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COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

CITY COUNCIL
CITY OF NEW YORK

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TRANSCRIPT OF THE MINUTES

Of the

COMMITTEE ON HIGHER EDUCATION

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June 30, 2022
Start: 10:06 a.m.
Recess: 4:53 p.m.

HELD AT: HYBRID HEARING, COMMITTEE ROOM, 250
BROADWAY, 16TH FLOOR

B E F O R E: Eric Dinowitz,
Chairperson

COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Charles Barron
Joseph C. Borelli
Gale A. Brewer
Oswald Feliz
Inna Vernikov
Kalman Yeger

A P P E A R A N C E S

1
2
3 Glenda Grace

4 Senior Vice Chancellor of Institutional Affairs,
5 Strategic Advancement and Special Council at the
6 City University of New York

7 Robin Garrell

8 President of the CUNY Graduate Center

9 Denise Maybank

10 CUNY Chancellor for Student Affairs

11 Adela Cojab

12 David Brodsky

13 Professor of Jewish History and the Chair of the
14 Judaic studies department at Brooklyn College

15 David Herbstman

16 Master Student in Forensic Mental Health
17 Counseling in the John Jay Campus

18 Shahar Sadeh

19 Director of the Strategic Affairs at the Jewish
20 Community Relations Council of New York

21 Barry Wiener

22 Calling on the New York City Council to Denounce
23 the Antisemitic Conspiracy Theories

24 Tzvia Waronker

25 Third Year Jewish Student at John Jay College and
Vice Chair of Senior Colleges of the CUNY
University Student Senate

Alyza Lewin

Brandeis Center

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A P P E A R A N C E S (CONT.)

Zachary Beer
Simon Wiesenthal Center

Michael Cohen
Simon Wiesenthal Center

Joshua Kramer
AJC

Susan Tuchman
Director of the Center for Law and Justice at the
Zionist Organization of America

Azriel Genack
Professor of Physics at Queens College

Gerard Filitti
Attorney and Senior Counsel at the Lawfare
Project

Barbara Kitei

Michael Mirochnick

Israel David Wise
Rabbi

Ofek Preis
Israeli International Student studying at SUNY
new Paltz

James Davis
PSC CUNY

Rena Nasar First
Stand With Us

Ilya Bratman
Hillel at Baruch College

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A P P E A R A N C E S (CONT.)

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3 Scott Richman
4 Anti-Defamation League

5 Amanda Berman
6 Zioness

7 Tammi Rossman-Benjamin
8 Testify on the behalf of Layla Beckwith

9 Reni Field
10 Testifying on the behalf of Dr. Laura Shaw Frank

11 Aliyah Jacobson

12 Michael Goldstein
13 Professor at Kingsborough Community College

14 Jeffrey Lax
15 Professor and the Department Chair at
16 Kingsborough

17 Timothy Jackson
18 Criticized by Ewell Publicly

19 Mark Holland

20 Edwin Scott Fruehwald

21 Rafaella Gunz
22 Was a Student at CUNY School of Law for one
23 Semester in 2019

24 Jordy Gross
25 President of Hillel City College

Allegra Timsit
Senior at CUNY Brooklyn College

A P P E A R A N C E S (CONT.)

Lisa Rubin

Completing Second Year, Evening Student at CUNY
Law

Michael Mantell

Steve Greenbaum

Sophia Ellman-Golan

Personally Targeted by White Nationalists and
Neo-Nazis

Joshua Greenberg

CUNY student

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2 SERGEANT AT ARMS: This is a microphone test.
3 Today's date is June 30, 2022, Committee on Higher
4 Education being recorded by John Biondo, 16th Floor
5 Committee Room.

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Just let me know when the
7 webinar is running.

8 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Webinar is running.

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Thank you Chloe. Good morning
10 to everyone and welcome to today's Hybrid New York
11 City Council hearing for the Committee on Higher
12 Education. To minimize disruptions on Zoom and in
13 person, please place all electronic devices to
14 vibrate or silent. If you would like to submit
15 testimony please send via email to
16 testimony@council.nyc.gov. Again, that is
17 testimony@council.nyc.gov.

18 Thank you for your cooperation, Chair Dinowitz,
19 we are ready to begin.

20 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you. Good morning
21 everyone and welcome to today's hearing on Examining
22 Antisemitism on College Campuses. I'm Council Member
23 Eric Dinowitz, Chair of the Committee on Higher
24 Education, a proud CUNY alum and the son of a proud
25

1
2 CUNY alum. I also Chair the Council's Jewish Caucus,
3 a position which I am grateful to serve.

4 I want to know before we begin. This hearing was
5 originally scheduled for June 8th. We had prepared
6 for a June 8th hearing and the Chancellor's Office
7 had reached out about changing the date of the
8 hearing because he wanted to attend and we were
9 thrilled because this issue is so pervasive across
10 our campuses that we welcomed the attendance of the
11 Chancellor.

12 I am deeply disappointed to announce that the
13 Chancellor will not be coming and we found out
14 yesterday, last night that the Chancellor will not be
15 personally attending. Instead, he is sending
16 representatives who I hope can help us answer
17 questions and look for a path forward. Though they
18 are not also physically present, they are on Zoom.

19 And we just found out this morning one of them
20 has to leave by 11:00. The problem of antisemitism
21 is so bad at CUNY, they are being sued and being
22 investigated at multiple campuses. This is a
23 pervasive issue. This is not isolated.

24 Look, our educational institutions are essential
25 to bringing people from different backgrounds

1
2 together to build community, to build trust and a
3 safer, more prosperous future for everyone. And at a
4 time when antisemitic hate crimes are on the rise, an
5 anti-Jewish sentiment is becoming more and more
6 prevalent across all facets of society. We need the
7 leadership of city's public colleges to visibly be
8 front and center.

9 I would be remiss if I didn't acknowledge that
10 work is being done to address this some areas but the
11 fact is, so many of our CUNY students are scared.
12 Many of them feel isolated and the simple attendance
13 of the Chancellor would have sent a strong message to
14 those students and the faculty to let them know that
15 they are not alone. But the lack of personal
16 participation sends the absolute wrong message to our
17 students and faculty, and we must do better.

18 Antisemitism itself is not new. Hate is not new.
19 Antisemitism is considered the oldest form of hate.
20 Discrimination has been supported by our
21 institutions. One example is our higher education
22 institutions here in New York. Many colleges in New
23 York provide legacy preference, which gives a
24 substantial leg up to applicants with relationship to
25 alumni.

1
2 So, in 2022 in this year, this has the effect of
3 excluding many qualified low-income students and
4 particularly students of color from institutions of
5 higher learning. And that's why in addition to
6 addressing initially the oversight we're doing today,
7 uhm, I'm introducing a Resolution which calls on the
8 State Legislature to pass and the Governor to sign
9 the Fair College Admissions Act, which addresses the
10 practice of legacy preference in college admissions.
11 And while we all have a 2022 lens and it has an
12 outsize impact on students of color now and a
13 surprise to no one, the legacy preferences has its
14 roots in antisemitism.

15 100 years ago, elite universities found ways to
16 exclude the influx of Jewish immigrants and the
17 Legacy Preference was one tool that was used.

18 So, it goes without saying that hate is bad and
19 it's weird that you have to say it out loud, and
20 there are many components to where we find
21 commonalities, like the aforementioned legacy
22 preference. And antisemitism like other forms of
23 hate, has its own unique characteristics. It has to
24 be examined for its own qualities. Jews don't fit
25 neatly into any religious, racial, political or

1 ethnic category. And to quote a comedian Alex
2 Edelman, he says it best. He says, "if you're
3 someone who thinks Whiteness is good, Jews are not
4 White. If you're someone who thinks Whiteness is the
5 root of all evil, then Jews are White."

6
7 So, the purpose of today's committee hearing is
8 to examine the rapidly escalating issue of
9 antisemitism at our city's institutions of higher
10 learning and to work towards solutions to address
11 this most prevalent form of hate. Now to be clear,
12 this is not a hearing on foreign policy. While
13 discussions of topics related to foreign policy will
14 necessarily arise, the issue before the Committee is
15 not what one country or territory is doing. The issue
16 here is what we are doing in New York City, an ocean
17 away, what we're doing to confront those realities
18 and to ensure that our Jewish students and their
19 ideas are welcomed on our campuses and that we get to
20 the root of the sentiment and biases that are so
21 pervasive in our universities.

22 We're not here to talk about the Israeli
23 governments democratic decisions, but we're here to
24 talk about how Jews are harassed and attacked here in
25 New York City on our campuses and we see when there

1
2 is increased turmoil in the region. We see more
3 attacks towards Jews. We saw it last year when there
4 was turmoil in Gaza. So, they're related.

5 And when I say that anti-Jewish acts are
6 pervasive, it's not hyperbole. When I say that it is
7 the most prevalent form of hate that we can see, it's
8 not an exaggeration. And when I say it's imbedded in
9 our society, that's uncomfortable for some. I don't
10 really care, but you have to look at the statistics.
11 The statistics tell you everything. 45 percent of
12 the bias motivated crimes in 2020 in New York City
13 according to the NYPD Hates Dashboard, Hate Crimes
14 Dashboard, 45 percent were anti-Jewish.

15 Almost half were anti-Jewish and in 2021, it
16 increased by 71 percent. Antisemitic hate crimes are
17 not unique to New York City. They occur across our
18 entire state. ADL reports that from 2020 to 2021,
19 New York State saw an increase of 24 percent and in
20 the United States, they calculate they are an average
21 of seven reported incidence per day.

