

17 June 2024

Chairman Edwards:

I write to you as Regional Director of ADL's (Anti-Defamation League) Cleveland Region to voice our support for HB 606, the Campus Accountability and Modernization to Protect University Students Act (the "CAMPUS Act"), and offer our gratitude to Representatives Jarrells, Pizzulli, and all the bi-partisan supporters of this important bill which will help counter the rising tide of antisemitism on our college and university campuses.

ADL is the leading anti-hate organization in the world. Founded in 1913, its timeless mission is "to stop the defamation of the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment to all." We are dedicated to fighting all forms of antisemitism and bias, using innovation and partnerships to drive impact. A global leader in combating antisemitism, countering extremism and battling bigotry wherever and whenever it happens, ADL works to ensure a just and inclusive society for all.

Unfortunately, our Audit of Antisemitic incidents for 2023 showed an enormous increase in antisemitic incidents – more than ADL has tracked since it began the audit in 1979. In 2023, Ohio had 237 incidents versus 61 in 2022 – a 289 percent increase. On campuses across the country, antisemitic activity reported an increase of **321 percent** from 2022. We also introduced the Campus Report Card in 2023 as well, tracking incidents at specific universities across the country. Both Oberlin College and Ohio State University were part of the report card.

There have been a number of concerning antisemitic incidents on Ohio State's campus, particularly in the wake of the October 7 terrorist attack. The U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights opened a Title VI investigation in January 2024. In April 2024, ADL, the Brandeis Center, and StandWithUs filed a Title VI complaint alleging that the University failed to meaningfully address a long list of incidents affecting Jewish and Israeli students, including verbal taunts and threats and physical assault.

Recent incidents have included two Jewish students being physically and verbally assaulted in November 2023 and a student being spat on during a fundraising event for Israel in October 2023. In December 2023, individuals

**Regional Officers**

**Board Chair**  
Steve Irwin

**Immediate-Past Board Chair**  
Yelena Boxer

**Regional Staff**  
**Regional Director**  
Kelly Fishman

**National Staff**  
**Senior Director, National Litigation**  
James Pasch

**Director Jewish Partnerships**  
Sara Scheinbach

**National Officers**  
**Chair, Board of Directors**  
Ben Sax

**CEO and National Director**  
Jonathan Greenblatt

**Deputy National Director**  
Kenneth Jacobson

shouted antisemitic phrases and threw objects at a Jewish fraternity, and a flier advertising an event hosted by Central Ohio Revolutionary Socialists, a student group on campus, stated, "Intifada, Revolution, and a path to a Free Palestine" alongside an image of an individual holding a gun. Also in December 2023, a street sign was reportedly vandalized with "From the river to the sea...Palestine will be free," and two women were arrested and charged after allegedly vandalizing the Ohio State University Hillel and shouting antisemitic threats.

The alarming and extreme proliferation of antisemitism on college campuses in Ohio and across the country has contributed to an explosive rise of antisemitic and anti-Jewish hatred that ADL has been tracking across society. Campus administrators have proven ill-equipped in many cases to effectively put mechanisms and strategies in place to counter the environments of hostility and intimidation targeting their Jewish students. It is clear administrators need help and structures put in place to protect their Jewish students and address the epidemic of antisemitism on their college campuses. The CAMPUS Act does just this.

Additionally, ADL understands and tracks the dangerous proximity between the normalization of antisemitism (or any kind of hate) and acts of physical violence. As Jew-hatred becomes more emboldened because of the current inability by campuses to effectively push back, there is less and less distance between that hatred and a physical or violence manifestation of it. We need to put checks in place so that campuses can prepare for the coming school year effectively, and interrupt the cycle of rising antisemitism before it leads to even worse tragedy.

Campuses should be places where all students should feel welcome and able to learn in a safe and nurturing environment. Through HB 606, the Ohio House is demonstrating the leadership and guidance campuses so desperately need in this moment where Jewish students, faculty and administrators feel targeted and unsafe to openly express their Jewish identity. ADL strongly supports HB 606, and hopes that the Members of the House Finance Committee advance it towards passage.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to be the initials 'ADL' followed by a stylized flourish.