitimize Israel and Zionism, must be rejected, both because they are inaccurate and unconstructive, and because they create an environment which emboldens antisemitism and hate.

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. It is for this reason that ADL continues to work alongside our partners – in the Jewish community and across other marginalized communities – to champion the safety and security of all Americans. We need to ensure that communities are safer in their houses of worship, safer in their neighborhoods, and safer on their college campuses.