May 26, 2021

The Honorable Joseph R. Biden, Jr.
President of the United States
The White House
1600 Pennsylvania Ave NW
Washington, DC 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We are deeply disturbed by the recent surge of antisemitic incidents in the United States. We appreciate your Administration's commitment to combat antisemitism in all its forms by continuing to work with us to address this scourge. We also know that this issue is deeply important to you and your family.

We believe we need a united, all-of-government effort to combat rising antisemitism in this country. As you know, over the past few weeks, we have witnessed a surge in antisemitic incidents in the United States, including attacks on Jewish Americans in New York, California, and Florida. In Times Square, a group yelling antisemitic slurs viciously beat, kicked, and pepper-sprayed an unsuspecting Jewish man. In Los Angeles, a caravan of pro-Palestinian protestors descended on a restaurant in West Hollywood, demanding to know "who's Jewish?" before unleashing a violent attack on diners while yelling antisemitic slurs. In Bal Harbour, a Jewish family visiting from New Jersey, was harassed by four men in an SUV shouting, "Free Palestine, f--- you Jew, die Jew." In Tucson, Arizona, an individual threw a rock through a glass window, vandalizing Congregation Chaverim. Jews across the United States are facing an extraordinarily tense environment of fear and insecurity.

It is undeniable that this increase in antisemitic incidents has coincided with recent conflict in the Middle East. It must be made clear that there is simply no excuse whatsoever for harassing or targeting people because they are Jewish. Blaming Jews for conflict in the Middle East or seeking to hold them collectively responsible for Israel's government policies is antisemitic, and it is wrong. Given that Jews in Europe and around the world have faced a similar increase in threats in recent weeks coinciding with the conflict, we also urge you to swiftly nominate an experienced and qualified United States Ambassador-at-Large to Monitor and Combat Anti-Semitism.

Growing antisemitic incidents are being fueled from a variety of sources, including a torrent of antisemitic posts online. For instance, the Anti-Defamation League found more than 17,000 tweets in one week with some variation of the phrase, "Hitler was right."

At the same time, elected officials have used reckless, irresponsible antisemitic rhetoric. These include repeated, unacceptable, and blatantly antisemitic statements made by a Member of Congress comparing facemasks and other COVID-19 public health measures to "what happened in Nazi Germany" during the Holocaust.

We also reject comments from Members of Congress accusing Israel of being an "apartheid state" and committing "act[s] of terrorism." These statements are antisemitic at their core and contribute to a climate that is hostile to many Jews. We must never forget that less than eighty years ago, within the lifetime of

our parents and grandparents, six million people were murdered by the Nazis in the Holocaust because they were Jews. Israel has long provided the Jewish people with a homeland in which they can be safe after facing centuries of persecution.

Sadly, we have learned from our history that when this type of violence and inflammatory rhetoric goes unaddressed, it can fuel increasing hatred and violence, and lead to unspeakable acts against Jews. That is why we need a united, bipartisan, national-level commitment to confront and address the threat of antisemitism head-on. Antisemitism is wrong, and it deserves to be unequivocally condemned by all.

Thank you for your attention to this serious issue. We look forward to working with you, our colleagues, and the American Jewish community to help protect our communities from the growing threat of antisemitism.

Sincerely,

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Josh Gottheimer
Member of Congress

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Elaine G. Luria
Member of Congress

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Kathy Manning
Member of Congress

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Dean Phillips
Member of Congress