

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

December 8, 2023

To the Members of the Governing Boards,
Harvard University
Massachusetts Institute of Technology
University of Pennsylvania

Dear Members of the Governing Board:

On October 7th the world witnessed Hamas terrorists perpetrate the deadliest attack against the Jewish people since the Holocaust.

In the weeks since, there has been an explosion of antisemitic incidents in the United States and around the world. The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) has recorded 1,481 antisemitic incidents —292 of which occurred on college and university campuses—a nearly 300% increase relative to the same period last year.

Jewish students should have found comfort on their campuses. Instead, many Jewish and Israeli students have faced an increasingly hostile educational environment, in the form of targeted harassment, protesters calling for the elimination of the Jewish state, and even acts of violence. According to a recent survey by ADL and Hillel International, 73% of Jewish college students surveyed have experienced or witnessed some form of antisemitism on campus since the beginning of the school year. This is unacceptable. Antisemitism has been allowed to fester on campuses for years, and in the wake of the October 7th attack, the world is witnessing the consequences.

This is a clear result of the failure of university leadership. To hold universities accountable, Congress held a hearing on confronting campus antisemitism. Testimony provided by presidents of your institutions showed a complete absence of moral clarity and illuminated the problematic double standards and dehumanization of the Jewish communities that your university presidents enabled.

The university presidents' responses to questions aimed at addressing the growing trend of antisemitism on college and university campuses were abhorrent. When pushed on whether calling for the genocide of Jews violates university policies on bullying or harassment, Presidents Gay (Harvard), Kornbluth (MIT), and Magill (Penn) were evasive and dismissive, failing to simply condemn such action. This should have been an easy and resounding "yes."

Instead, they shocked the world. MIT President Kornbluth responded that calling for the genocide of Jews at MIT would only be considered harassment if it was "targeted at individuals, not making public statements" and if it was "pervasive and severe."

UPenn President Magill stated, after smiling, that "it is a context-dependent decision." When pushed again for a "yes" or "no" answer, does calling for the genocide of Jews violate the code

of conduct at UPenn, President Magill shockingly responded, “If the speech becomes conduct. It can be harassment, yes.”

Finally, Harvard President Claudine Gay insisted that it “depends on the context” whether calling for the genocide of Jews violated Harvard’s rules of bullying.

There is no context in which calls for the genocide of Jews are acceptable rhetoric. Their failure to unequivocally condemn calls for the systematic murder of Jews is deeply alarming. It stands in stark contrast to the principles we expect leaders of top academic institutions to uphold. It is hard to imagine any Jewish or Israeli student, faculty, or staff feeling safe when presidents of your member institutions could not say that calls for the genocide of Jews would have clear consequences on your campus.

Some of your presidents took to social media to clarify their responses after excessive public backlash. They confirmed their opposition to genocide — which should not have required clarification — but offered little clarity on your campus’ true commitment to protecting vulnerable students in this moment of crisis. These desperate attempts to try and save their jobs by condemning genocide are too little too late. It should not take public backlash nor 24 hours of reflection to realize that calling for genocide is unacceptable.

There must be accountability for those who threaten, harass, or incite violence toward the Jewish community and clear guidelines for college campuses. If calls for genocide of the Jewish people are not in violation of your universities’ policies, then your universities are operating under a clear double standard.

Considering this, we are compelled to ask whether the testimony provided by your university presidents aligns with the values and policies of your respective institutions. The leadership of top universities plays a pivotal role in shaping the moral compass of our future leaders. It is critically important that such leadership reflects a clear and unwavering commitment to combating antisemitism, along with all forms of hate speech and bigotry.

Given this moment of crisis, we demand that your boards immediately remove each of these presidents from their positions and that you provide an actionable plan to ensure that Jewish and Israeli students, teachers, and faculty are safe on your campuses. Anything less than these steps will be seen as your endorsement of what Presidents Gay, Magill, and Kornbluth said to Congress and an act of complicity in their antisemitic posture. The world is watching – you can stand with your Jewish students and faculty, or you can choose the side of dangerous antisemitism.

Thank you for your attention to this critical matter.

Sincerely,

Elise M. Stefanik

Elise M. Stefanik
Member of Congress

Jared Moskowitz

Jared Moskowitz
Member of Congress

Steve Scalise

Steve Scalise
Majority Leader

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Mary E. Miller
Member of Congress

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Keith Self
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Tim Walberg
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Erin Houchin
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Andy Barr

Andy Barr
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Randy Feenstra
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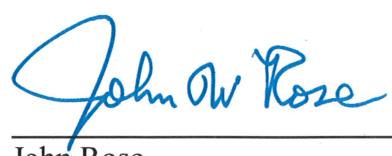
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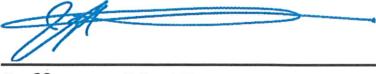
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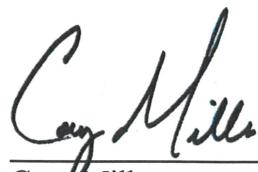
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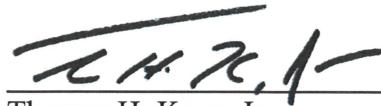
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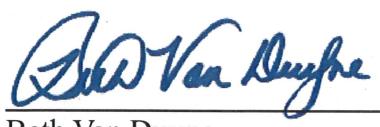
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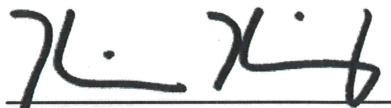
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