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Chairman Edwards, Vice-Chair LaRae, Ranking Member Sweeney, and members of the Finance Committee:

My name is Rabbi Ari Jun, and I am Director of the Jewish Community Relations Council of the Jewish Federation of Cincinnati, on behalf of whom I am here today. I appreciate you taking the time to hear testimony on House Bill 606, which we support.

Some months ago, in January, I traveled to our nation's capital to lobby on behalf of protections for the Jewish community in the wake of the largest wave of antisemitism I have seen in my lifetime—the one which has followed October 7th, which continues to the present. With me were a number of adult colleagues, but also a college student who opted to take time from her busy schedule to try to convey the direness of the current situation to federal lawmakers. This student uttered words that have stuck with me, which I share with you: “I just hope that, moving forward, college students don't have to go through this to get a degree.”

Since then, still, little has changed. That student—her name was Janel—couldn't have known in January about the *further* waves of antisemitic vitriol which would soon target Jewish students on campus late in the spring semester. She couldn't, for instance, have known about the encampments which—though, perhaps, filled with many well-intentioned individuals—prompted an almost dystopian wave of Jew-hatred around our nation. I *know* you know how bad this was—and how the ambiguity about university policy, state law regarding disruptions to campuses, and legally obligatory responses to collegiate identity-based hate—has only made this situation worse. Hence the need for the CAMPUS Act.

As I experienced in January, there is no one better equipped to speak on this issue than those most affected by hate on campuses: our students themselves. Therefore, allow me to introduce my colleague, Eliana Goldner, so she can share from *her* perspective why this legislation is so needed:



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Chairman Edwards, Vice-Chair LaRae, Ranking Member Sweeney, and members of the Finance Committee:

Good morning. I am grateful for the opportunity to speak to you today in support of House Bill 606.

My name is Eliana Goldner. I'm from Cincinnati and I am a rising junior at The Ohio State University. This summer, I am interning at the Jewish Community Relations Council of Cincinnati.

As a proud Jew, I have always embraced my identity. However, since October 7th, I have felt compelled to hide this aspect of myself. The campus, which once felt like a welcoming home where I could be true to myself, now leaves me feeling isolated. The incidents of antisemitism have been horrendous: two Jewish students were physically assaulted, another was spat on, Jewish fraternities have been harassed, and public street signs have been vandalized with antisemitic rhetoric. Additionally, during finals week, there were numerous encampments set up on campus where individuals displayed antisemitic posters and flyers while shouting hateful remarks. These actions have made it difficult for me to even walk to the library to study. While peaceful protest is a right that must be protected, what is currently happening on campuses is far from peaceful.

House Bill 606 presents an opportunity to address these issues and move in the right direction. As a college student, the knowledge that my institution's administration, faculty, and staff will be trained to handle incidents of hate and harassment makes me feel significantly safer. Furthermore, the establishment of a written procedure for investigating claims of such incidents provides a sense of empowerment and hope.

On behalf of Jewish college students, I strongly urge you to vote in favor of House Bill 606.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



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Thank you, Eliana.

This and, God-willing, next week, you have the chance to do what our Federal government and few other states have yet to do: Provide adequate protections to Jewish and other vulnerable students on campus by instructing our state's institutions of higher education on how to better administer and protect the budding leaders in their care. Ohio *can* and *should*—and, I pray, *will*—emerge as a leader and model in the nation on this issue. By supporting House Bill 606, which addresses the concrete needs of Jewish and other targeted populations, you can propel us in that direction.

Thank you for your time, and we are happy to stand for any questions.

Rabbi Ari Jun
Director
Jewish Community Relations Council
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Eliana Goldner
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