

October 31, 2023

VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

The Honorable Bernard Sanders
Chair
Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Chair Sanders:

In the wake of the mass murder of Jewish civilians by Hamas terrorists on October 7, 2023, there has been a disturbing rise in anti-Semitic incidents, including targeted harassment and violent attacks, directed at Jewish students on college campuses. As the Chair of the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions Committee, we urge you to hold a bipartisan hearing on ensuring safe learning environments for Jewish students, as required by the Civil Rights Act of 1964.

It is our duty to ensure federal officials are doing everything in their power to uphold the law and ensure students are not excluded from participation, denied the benefits of, or subject to discrimination at school based on race, color, or national origin. We need to engage in a direct discussion with Department of Education leaders Secretary Miguel Cardona and Assistant Secretary of Civil Rights Catherine Lhamon about the actions they are taking to address anti-Semitism on college campuses.

The terrorist attack of October 7 was the largest murder of Jewish people in one day since the Holocaust. It led to a noticeable rise in anti-Semitic activity, specifically on college campuses. Under your leadership, the Committee has quickly organized and held hearings on other topics related to recent events. This issue certainly demands the Committee's direct attention and engagement from the Senate-confirmed Department of Education officials we oversee.

The examples of anti-Semitism after Hamas' attack are startling. In the shadow of our nation's capital, swastikas were drawn on dorm room doors and in bathrooms where Jewish students live and in the parking lot at a high school where Jewish students study. In Philadelphia, a hateful arsonist set a Jewish student's dorm ablaze. During the nationwide "Day of Resistance," groups of pro-Palestinian students on the University of California Los Angeles campus shouted "intifada," celebrating the violent act of Hamas towards Israelis. At Columbia University, posters of Israelis taken hostage by Hamas were torn down by a vandal who was charged with a hate crime after allegedly attacking an Israeli student with a stick.

Faculty at universities have also made concerning anti-Semitic acts. A Stanford professor directed Jewish students to stand in a corner and asked Jewish students to identify themselves. He stated that "only six million" Jewish people died in the Holocaust and "colonizers killed more than six

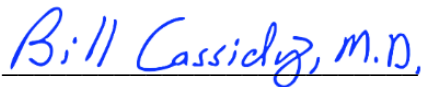
million. Israel is a colonizer.” A professor and student advisor at University of California Davis went as far as posting on social media that Zionist journalists and their children should be identified and murdered.

This hearing should be focused on the Department of Education’s anti-Semitism campaign over the last four months, its recent announcement to expedite processing of discrimination complaints under Title VI, the impact these actions have had, and how the Office of Civil Rights is ensuring safe learning environments for students in light of recent events. A non-government panel could share what it is like to be a student on campus, egregious examples of incited violence, and what institutions of higher education are doing to support students and maintain safe learning environments.

Former President Barack Obama stated, “The state of Israel does not exist because of the Holocaust, but in the survival of a strong Jewish state of Israel the Holocaust will never happen again.” The prospect of the destruction of state of Israel and more murders based on anti-Semitism are real. Let us be proactive on a bipartisan basis as we seek to ensure the civil rights of Jewish students are upheld and a safe environment for all students is maintained.

Thank you for your consideration of this serious issue. We look forward to your response and our staffs stand ready to make this important bipartisan hearing happen.

Sincerely,



Bill Cassidy, M.D.
Ranking Member
U.S. Senate Committee on Health,
Education, Labor, and Pensions



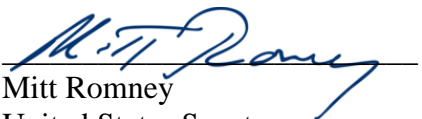
Susan M. Collins
United States Senator



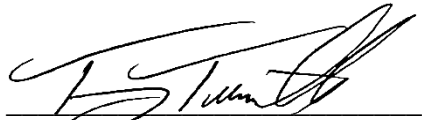
Mike Braun
United States Senator



Roger Marshall, M.D.
United States Senator



Mitt Romney
United States Senator



Tommy Tuberville
United States Senator



Markwayne Mullin
United States Senator



Ted Budd
United States Senator