22 Now, one of the other problems we face is that
23 there is not a sound method of tracking hate
24 incidents on our college campuses. So, in that
25

1
2 absence, International began accounting for incidents
3 reported.

4 In 2021, they had seen an increase of 35 percent
5 of incidents from the previous year. And again, I
6 keep saying this, reported incidents. Survey
7 research finds disturbing trends of growing hostility
8 toward Jews. 32 percent of respondents to this
9 survey said that they personally experienced
10 antisemitism directed at them on campus. And 31
11 percent witnessed antisemitic activity on campus. In
12 total, 43 percent of respondents, almost half of
13 people who were surveyed said they experienced and/or
14 witnessed antisemitic activity in the last year.

15 And I think what's deeply troubling and one of
16 the things that we need to discuss today and I know
17 some of the witnesses will speak about, is that the
18 data reveal a lack of sound reporting. 75 percent of
19 respondents who personally experience antisemitism
20 didn't and 41 percent did not know how to do it.

21 That's why I've introduced Resolution 238. It
22 calls upon CUNY to compile data on bias incidents and
23 hate crimes into a single report, include greater
24 specificity in the bias classification but
25 importantly, engage in an education campaign or

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2 initiative to ensure that our faculty and our staff
3 and our students know how to report this and know
4 that they can and should report it and know that it
5 can and should be addressed and not ignored for a
6 year, as you'll hear about later.

7 I'll tell you, personally to me, I think what's
8 hardest as an American Jew, is that in the same
9 report, 39 percent of American Jews said they changed
10 their behavior to avoid revealing that they were
11 Jewish to feel shame or fear for who they are. But
12 if statistics aren't enough, all you have to do is
13 open a newspaper. As I mentioned before,
14 antisemitism goes across the entire political
15 spectrum. In a time of hyperpolarization, both the
16 far right and the far left have found their
17 commonalities and their version of antisemitism.

18 So, in the far left spaces under the guides of
19 social justice, we see a prevalent climate activist
20 group refusing to march in a voting rights march with
21 Jewish groups because they are Jewish organizations.
22 LGBTQ rights activists, where a star of David on a
23 pride flag, star of David is a Jewish symbol, where
24 ejected from a Chicago LGBTQ pride march for having
25 that star of David on their pride flag.

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2 There are a lot of disturbing incidents that
3 exclude you as people but I think the most recent one
4 that troubles me is the creation and promotion by the
5 Boston Chapter of the BDS movement, Boston BDS of a
6 map of Jewish organizations. Including a high
7 school, a center for people with disabilities, Jewish
8 charities, synagogues, student groups and newspapers
9 and a handful of non-Jewish organizations associated
10 with Jewish organizations blaming these groups for
11 problems throughout the world. Perpetuating
12 antisemitic tropes of wealth and power with a call to
13 dismantle and disrupt these institutions putting a
14 literal target on these organizations backs.

15 But as I said, it's the tropes of wealth and
16 power, the scapegoating of Jews, the effort to remove
17 Jews from certain spaces is not limited to the far
18 left. I think quite recently many Americans learned
19 of the great replacement theory on the far right.
20 It's this false and dangerous conspiracy theory
21 rooted in White Supremacy, which states that non-
22 White people are being brought to the United States
23 to replace White voters and that the Jews are the
24 elites. The ones with all that power, responsible
25 for this replacement scheme.

1
2 We see this paraded and far right media and it's
3 even creeping from the fringes into mainstream media.
4 We remember chants of Jews will not replace us and
5 unite the right rally in Charleston and the massacre
6 at the Tree of Life Synagogue, where the murder of
7 blame the Jews for bring non-White immigrants and
8 refugees to the U.S.

9 You know, I know some people watching may feel as
10 though I'm sensationalizing this. I'm bringing up
11 the most overact but that's typically all we see. We
12 only see the end points of hate. We only see
13 antisemitism once it makes a headline or once there's
14 bodily harm. No one is born with hate in their
15 heart, it is learned, it grows, and is given a safe
16 space. And too often, these safe spaces are our
17 college campuses.

18 In testimony, you're going to hear today the
19 reality of exclusion based on tropes deeply embedded
20 in our society exists on our college campuses. Where
21 young minds are being molded and prepared to be sent
22 out into the world. Students are afraid to speak
23 out. Some had to share their stories with me
24 anonymously. Others as mentioned earlier, just don't
25 report things or rely on their friends to do it for

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2 them and are still met with silence. In many
3 instances, Jewish student organizations are
4 explicitly excluded from working with other campus
5 organizations. Our movements are made in order for
6 that exclusion to exist and throughout CUNY, CUNY
7 administration's silence is damning.

8 By the time a hate crime has occurred, it's too
9 late. The seeds of hate were planted years before
10 and the anti-Jewish sentiment was given space to
11 grow. I'll note that while Columbia and NYU have
12 submitted written testimony only, although anyone who
13 follows the news knows that there are issues
14 prevalent there as well. I look forward to hearing
15 how CUNY is addressing this obvious growth in
16 antisemitism and how they are systemically working
17 toward a better, more inclusive future for all of our
18 students.

19 Again, I am disappointed that the Chancellor is
20 not here to listen to this testimony firsthand and to
21 offer what I think could be valuable solutions given
22 that his past actions have seemingly indicated that
23 he's supportive of this cause and I know we'll hear
24 more about that from some of our other witnesses
25 later.

1
2 And before I turn it over, I want to just read a
3 few lines from some of the anonymous testimony. And
4 it's varied where a student on campus said, "we need
5 Hitler again." Again to the silence of professors
6 not addressing it, the student unfortunately left our
7 CUNY system. Students on another campus called for
8 the murder of Jews and they are afraid for their
9 physical safety.

10 The student government out of CUNY was
11 comfortable posting one sided hateful messages
12 against Israel and not engaging in an actual dialogue
13 and the student feels isolated by the student
14 leaders, her peers, and faculty. 15 students were
15 praying during Minhah, during morning prayers. A
16 student walked by and said, dirty Jews. Not
17 addressed.

18 A swastika was found in the bathroom by a student
19 their freshman year, swastika. In one of our
20 universities, human feces was used to draw the star
21 of David on a building wall and this student was
22 scared to show that they were Jewish for weeks.

23 More, there's a lot more, I won't read all of
24 them. Uhm, in one class, students asking, "why are
25 we even still talking about the Holocaust? Jews are

1
2 all so rich, they have so much power." Met with
3 sounds from Jewish, from the professors while the
4 students snicker about their Jewish professors. On
5 Zoom, they hear jokes about Jews in ovens and what
6 the student says, "there is no one there to protect
7 me."

8 I'm going to leave it there and turn it back to
9 Committee Counsel but I do look forward to hearing
10 how were recognizing this problem and how it's being
11 addressed.

12 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Good morning, I will
13 administering the oath to the members of CUNY who are
14 on the Zoom. I will read the oath and then you will
15 be unmuted one at a time by a member of our staff to
16 confirm.

17 Do you affirm to tell the truth, the whole truth
18 and nothing but the truth in your testimony before
19 this Committee and to respond honestly to Council
20 Member questions?

21 GLENDA GRACE: I do.

22 DENISE MAYBANK: I do.

23 ROBIN GARRELL: I do.

24 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Can you please confirm?

25 ROBIN GARRELL: I do.

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2 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Thank you. Just one moment,
3 the Council Members in attendance are also going to
4 give opening remarks.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Good afternoon
6 everyone. My name is Inna Vernikov, I'm the Council
7 Member for the 48th Council District in Brooklyn. I
8 want to thank first of all Chair, Chair Dinowitz for
9 holding this hearing. It is an incredibly important
10 hearing and an incredibly important subject,
11 antisemitism at CUNY. The antisemitism at CUNY has
12 been pervasive. It's infested many of the colleges.
13 There are 26 CUNY campuses in New York City. The
14 Jewish students and the professors all feel harassed,
15 intimidated, afraid to express their view points,
16 afraid to be pro-Israel, afraid to just attend
17 school. And we're here to listen to their painful
18 testimonies and their trauma. And this hearing was
19 supposed to take place on June 8th and the Chancellor
20 of CUNY, the top guy, the guy in charge. The man
21 under whose watch, the antisemitism is taking place,
22 said that it's important for him to be here today.

23 So, we rescheduled that hearing to today and
24 yesterday, in a very cowardly move, he decided not to
25 appear. He canceled. Instead, he sent three

1 witnesses who are here on Zoom. They're not here.
2 They're not even here in this room to listen to the
3 painful testimony of the professors and the students
4 who have experienced pervasive ongoing discrimination
5 and antisemitism at school.

6
7 And it is extremely disappointing that not a
8 single member of the CUNY administration showed up
9 here today. And I said this earlier at the press
10 conference, I'm happy to pay for your Uber or I'll
11 give you a metro card to come here to hear the
12 testimony of the people who some of them came from a
13 different state.

14 The Chancellor not showing up today is
15 perpetuating the antisemitism that we're here to
16 explore, because there has been no accountability at
17 CUNY. No one has been held responsible for what's
18 been going on all over our city and our state. And
19 we were looking forward to having the Chancellor
20 here, to hear all of the testimony. And so, him not
21 showing up, is showing us all that he doesn't care.
22 He doesn't care to hear about your painful testimony
23 and trauma you have experienced. It's not important.

24 And my question is, would the same thing happen
25 if this was a discussion about any other ethnic

1
2 minority? Would the Chancellor dear not show up? If
3 we were talking about any other group that's been
4 discriminated against, would he sit there in his cozy
5 chair in midtown Manhattan and dear not show up here?
6 I submit to you that he would not. I submit to you
7 that he would be here. He would never get away with
8 not showing up but when it comes Jews, do Jewish
9 lives matter?

10 I'm looking forward to hearing the testimony of
11 the professors and the students who are here today.
12 I'm looking forward to questioning the witnesses who
13 are on Zoom. I still hope that you will come. I'm
14 assuming that all of you have set out today to
15 testify and I'm assuming that you're somewhere a
16 couple blocks away here in Manhattan and I'm asking
17 you to show up in here in person. Thank you.

18 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you Council Member
19 Vernikov. Council Member Yeger.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Thank you Mr. Chairman and
21 thank you for convening this important hearing today.
22 And to my colleague next door here in this room and
23 also next door in our neighborhoods back in Brooklyn,
24 Councilwoman Vernikov, who has been a passionate
25 advocate on this topic since she joined this body and

1 we, this body desperately needs passionate advocates.
2 You can look at this table to see it. There are four
3 members of a 51 member body who are here. Two
4 republicans and two democrats. There should be 51
5 members listening to this because this didn't start
6 yesterday. This didn't start yesterday, this has
7 been going on at CUNY for long enough ago that when I
8 was going to college, the child of two CUNY graduates
9 both from Brooklyn college, my parents made a
10 decision that I would not go to CUNY. Because a CUNY
11 college was not safe for an identifiably orthodox
12 student. And they made the same decision for my
13 three siblings. It shouldn't be that way in New York
14 City. CUNY was once the preeminent educational
15 institute. It's the place where people dreamed that
16 they would go to college. It's the place where
17 immigrants, so many Jews were able to go and get an
18 education. And today, it's a bash of antisemitism.

19 It's a place where not just students being made
20 to feel uncomfortable but students' lives feeling -
21 of being felt to be in jeopardy because of who they
22 are. Because of that they believe. And it's not
23 just from fellow students, it's from their
24 professors. When the Professional Services Congress,
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2 the union representing the professors, the educators,
3 pass Resolutions saying how much they hate Israel,
4 it's okay, they don't hate Jews, just Israel, just
5 Israel.

6 You declare my friend that you do not hate the
7 Jews, you are merely antizionist. Antisemitism, the
8 hatred of the Jewish people has been and remains a
9 blot on the sole of mankind. So, also know this,
10 antizionist is inherently antisemitic and ever will
11 be so. I wish those were my words. Those were the
12 words of Dr. Martin Luther King in 1967.

13 He understood that and that's what he preached.
14 To be antizionist is a cover for what you really are.
15 You're an anti-semi and it's not something we're just
16 seeing at CUNY campuses, it's something we're seeing
17 in the United States Congress. It's something we saw
18 here in the City Council three years ago. It's
19 something we saw here in the City Council five or six
20 years ago when a BDS Resolution was passed by my
21 predecessor Councilman David Greenfield. And the
22 vehement antisemitism that was heard then.

23 I know there are people in this room, some of my
24 friends who provide security for this Council, the
25 Sergeants at Arms who are people I know since I was a

1
2 teenager and worked at this body, who remember those
3 hearings very well. And feeling that Council Members
4 lives were in jeopardy by the vehement antisemitism
5 that was showing up. This is New York City. This is
6 the place where Jews came to live a life like so many
7 other immigrants. Very few people in this city are
8 descendants of the people who came here on the
9 Mayflower. Everybody here is an immigrant.
10 Everybody here is from somewhere else and like
11 Council Member Vernikov, we are also immigrants
12 ourselves with the children of immigrants. My father
13 came here on a boat with his brother and his parents
14 and uh, he and my mother were the first of their
15 generation to go to college, a CUNY college. That's
16 New York City and to be made to feel unwelcome in our
17 own city, to be made to feel like Jews don't belong
18 here, like Chairman alluded to, is the most heinous
19 antisemitism and they hide it. They hide it. They
20 say they're not anti-semi's, they just don't like
21 Israel.

22 Today, we're going to hear more about that in
23 real life stories and we'll hear from CUNY,
24 representatives not the Chancellor. Uh, telling us
25

1
2 what it is that they've done and I suspect it's not a
3 lot of anything. Thank you very much Mr. Chairman.

4 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you Council Member
5 Yeger. We will now turn it over to CUNY for their
6 opening remarks.

7 GLENDA GRACE: Good morning Chair Dinowitz and
8 members of the New York City Council on Higher
9 Education, staff and guests. I'm Glenda Grace,
10 Senior Vice Chancellor of Institutional Affairs,
11 Strategic Advancement and Special Council at the City
12 University of New York. I am joined this morning by
13 President Robin Garrell of the CUNY Graduate Center
14 and the CUNY Chancellor for Student Affairs Denise
15 Maybank.

16 As you know, CUNY serves approximately 268,000
17 degree seeking students, 185 adult and continuing ed
18 students. There's about 40,000 faculty and staff at
19 our 11 four year colleges. Our seven community
20 colleges and seven graduate and professional schools.
21 I've had the privilege of working at CUNY for 13
22 years at Hostos Community College, at Queens College
23 and since 2019, at the central office.

24 The Council has been steadfast in your support of
25 CUNY and we thank you for that support. As an

1
2 institution of higher learning, the City University
3 of New York takes pride in our unwavering support of
4 free speech, academic freedom and freedoms protected
5 under the first amendment of the constitution of the
6 United States.

7 We are legally required to allow the expression
8 of multiple view points on campus. We understand
9 that opinions of a political nature can create
10 tensions when members of our communities stand on
11 conflicting sides of polarizing issues and cause that
12 are under guarded by deeply held convictions. We
13 believe the best way to counter the resulting discord
14 is to expand upon the work we do across our campuses
15 to encourage scholarship, dialogue, tolerance and
16 civil engagement that fosters understanding and a way
17 forward.

18 This is the hard and ongoing work that we need to
19 embrace to counter violence, hate, antisemitism, and
20 racism that can creep into our campuses, our country
21 and the world. Diversity, inclusion and environment
22 free from discrimination are central to the mission
23 of the university.

24 CUNY unequivocally denounces antisemitism in
25 every form. Arguably the country's most diverse

1
2 urban university, CUNY is not immune from tensions
3 between different groups. It's not immune from the
4 problems that you've described. Chancellor Felix
5 Matos Rodriguez has focused on elevating dialogue and
6 building brick bridges between people and groups of
7 different backgrounds, whose belief and diversion
8 experience and history sometimes place them at odds.

9 This focus is evidenced by one of the Chancellors
10 early ask of former City Council Speaker Corey
11 Johnson. Funding for newly created CUNY diversity
12 equity and inclusion incubator. A multiyear
13 initiative to support campuses and creating vital
14 cultural and systematic shifts across CUNY, centering
15 values of anti-racism, justice and equity.

16 Thank you for the Council's continued support of
17 this important initiative. Now, this is not the only
18 concrete action CUNY has taken to deal with
19 antisemitism. CUNY has been outspoken and
20 unequivocal about the crime, the increase in
21 antisemitic violence and bigotry in New York and the
22 nation. Over the past year, the University has
23 issued four statements that emphasize the role that
24 higher education can and must play in dismantling the
25

1
2 many manifestations of bigotry and hate that have
3 emerged and continue to spread.

4 Let me summarize those messages. First, the
5 university made it abundantly clear that CUNY student
6 and faculty senates, its faculty union, and various
7 membership groups are free to voice opinions on a
8 wide range of issues but speak for themselves when
9 they do so. The positions they express are entirely
10 theirs and do not represent the views of the City
11 University of New York.

12 Further, the university has asserted and
13 consistently reiterate that we do not support boycott
14 divestment and sanctions against Israel and pursuant
15 to New York State Executive Order 157, we cannot,
16 we're prohibited from participating in or supporting
17 such actions and we're actually required to divest
18 public funds from any companies that do.

19 Also, the University clarified the process by
20 which a student speaker was selected to deliver
21 remarks at the 2022 law school commencement. Student
22 commencement speakers are chosen by their fellow
23 graduates to deliver remarks. They speak for
24 themselves, not on behalf of their school or the
25

1 University and the opinions they express are their
2 own.
3

4 Statements are important but we understand that
5 more has to be done. We have been working on that.
6 Also, students, staff and faculty who feel they can
7 discriminate against or harass are able to bring a
8 complaint under our equal opportunity and non-
9 discrimination policy. The policy protects against
10 discrimination based upon different characteristics
11 including being Jewish and harassment from all
12 protective characteristics.

13 Student members can go through student affairs,
14 campus diversity officers or the public safety
15 officers to make such a report and faculty and staff
16 can go to Human Resource Department, the Chief
17 Diversity Officers and Public Safety Officers.

18 As I stated, CUNY is engaged every day in the
19 hard, ongoing, and imperative work that we need to
20 embrace to counter violence, hate, antisemitism and
21 racism that exists in the world. Let me just give
22 you a sample of some of this work. In early April
23 2022, Chancellor Matos Rodriguez, several CUNY
24 presidents, student administrators and I, attended
25 the two day seminar on campus antisemitism sponsored

1
2 by the American Jewish Council and partnership with
3 Hillel International and the American Council on
4 Education.

5 In late April 2022, Chancellor Matos Rodriguez
6 led a delegation of 12 CUNY college presidents and
7 deans to Israel to participate in a week-long tour of
8 country city's, higher education institutions and
9 historic sites. This scholars bridge program was
10 organized by the Jewish Community Relations Council
11 of New York and you will hear more about this from
12 President Garrell from the Graduate Center.

13 There are other central and campus initiatives
14 and activities combating hate in general and
15 antisemitism specifically. CUNY recently hired a
16 University Dean of student into cultural engagement
17 and dialogue. This newly established position, which
18 you'll hear more about from Vice Chancellor Maybank
19 is to help student communities that have historically
20 experienced conflicts and tensions associated with
21 faith perspectives, race and ethnicity and
22 intercultural communication.

23 The person who is heading it up is no stranger to
24 CUNY. She helped fund – the City Council funded –
25 She help found the City Council funded diversity

1
2 incubator and she worked at the Center for Ethnic and
3 Racial and Religious Understanding at Queens College.
4 You will hear more again about this from Vice
5 Chancellor Maybank.

6 I want to give you a sampling of campus efforts
7 that foster an inclusive environment, allowing all
8 CUNY students, faculty and staff to learn, dialogue
9 and thrive. We are working with academic engagement
10 networks, Antisemitism Education Initiative. This
11 has been adopted by at Baruch at the Hillel at Baruch
12 and they're partnering with City Council and John
13 Jay.

14 We Stand Against Hate which was a program that
15 was sponsored at Brooklyn College, that featured
16 lectures and other events that help celebrate the
17 voices that make up a diverse campus community.
18 Confronting antisemitism, the Center of Jewish
19 Studies at Hunter College with a donation from a -
20 versus survivors started and just launched a
21 semester, a semester long program to educate about
22 the Holocaust and about antisemitism and methods to
23 combat it.

24 No place for hate was a day in April at the
25 College of Staten Island where different officers at

1
2 Staten Island include the campus allowed and the
3 Office of Pluralism and Diversity made a safe space
4 for students, faculty, and others in the campus
5 community to talk about their experiences and create
6 a safe space to discuss and combat this.

7 Love Not Hate Summit, which was actually May 22,
8 at Kingsborough Community College, brought together a
9 diverse group of religious leaders and also students
10 from the DOE, as well as from Kingsborough Community
11 College. And they developed – young people were able
12 to strategize and develop action plans to mobilize
13 their diverse communities away from hate and toward
14 love that's needed to heal and move communities
15 forward.

16 American's in the holocaust at the New York City
17 College of Technology Library, they secured the
18 exhibit about American's in the Holocaust. They were
19 one of only 50 institutions that partnered with the
20 United States Holocaust and Memorial Museum and the
21 American Library Association. We had individuals
22 from Israeli Hope in Academia visit Queens College,
23 where they talked about information and how to
24 explore collaborations. Under siege again,
25 distortion and the rise of hate crimes against Jews.

1
2 This program was sponsored at Queensborough's
3 Community Colleges Kupferberg Holocaust Center and it
4 featured someone from the Hate Crimes unit at
5 Queensborough Queens District Attorney Office, as
6 well as someone from the Simon Wiesenthal Center.
7 There's a potential partnership with the Yad Vashem,
8 the world holocaust remembrance that is being
9 explored by KCC's Kupferberg Holocaust Center, which
10 would including many of workshops training and
11 programs on the holocaust, holocaust distortion and
12 antisemitism.

13 A number of schools regularly sponsor programs on
14 International Holocaust Remembrance Day and in
15 commemoration of Kristallnacht and a number of
16 schools have held listening sessions with Jewish
17 students about their experiences on campus. We're
18 living in very challenging times and CUNY is not
19 exempt from experiencing those same challenges.
20 However, CUNY is committed to fostering environment
21 where all faculty, staff, students can work, teach
22 and learn, thrive and reach their full potential.

23 Thank you for your attention and I now ask
24 President Garrell to discuss the trip to Israel and
25 she will be followed by Vice Chancellor Maybank.

1
2 ROBIN GARRELL: Thank you and good morning. I'm
3 Robin Garrell, the President of the CUNY Graduate
4 Center. It is my privilege to join Chancellor Matos-
5 Rodriguez and CUNY Presidents and Deans on our recent
6 study toward Israel scholars as bridge builders,
7 which is hosted by the Jewish Community Relations
8 Council of New York.

9 The study afforded opportunities to gain new
10 perspectives on the region, the people and higher
11 education in Israel and the West Bank. At the
12 Graduate Center, we train students to conduct
13 research by consulting primary sources. And on the
14 study tour, we visited historic sites and memorials
15 including the Old City, Masada, Yad Vashem and
16 experience Kabbalat Shabbat at the Western Wall and
17 learned about Jewish Ethiopian cultural at the Tay
18 Center in Tel Aviv.

19 We met with educational leaders from Hebrew
20 University, Tel Aviv University and Sapir College
21 with President Isaac Herzog under the former
22 Administer of higher education for the Palestinian
23 authority. And we heard directly from diverse
24 students and recent graduates including an orthodox
25 Jewish woman, an Arab Israeli living in East

1
2 Jerusalem and a Palestinian living in Ramallah. And
3 they related their personal journeys. Described the
4 challenges of daily life and shared their hopes for
5 the future of their communities. And they were very,
6 very generous and candid in responding to our
7 questions.

8 We also met with many experts on the region,
9 journalists, political scientists, former politicians
10 and community leaders. They engage with us as
11 colleges and as teachers and they described their
12 efforts to work purposely to foster constructive
13 dialogue across differences and to advance the
14 wellbeing of all members of society.

15 Common themes emerge from our discussions and
16 foremost in my mind, is the value the people place on
17 higher education and the shared commitment to
18 broadening access for students who are
19 underrepresented in colleges and universities.
20 People there, just like here, recognize the
21 transformative value of education in advancing
22 knowledge and socioeconomic equality. Opening career
23 opportunities, improving the economy of the region
24 and many of the barriers there have parallels here in
25 New York City.

1
2 Perhaps most importantly, we learned about
3 efforts and effective ways that campus and local
4 leaders there are developing community and sharing
5 cultural experiences and supporting constructive
6 dialogue. Faculty, staff and students the CUNY
7 graduate center are committed to fostering an
8 inclusive environment that respects the identities
9 and beliefs of individuals even as we engage in
10 intellectually challenging conversations.

11 We recognize that antisemitism is antithetical to
12 that commitment. And I'll highlight three examples
13 of our recent work. Through public events and
14 seminars, the Center for the Study of the Holocaust,
15 genocide and crimes against humanity at the graduate
16 center has focused attention on the phenomenon of
17 Jews displaced by antisemitism and anti-Jewish
18 violence, both historically and in modern times.

19 The 2019 inauguration of Photonics Initiative at
20 the CUNY Advanced Science Research Center, featured a
21 U.S. Middle East conference on photonics and it
22 highlight the contributions of scientists from all
23 countries in the middle east and called for the free
24 exchange of ideas. A principle that we uphold across
25 the Graduate Center. And notably, seven Graduate

1
2 Center and CUNY faculty joined more than 200 eminent
3 scholars from around the world as original signers of
4 the 2021 Jerusalem Declaration on antisemitism.

5 Administrator and faculty leaders on my campus,
6 as Glenda Grace noted, regularly affirm our
7 commitment to supporting an inclusive climate and to
8 preventing and addressing discrimination and bias.
9 Students, faculty and staff are provided information
10 on how to report experiences and concerns and we have
11 established follow-up procedures. And I meet
12 personally, regularly with my student affairs staff
13 and the Chief Diversity Officer to learn about all
14 allegations of discrimination and bias and work with
15 them to ensure we are following up our established
16 procedures to address those things appropriately.

17 At the Graduate Center with our commitment to
18 doctoral and master's education for the public good,
19 we have a vital role in challenging racism,
20 antisemitism and all forms of discrimination, locally
21 and gullably by advancing knowledge, by creating
22 paths for change through teaching, the search and
23 public engagement.

24 And as the President, I am always open to
25 conversations with the campus community, particularly

1
2 with our many diversity, equity and inclusion
3 councils that are at the program and unit level at
4 the graduate center. And I feel that my experiences
5 gage with primary sources on the JCRC study, will
6 help me better navigate campus conversations that
7 could become polarized and cause members of our
8 community to feel marginalized or silenced.

9 Fundamentally, this trip fortified my commitment
10 to fostering academic engagement and discourse that
11 will advance knowledge for the common good. I now
12 turn to Denise Maybank.

13 DENISE MAYBANK: Good morning. Chairperson
14 Dinowitz and members of the Committee on Higher
15 Education, thank you for the opportunity to provide
16 testimony as you examine antisemitism on college
17 campuses. I am going to pause to acknowledge the
18 experiences that you shared this morning.
19 Experiences voiced by students from CUNY and other
20 places that tell us of fear, intimidation and
21 marginalization and I don't want to just move into
22 the testimony without acknowledging the information
23 that you provided and the specific experiences of
24 individuals you shared.

1
2 So, I wanted you to know, I heard you. My name
3 is Denise Maybank and I am honored to serve as the
4 Vice Chancellor for Student Affairs for the City
5 University of New York. I had the privilege of
6 coming before you on prior occasions and I return to
7 briefly share what we are doing and plan to do as we
8 respond to the broad societal concerns about
9 antisemitism and consider the impact on the CUNY
10 campuses and among our students.

11 In the wake of increasing polarization,
12 ignorance, acts of violence and hate inspired
13 activity, numerous colleges and universities along
14 with higher education organizations and associations
15 have taken up the concern of how best to use the
16 education platform to address the current state of
17 civil discourse or not so civil discourse and to
18 promote diversity, equity and inclusion.

19 Colleges and Universities are intended to be
20 places for intellectual exchange on controversial
21 topics and matters. It is when the intellectual
22 meets the personal. Interpersonal and emotional
23 aspects of our being that we find more challenging
24 experiences and need to consider how best to engage
25 diverse perspectives and people for a greater good.

1
2 Commitment to first amendment rights and free
3 speech is critical for assuring we provide students
4 an engaged learning environment. Means for
5 maintaining civility and ways of managing
6 disagreement. It is our responsibility to help those
7 participating in the experience and purpose of higher
8 education to build global competencies and pass on
9 the skills that support the open exchange of ideas in
10 the interest of advancing knowledge.

11 The Hillel College Guide for 2021 lists six of
12 the CUNY campuses among the top 60 public
13 universities by Jewish student population. Two CUNY
14 campuses are in the top ten. That is Brooklyn
15 College, [INAUDIBLE 1:08:43] at number seven and
16 Queens College at number eight.

17 Regardless, the numbers, the targeting and
18 marginalization of any group of students requires our
19 attention and concerted effort to be responsive to
20 the identified needs and concerns.

21 Attention has been given to the concerns of
22 Jewish students through meetings with Hillel students
23 held once in the fall and once in the spring
24 semester. The initial meeting allows students to
25 share their concerns and to offer solutions for

1
2 creating what they believe would be a more inclusive
3 environment.

4 The students sought support for people being
5 accepted for their personal views, rather than their
6 affiliations. The follow-up meeting generated
7 interest in having regularly scheduled meetings to
8 stay abreast of concerns and actions. And when I
9 reference these meetings, I want you to know that was
10 a meeting held with me and other members of the
11 student affairs central office team.

12 The Interfaith Council is a group of CUNY based
13 faith leaders, faculty advisors, and student affairs
14 professionals who meet quarterly in order to share
15 faith-based and intersectional issues associated with
16 the campuses. The Council developed the Interfaith
17 Calendar being used to keep the CUNY community
18 informed of significant holidays that may be observed
19 by many different faiths. The Council is currently
20 focused on identifying and establishing dedicated
21 prayer, reflection and meditation spaces across the
22 CUNY campuses.

23 We will also be reconstituting the Community
24 Advisory Board, consisting of Interfaith
25 practitioners and faith-based community organization

1
2 directors from the five boroughs. There will be
3 representation from Jewish organizations that can
4 advise on best practices for issues that affect
5 Jewish students.

6 We take seriously the challenges of preparing
7 students and other members of the college community
8 to take on the difficult conversations necessary for
9 global engagement. Recognizing much of the
10 challenges begins much closer to home and in
11 experience. For this reason, we have established the
12 position of University Director of Student
13 Intercultural engagement and dialogue. You heard
14 Senior Vice Chancellor make reference to this
15 position, which is to develop and administer programs
16 and resources that facilitate outreach and engagement
17 among student communities that have historically
18 experienced conflict and tensions associated with
19 faith perspectives, race and ethnicity and
20 intercultural communication.

21 This position will enable dialogues, training and
22 understanding around critical concepts including
23 antisemitism, racism, xenophobia, Islamophobia, and
24 will facilitate the unpacking of how associated lived
25 experiences are inextricably bound up with the

1
2 intersectional elements of identity. The primary
3 initiative under the auspices of this new position
4 will be that of creating a fellowship program
5 designed to bring those of seemingly desperate
6 backgrounds together through shared experience. To
7 learn about and from one another using the cultural
8 benefits of the City of New York.

9 The Interfaith student fellowship will help
10 students meet and deepen relationships across
11 differences. Learn and understand more about each
12 other's religious identities and work together to
13 create a better campus climate. Training will
14 include creating brave spaces for conversation. How
15 to have and facilitate difficult conversations across
16 difference. Understanding each other's religious and
17 intersectional identities and how to dispel violence
18 and hatred based on religious and other identities.

19 Experiences will be developed in partnership with
20 the CUNY Cultural Corp taking advantage of the New
21 York City Canvas in order to have experiential
22 understanding of identity. Going to cultural
23 centers, faith-based spaces, such as synagogues,
24 mosques, churches, museums, plays and other art-based
25 experiences.

1
2 Student Affairs leaders are working with faith-
3 based and religious leaders of the Jewish community
4 to assist us in the development of curriculum and
5 training for students in addressing antisemitism and
6 other social divisions.

7 The work of the University Director of Student
8 Intercultural Engagement will focus on creating ways
9 to build skills and understanding for intercultural
10 engagement across various points of tension
11 experienced among the student population.

12 Over the summer, we will be working to put
13 together student faith-based affinity groups. The
14 first affinity group meeting with a Jewish student
15 affinity group, put together with the help of several
16 Hillel directors was held Thursday, June 2nd.

17 Students discussed issues of concern and will work
18 towards ways to mitigate those concerns and ensure a
19 good campus climate for all based on religious and
20 intersectional identities.

21 We will also work diligently to ensure that the
22 mechanisms to report instances of antisemitic
23 activity are well-known and readily available. We
24 must address the ignorance that fuels antisemitism
25 and other forms of discrimination and groundless

1
2 hatred. It remains our responsibility to assure all
3 students, faculty and staff choosing to be a part of
4 CUNY, feel safe and welcome on our campuses
5 regardless of their background, identity or
6 membership in protecting classes or affinity members.

7 We will not shrink away from our responsibility
8 to advance knowledge and we will embrace our
9 opportunity to fill capacity among and impact the
10 lives and understanding of the approximately 260,000
11 students, choosing to study and be a part – choosing
12 to study at and be a part of CUNY. Thank you.

13 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you all for your
14 testimony. I have a few questions. I'm then going
15 to turn it over to my colleagues and then we'll do
16 another round of questioning. But first, I want to
17 recognize we've been joined by Council Member Brewer
18 and Minority Leader Joe Borelli.

19 So, I was taking a lot of notes while you were
20 all testifying and I know we have our prewritten
21 questions but I just, I kind of want to talk about
22 just ask first about free speech. And I am not here
23 to talk about an individual speaker. I know that was
24 brought up on the testimony but that's not what I'm
25 here to do. It's not about one speaker, it's about

1
2 the speech that is going on on campuses that includes
3 things like swastikas, right. That is a form of
4 speech.

5 At what point does CUNY say, CUNY, the entire
6 organization and their schools, and direct the
7 schools, the individual campuses to start having the
8 conversation about what speech is dangerous and makes
9 life more dangerous for Jewish students?

10 GLENDA GRACE: Let me start with that. I think
11 the conversation is ongoing. Many of the activities
12 that we discussed involve people getting together and
13 educating themselves about what's going on and what
14 isn't going on right. What should be going on, what
15 should be said, what shouldn't be said. So, those
16 conversations are starting but that's also one of the
17 reasons why we hired the new university director of
18 student intercultural engagement and dialogue.

19 Part of the work that's going to be done is to
20 talk about what you know - there used to be uh, work
21 that we did about what's hurtful and what's hateful,
22 what's harmful, what's illegal. Those are part of
23 the conversations that we are having now. Uhm, in
24 terms of swastika's, just to kind of explain, I had
25 mentioned that I was on a campus for nine years and

1
2 realistically with someone, it's pretty straight
3 forward when there's uh, it's hurtful and it's
4 harmful, let's just start with that.

5 When there's a swastika or any other anti-Jewish
6 or anti-hate symbol put on a building or on a wall,
7 or on a bulletin board. And we immediately, there's
8 - immediately what happens, what I've directed people
9 to do when I've been on campus is immediately contact
10 the police department right. Because in order for
11 there to be a crime that's prosecuted, they have to
12 have evidence. So, we immediately reach out to the
13 local public police department. So, a photo was
14 taken. We also make sure that people are not
15 continually confronted with this hateful image, so we
16 might cover it up. We might make sure people don't
17 go near there until the police get there, take a
18 picture of it and then we look at cameras to see if
19 there is uhm, if you can find out who the perpetrator
20 is, right. Even if the police department decided not
21 to move forward with the prosecution, there are still
22 things that we can do if that is a member of our
23 community. Even if there is no prosecution. We can
24 still do things. We can bring disciplinary charges,

1
2 a number of things that we can do for faculty staff
3 and students.

4 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: So, you know again, it is
5 not just, as I mentioned in my opening statement, it
6 not just the existence of the swastika and the SU
7 sample but the environment that allowed that student
8 to feel comfortable in the first place to draw the
9 swastika and have you — have you ever engaged in
10 disciplinary measures against students for things
11 like swastika and hate speech? And is that
12 information that you can share with us? Not the
13 names of the students obviously but data as it
14 relates to that.

15 GLENDA GRACE: Look, if I can give you — it's not
16 uh — if there was a video of a student who was
17 putting any hate speech, like a swastika or anti KKK,
18 there's certainly charges and disciplinary charges
19 that could be brought against them.

20 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: No, I appreciate that.

21 GLENDA GRACE: Right now, I'm sorry, I can
22 collect that data for you but I don't have it.

23 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Yeah, because my question
24 wasn't what can you do? Because you said previously
25 in your answer, even if the police don't do

1
2 something, we can bring disciplinary charges. I'm
3 asking if that's something that's actually done?

4 GLENDA GRACE: I will give you an answer to that
5 and I'll get back to you with that information.

6 DENISE MAYBANK: And that's something that comes
7 through student affairs, so we will certainly look at
8 the historical record and see if there is anything
9 specific in response to what you've asked
10 Chairperson.

11 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: And when someone comes to
12 student affairs with a complaint, let's say they've
13 faced what they perceive as antisemitism
14 discrimination. How long does it typically take for
15 them to get a response?

16 GLENDA GRACE: The policy, it depends, the policy
17 actually says it's supposed to be done within 60 days
18 if they are able to do it. I will say the policy is
19 clear, that if sometimes people decide that they want
20 to try to mediate as opposed to moving forward with a
21 complaint. When that happens, that might take
22 longer. Obviously, I know there's some examples that
23 have gone much longer than 60 days but the policy
24 does say it should be within 60 days if possible.
25 Depending on the incident, there could just be lots

1
2 of people we need to talk to but the policy says 60
3 days.

4 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: And how often do you need
5 a 60-day deadline?

6 GLENDA GRACE: I do not have that information. I
7 don't have that information.

8 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Okay, so just, I mean just
9 from the last two answers, understand this is all
10 born out of frustration and fear of you know things I
11 hear from professors and students, right and again,
12 the increase in violence we're seeing.

13 So, in the last two answers, I'm hearing, we
14 could bring disciplinary charges but I'm not sure we
15 do. Right, you'll get me the data, I know and I
16 appreciate that but that's you know that is the
17 answer I heard and if someone has a complaint about
18 you know, maybe it's not a swastika, maybe it's about
19 other harassment. It should be 60-days but maybe
20 it's longer. It could be longer but you don't - do
21 you keep track of how long it takes to respond.

22 GLENDA GRACE: What I could - as I think Vice
23 Chancellor Maybank said, we have a record of how long
24 it takes in every single case. Can I give you what

1 happens in every single case off the top of my head?
2 I can't.

3
4 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: But can you then get us
5 the data at some point? Or how long?

6 GLENDA GRACE: I can get you the data. I can get
7 you what we have yes.

8 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Okay, and I'm you know
9 going to go back to the free speech thing but just
10 focusing on this reporting. What proactive measures
11 do you take at the beginning and throughout the
12 school year to ensure that students know where to
13 report things?

14 GLENDA GRACE: As President Garrell said in her
15 testimony, I'm going to actually and it's in our
16 People Opportunity of Non-Discrimination Policy. At
17 the beginning of every semester, there's a letter
18 that goes out the entire, each campus gets a letter
19 where the President explains and gives a copy of the
20 - a link to the policy and also explains who you can
21 talk to and what some of the procedures are to file a
22 complaint.

23 ROBIN GARRELL: If I could amend that as well,
24 that information is posted on our website and this
25 information is available at the department level.

1
2 It's provided to inbound students at orientation and
3 whenever questions arise, students are directed to
4 that information and guided to the one of several
5 offices they may approach.

6 I do want to actually amend the prior answer.
7 When issues are brought to the attention to our
8 Student Affairs unit, uh, in my experience at the
9 Graduate Centers, within a week, sometimes within a
10 day, there's a conversation with our Chief Diversity
11 Officer about the next steps. So, it does proceed
12 with concern.

13 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you. I would love
14 to get the information about the differences
15 throughout all the different campuses in the system.
16 You know again, your campus might be different than
17 let's say, I don't know, one of the many colleges
18 facing uh, I don't know, a federal investigation or a
19 lawsuit, right. So, you understand that the
20 different campuses have perhaps different policies,
21 which is why it is so important to the cohesive and
22 unified policy and directive.

23 And just as far as the office itself, the
24 physical location of the office, how separate is it
25 from their professors and how separate is it from

1
2 other students groups? And the reason I'm asking is
3 because as I mentioned in my opening statement, you
4 know there are 75 percent of students that don't even
5 know where to report and I think it was 41 percent
6 are even just too scared to do it in the first place
7 and part of that I imagine maybe the physical
8 location of the office.

9 Walking into the office and a professor next door
10 knowing you're making a complaint against them is
11 intimidating to say the least. So, how do you
12 separate physically these offices from other student
13 groups and your professors offices?

14 ROBIN GARRELL: So, what I can say is that our
15 Chief Diversity Officer uhm, her office is on a
16 different floor, in a different suite with a
17 different entrance and it's well separated from a
18 student coming into that space would not be seen by
19 peers or colleagues on my campus. So, I'm just
20 speaking to my campus.

21 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you. One down, 24
22 to go. Can anyone else speak to the other 24
23 campuses?

24 GLENDA GRACE: I can at least speak to — actually
25 Denise.

1
2 DENISE MAYBANK: No, I was going to say, I don't
3 have the ability to say where they are positioned but
4 what I will say is that letting students know there
5 are multiple ways to report and people to whom they
6 can report, keeps it from being the stigma of, I went
7 through a door that was labeled, I'm here to report
8 discrimination, marginalization, concern in some way.
9 Because I believe that it is the responsibility of us
10 in totality to be available and to show care and
11 concern for our students and things happen that are
12 intimidating, ostracizing, isolating.

13 And so, even though we have identified the
14 position of University Director of Intercultural
15 Engagement and Dialogue, it is not totally her
16 responsibility alone to make this happen. And so,
17 being able to go to a member of public safety, being
18 able to go to your faculty members who are trusted.
19 Being able to talk to a peer who is well informed and
20 knows how to help you as well, are all parts of this.
21 And yes, we have to make certain that the information
22 or what to do, how to do it and what will happen is
23 available broadly. So, whether that is on a website,
24 in a policy, it has to be in the mouths and come
25 through the voices of the members of our community.

1
2 So, fully acknowledge that that is a critical
3 part of this as well but it is not to stigmatize
4 someone by them going in a door with a label over the
5 top that says, come here to report discrimination.

6 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: I mean, it doesn't have to
7 say that for you to know what the door is for. Just,
8 I appreciate what you said about getting the
9 information to the hands and the mouths of students.
10 What's the plan to do that?

11 DENISE MAYBANK: So, a big part of the
12 responsibility of the university director is for us
13 to hear from students, how best to do that.

14 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: So, what meetings - I
15 mean, what meetings - I'm sorry to interrupt. What
16 meetings have you convened in order to have those
17 conversations and hear from the students?

18 DENISE MAYBANK: So, those are the meetings, the
19 Affinity group meetings that we're talking about
20 having throughout the summer that have already begun
21 and that will continue to have students come together
22 and say, this is what I felt, this is what I'm
23 experiencing and this is how I believe CUNY needs to
24 act in a way that will have me understand what to do

1
2 if I'm feeling in any way threatened by an experience
3 or an interaction.

4 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: So to be clear, at every
5 single campus, there's going to be a policy born by
6 the needs of the students and this is going to
7 discussed this summer of how to report an incident in
8 where to go and you're going to hear from the
9 students about their needs in order to make that
10 happen.

11 DENISE MAYBANK: So, what is happening is that we
12 are using our campus connections to convene smaller
13 groups of students over the course of time to hear
14 from them. So, we wanted to be able to be a dialogue
15 where everyone can get heard. So, no, we don't want
16 to have this huge town hall. You know everybody
17 likes a town hall but we want to have a more intimate
18 conversation where we can hear. Where we can be able
19 to dialogue and be clear about what students are
20 looking for and then to roll that back out to
21 campuses to say, this is what we understand is
22 important and be the things we are recommending.

23 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: And so, what I'm asking is
24 on the agenda. I mean he has an agenda or guiding
25 questions that you have conversations about. I don't

1
2 know the structure of the meetings you plan to have
3 but will the topic of reporting and getting
4 information to students, will that be a component of
5 the discussions you have with these affinity groups?
6 And side note, are these affinity groups from every
7 campus or are you only convening affinity groups from
8 certain campuses?

9 DENISE MAYBANK: No, it's affinity groups from
10 across the university. So, that you now, so if we
11 bring together students from our Hillel programs,
12 there from the campuses where the Hillel directors
13 have recommended, this person would be a great person
14 to have in that dialogue. So, it is not just Hillel
15 from Queens or Hillel from Brooklyn or Hillel from
16 Kingsborough, it is a matter of bringing in a cross
17 section of students to hear what they're saying, so
18 that we can use that information. And the next group
19 might be a different configuration of campus
20 representatives but it will be a mix of the groups.

21 Also, I thought it was another piece of your
22 question, I'm sorry if I didn't respond to both
23 parts.

24 ROBIN GARRELL: Also, they can report
25 electronically also, so they don't necessarily have

1
2 to go to a room. There's an electronic link where
3 they could make a complaint.

4 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Yeah, thank you. We're
5 spending a lot of time on just the you know just the
6 reporting aspect and I appreciate that it's an
7 important component of ensuring that you have the
8 data and that students know that they are supported
9 by administration. Again, the ensuring and as you're
10 discussion as you're planning, it seems clear that a
11 letter at the beginning of the semester, seems to not
12 be enough. And so, that really getting answers to
13 what more can be done to disseminate the information.
14 And again, really thinking about the physical
15 location because a door doesn't have to say what the
16 door's for but obviously if you're going there, you
17 know what it's for in the first place, right, often
18 to name it like that.

19 And so, when a student or when something – an act
20 is being investigated as an act of bias against a
21 Jewish student or a student is even considering
22 whether what their facing is antisemitism or just you
23 know genuine disagreements in conversation, how are
24 you as a city university defining antisemitism?

1
2 GLEND A GRACE: What we tend to do is our policy
3 is clear about what acts of discrimination and
4 harassment are. Basically that you're treating
5 someone differently or less favorably because they're
6 Jewish or you're harassing them and giving them
7 unwelcomed conduct because of that. And that's how
8 our policy determines whether you're discriminated
9 against or harassed.

10 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Okay, so that is a little
11 problematic. And the reason it's problematic is
12 because it goes back to the free speech situation,
13 which is certainly a very delicate and nuanced
14 conversation but it is very, you know when
15 discrimination against a Jewish person, like myself,
16 meaning oh, your people are all murderers, genocidal
17 maniacs and they get in your face and calling you all
18 sorts of other names with expletives.

19 You know, it's easy for a university to say
20 that's uh, that's just uh free speech, right. So,
21 how do you delineate between legitimate free speech
22 and the conversations that as a university, you're
23 supposed to facilitate and the very difficult and
24 uncomfortable conversations that we all have to have?
25

1
2 And what is the line by which it veers into hate for
3 Jewish people?

4 GLENDA GRACE: I think the question is, what is
5 the line that we can take action against, right. So,
6 you gave an example -

7 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Well, and I want to be
8 clear on like action against. I'm not suggesting
9 peoples you know be like locked up in jail, I'm
10 talking about oh, this is you know this type of
11 speech, we really need to intervene personally and
12 not just have a summit. Intervene in this specific
13 situation and foster that dialogue and have a
14 conversation about why certain language is dangerous.

15 And if it's unclear - it shouldn't be unclear to
16 anyone I mean again, I mentioned this in the opening
17 but when we an increase in violence in an ocean away
18 in the region, Jews in New York, in my community,
19 they threw bricks at the Schuls. In Brooklyn, she
20 was lit on fire. Cherry bombs thrown at Jews. Jews
21 punched in the back of the head. We see an uptick in
22 that.

23 So, there is a real danger about not being able
24 to have these conversations and just kind of hiding

1
2 behind the free speech thing and not intervening with
3 really constructive dialogue.

4 GLENDA GRACE: I'll say the constructive dialogue
5 could start as soon as someone makes a statement
6 right. We can condemn and have condemned statements.
7 We can have discussion about why it's hurtful, why
8 it's harmful. The example you gave also talked about
9 a potential for harassment, in terms of getting in
10 someone's face right.

11 So, that - the investigation could start there
12 but even if there was nothing, even if it was free
13 speech, we can still condemn it and have a
14 conversation about why it's wrong and why it is not
15 helpful or why it's hurtful for our students, why it
16 doesn't allow our students to thrive and that's -

17 DENISE MAYBANK: Oh -

18 GLENDA GRACE: Go ahead.

19 DENISE MAYBANK: I'll also add that our
20 responsibility to our students is for care, is for
21 safety, and the actions that are taken when something
22 happens that isn't a front to who they are is that we
23 have to reach out and acknowledge their humanity and
24 dignity. We have to be responsive to that, so we
25 can't act as though oh, this is an act that is

1
2 protected by free speech, is hateful, whatever. This
3 is a person who has had the impact of something
4 against them and we need to figure out how we are
5 responsive to that part of personhood. And to
6 acknowledge that yes, that was painful. Yes that was
7 damaging to you and let's talk about what it's going
8 to take for you to feel safe. If we need to create a
9 safety plan for you, the individual in that moment.
10 We need to act in that way. Yes, we need to preserve
11 whatever the evidence is for the investigation but
12 our action has to be about care and care for the
13 individual in the experience.

14 Are we all the way there? Probably not but can
15 we get there and get closer to that as our ask and in
16 terms of our aspiration of responding to each
17 student.

18 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Well here's what I think
19 is a fundamental disagreement and what I think is a
20 misunderstanding on the part of CUNY. It's not about
21 the person, it's about the people. Because you know
22 and that's the dangers – and that's the danger you
23 know of any hate crime, right. I know we're – uhm,
24 you know I mentioned earlier, there's a uniqueness to
25 antisemitism throughout history but there's certainly

1
2 commonalities and one of the commonalities we feel
3 when someone is attacked for who they are or what
4 they believe, that impacts the entire community.
5 It's not about a safety plan for an individual
6 person. If they're being attacked for their
7 religious or political beliefs. It's about everyone
8 who holds those views and those values. Now, it was
9 mentioned that you can condemn uhm, you can condemn
10 statements. You can intervene but my question is, do
11 you? And I think one of the loudest examples is the
12 passage of the Resolution by CUNY Law. And when I
13 say by CUNY Law, I mean, they're student Council and
14 I mean, they're faculty. And I know the Chancellor
15 made a statement sort of condemning it. What steps
16 were taken at CUNY Law to engage in a conversation
17 with you know the Jewish students who are made to
18 feel unsafe and unwelcome by the passage of that
19 resolution. What plan was made?

20 GLENDA GRACE: I believe Student Affairs reached
21 out to different students to ask them how they felt
22 and what they could do and I can also talk to Student
23 Affairs to get more details about what was done in
24 that situation.

25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: So, sorry, you said
3 Student Affairs reached out to some Jewish students?

4 GLENDA GRACE: I think Student Affairs is usually
5 on the ground and I think I can have Vice Chancellor
6 Maybank talk a little bit more about what Student
7 Affairs does when things happen on campuses. And I
8 can also specifically reach out to the law school and
9 get more information about that.

10 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Yeah, I want to be clear.
11 I want to talk about some of the initiatives you're
12 doing and I do appreciate that those are important
13 steps and I think it's important steps that these
14 plans are being made and certain things are done.
15 I'm just, in this particular instance, uhm, asking if
16 that happened, the things you're saying can happen,
17 I'm trying to relate the possibilities to the
18 reality.

19 So, just curious, did Student Affairs reach out
20 to any of the student groups or any of the students?
21 Has there been a plan for constructive dialogue about
22 a very difficult topic? Have those conversations
23 happened in that particular instance?

24 DENISE MAYBANK: Chairperson Dinowitz, what I can
25 say to you is that more often than not, that would be

1
2 the case. I cannot tell you about the specific
3 you're asking. What the law school will say on this
4 date, this is what happened but we certainly can
5 inquire and get back to you with details about what
6 may have happened in that regard.

7 What I do know is that there is concern such that
8 there is a reach out to students when they are
9 expressing fear or intimidation. That I know happens
10 and you know, you were saying that's it's not about
11 the person, it's about the people and I just want to
12 say to you, it doesn't have to be one or the other,
13 it has to be and. It's about the person and the
14 people and we have to be able to be responsive to
15 those aspects without saying that one you know has a
16 priority over the other. Because I do get concerned
17 about an individual's ability to persevere in the
18 face of that kind of trauma. And so, we have to
19 think about it in that regard as well. And so, when
20 the Student Affairs professionals on any of our
21 campuses reach out, they have to reach to the
22 students in particular and hear what it is that has
23 happened and how it has impacted them in order to
24 formulate a reasonable response to address that.

1
2 I believe that has happened but we will have to
3 get more detail for you and get back to you with
4 specifics.

5 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Okay, and what's the
6 timeline for those answers?

7 DENISE MAYBANK: I believe - I'm going to be
8 perfectly honest; I believe that the person
9 responsible is on vacation right now but as soon as I
10 can get in touch, I will ask the questions about that
11 interaction.

12 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Okay, I mean, it uh- how
13 about the same 60-days to get this information that
14 faculty is supposed to respond to complaints of bias?

15 DENISE MAYBANK: What was the first part of what
16 you said?

17 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: I said, how about the same
18 60-day window.

19 DENISE MAYBANK: Same 60-day okay, I thought you
20 said 60-days but then -

21 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Administration is supposed
22 to reply to yeah.

23 DENISE MAYBANK: Okay, 60-day window. Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: It just - look, it feels a
25 little disingenuous to not be able to - to come and

1
2 not talk about the plans that were made. I mean
3 these were issues that are literally – you know, CUNY
4 campuses are being investigated for this. These
5 issues of for example, the CUNY Law School, these
6 weren't secret issues. These were issues that I
7 think CUNY knows are significant issues, that's why
8 the Chancellor made multiple statements about it.
9 Which, you know I appreciate him speaking out against
10 it but you know to not have any information regarding
11 it, regarding the plans made at these particular
12 schools, where the problems are very public, is very
13 problematic and indicative of a problem existing
14 throughout CUNY.

15 And I hate to say this out loud but it makes me
16 question how seriously this problem is being
17 addressed between you being virtual and the
18 Chancellor not being here, it doesn't fill me with a
19 lot of hope and I'm like a hopeful person. I was
20 seriously holding out hope till 9:59 that the
21 Chancellor would say, just kidding, I'm here but I'm
22 you know not filled with a lot of hope with these
23 questions.

24 I do want to turn it over to colleagues. I do
25 have another long round of questioning but I do want

1
2 to give my colleagues an opportunity to share some of
3 their questions. Again, I do thank you. I know that
4 this isn't an easy conversation but the fact is, it's
5 also not easy for the Jews on campus. So, I'm going
6 to turn it over to Council Member Vernikov for her
7 first round of questioning.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you Council
9 Member Dinowitz and I also want to thank you for not
10 limiting my time today. As you know, this is a very
11 important issue, so we need the time with all the
12 witnesses.

13 Thank you all for being here as well. Uhm, I
14 have a question for the panel, do any of you speak
15 for the Chancellor today?

16 GLENDA GRACE: We're speaking for the University.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: So, uh what authority
18 do you have at CUNY to implement CUNY policy?

19 GLENDA GRACE: So, the panel that's sitting here
20 actually, with Robin Garrell and I actually give an
21 opportunity to my colleagues to chime in. Robin
22 Garrell runs the — is the President of the Grad
23 Center and has authority to make sure that the policy
24 are implemented. She has authority to recommend that
25 the policies are changed. She has authority to make

1
2 determinations about recommendations about what
3 should and shouldn't be done and Vice Chancellor
4 Maybank, the [INAUDIBLE 2:03:33] regarding dialogue
5 and education, student discipline, they all flow from
6 Vice Chancellor Maybank's area at Student Affairs.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Okay.

8 GLENDA GRACE: And then I also, I work, I'm the
9 special counsel for the Chancellor and I also have
10 experience at both uh at Central and at a two-year
11 college and at a senior college.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Yes, and I recognize
13 that you follow Tony.

14 GLENDA GRACE: Yes.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: A New York Times report
16 in an article in April of 2022 describes 183
17 incidents of harassment in New York, along with 182
18 vandalism cases and 161 incidents involving
19 swastika's. It also said there was a 41 percent
20 increase in reported incidents at Jewish
21 institutions, which were targeted 62 times last year
22 in New York. Overall, antisemitic crimes in New York
23 City have spiked nearly 300 percent in January. Are
24 you aware of this drastic increase in antisemitism in
25 our city?

1
2 GLEENDA GRACE: Yes, definitely aware. I've read
3 it and the first statement that the Chancellor put
4 out last year talked about that increase.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: And are you aware that
6 in recent years CUNY schools have become hot beds for
7 antisemitism and anti-Israel sentiment, including but
8 not limited to a hostile environment for its Jewish
9 students and professors?

10 GLEENDA GRACE: I would say that there has been
11 and increase incidents of things on campuses.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Can you actually list
13 some of the examples of antisemitic activities on
14 some of the CUNY campuses?

15 GLEENDA GRACE: So, one of the things I can't do
16 just to be clear as we move forward, is we can't talk
17 about pending litigation, we can't talk about
18 personal actions or decisions and obviously we can't
19 talk about disciplinary actions for students, but you
20 know there have been more incidents in terms of
21 swastikas on campuses. There have been students who
22 have expressed discomfort. There have been people
23 expressing discomfort about the various resolutions
24 that have been voted on by different organizations
25 within CUNY that do not speak for CUNY.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Are you aware that
3 there have been physical assaults on students on CUNY
4 campuses?

5 GLENDA GRACE: Uh, they would have been reported
6 to public safety, I would hope.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: But are you aware of
8 those incidents?

9 GLENDA GRACE: Not, I can't say I am right now.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Are you aware that
11 Jewish students are intimidated and afraid to express
12 their pro-Israel views? They're afraid to be Jewish.
13 They're afraid to wear Yamaoka's on campuses?

14 GLENDA GRACE: You said that and I think that
15 that is an awful thing. That's one of the reasons
16 why we're trying to do more and more to make students
17 feel comfortable and to be able to be their true
18 selves because we have no wish to have people hiding
19 their identity or being physically, feeling
20 physically scared to come to our campuses. That is
21 antithetical to who CUNY is and who are working to
22 make sure that we are.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: But you're aware of
24 their personal feelings of fear and intimidation,
25 correct?

1
2 GLENDA GRACE: I'm aware. I've heard yes, I've
3 heard before today, I've heard stories about that.
4 That's one of the reasons why we're trying to do the
5 work that we're doing to make this a better place and
6 have a better plan than the world has.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Okay.

8 DENISE MAYBANK: We acknowledge as well. My
9 meetings with the students since I've been here, for
10 the 21-months I have been here, yes, I have heard
11 students talk to me about their personal feelings of
12 whether it's a matter of, I'm uncomfortable in this
13 space or I don't feel safe generally.

14 As I sat with a group of students, they shared
15 their experiences and their concerns yes.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: And aside from alleged
17 condonations about this, what does CUNY actually do?
18 What kind of action does CUNY take when you get these
19 complaints from students?

20 GLENDA GRACE: Well, I can tell you, if someone
21 is assaulted and they allege that they're assaulted,
22 we would take them to public safety. Uhm, we would
23 also make sure that someone with Student Affairs
24 talked to them about what their needs were. If they
25

1
2 needed counseling, if they needed uhm, if they were
3 concerned about walking around campus safely.

4 Public Safety would talk to them. If they wanted
5 to file a complaint, they would go to the local
6 precinct with the individual. Uhm, that's for an
7 assault. If someone had an interaction in a
8 classroom that made them feel uncomfortable, they
9 could talk to their Chair. Their Chair of the
10 Department. They could talk to someone in student
11 affairs. They could also go to the person at the
12 Chief Diversity Officer.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: So, you're saying that
14 CUNY does everything in their power to make these
15 students feel safe, correct?

16 GLENDA GRACE: We are obviously, we're here
17 because we're not perfect but we are trying to do
18 everything within our power, yes.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: So, why are these
20 students, hundreds of students still afraid?

21 GLENDA GRACE: Uhm, if I knew the answer to that,
22 I could solve the problems of the world. We want to
23 make sure our students thrive here. My time at CUNY,
24 I remember seeing students who came and complained
25 and looked the way the way looked. They look like a

1
2 different person. I've dealt with students who came
3 and complained about an issue. I saw them after the
4 issue was resolved and they look like a different
5 person. They had light in their eyes. Their skin
6 glowed. We don't want anybody on CUNY's campus to be
7 uhm, to be diminished and obviously, that's what
8 we're working towards. If that was solved, we would
9 be going on; we'd be telling the world how to solve
10 the problem but we're trying to lead the way with the
11 work that we're doing. The work that's being done on
12 campuses and the work that's coming out of Vice
13 Chancellor Maybank's area.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: I thank you for
15 whatever work you are doing but unfortunately the
16 students that come to me to complain about
17 antisemitism, do not come to me with light in their
18 eyes. They come to me with fear in their eyes. So,
19 I just want to make that clear.

20 Do you believe that it's essential to have a
21 system in place where students can safely report
22 antisemitic activity?

23 GLENDA GRACE: Absolutely.

24 ROBIN GARRELL: Most definitely.

25

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: And what is that
3 process at CUNY?

4 GLENDA GRACE: You can either do it as I said,
5 you can make a complaint using the internet. There's
6 a link that you can make complaints. You can
7 actually make complaints at campuses. You can also
8 make it centrally. You can to the OGC's Office
9 actually. You can also go and talk to – there's a
10 number of ways. You can go to talk to a faculty, a
11 trusted faculty member, a Student Affairs
12 professional. You can go to the Chief Diversity
13 Office. You can also go to public safety.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Is there a special
15 committee dedicated to reviewing antisemitic
16 incidents on CUNY campuses?

17 GLENDA GRACE: There is not.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Do you believe that
19 such a committee would be beneficial towards creating
20 a safer environment for Jewish students?

21 GLENDA GRACE: Actually, we believe that by doing
22 the affinity groups and having conversations with
23 different folks, that will help inform the work that
24 we do. We believe that public safety works with
25 Student Affairs and learns from them, and certainly

1
2 that's part of the work that Vice Chancellor Maybank
3 described in her testimony.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Well, I'll say again
5 that -

6 DENISE MAYBANK: Oh - I'm sorry.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Go ahead.

8 DENISE MAYBANK: I was just going to say I think
9 all too often we can sit and decide, we know how to
10 solve something before we really hear the something
11 we're trying to solve. And so, our objective right
12 now is to be clear in listening and working
13 collaboratively with students, for them to help us
14 know in the 21st Century, how do we respond. Within
15 the context of technology and social media. How do
16 we respond in ways that are meaningful for them and
17 not to just sit back and figure out, we have the
18 panacea to say, we can do this and it's going to take
19 care of it. I don't think that's fair to the
20 students and it certainly doesn't set us up for
21 moving forward in a way that is engaging and
22 embracing of the student experience, the lived
23 experience of students, so that we have the real
24 solutions in response.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you. I
3 appreciate that and I want to say again that I do
4 appreciate all the work you've been trying to do but
5 I think that we're here because let's agree, whatever
6 work has been done so far, it's not working. The
7 antisemitism is only increasing. It's not
8 decreasing. So, we're here to explore different
9 options.

10 DENISE MAYBANK: Yes.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Do you believe that
12 Jews have a right to feel safe on CUNY campuses?

13 GLENDA GRACE: Absolutely, I believe every single
14 person does, especially Jews given their unique
15 history and the history of persecution, absolutely.
16 That's part of being an educational institution and
17 part of our core values.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Let me ask you this
19 question, if there was a student elected by the
20 student body, the student government to be a
21 commencement speaker, and that student was a White
22 Supremacist, would the school allow the student to
23 continue with his speech?

24 GLENDA GRACE: Actually, under the First
25 Amendment, yes that's what would happen as long as it

1
2 was within the context of free speech, that would be
3 allowed.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Do you -

5 GLENDA GRACE: And that would be deplorable, just
6 like other hate speech is deplorable.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: So, the school wouldn't
8 do anything? They wouldn't protest. They wouldn't
9 try to get the student not to speak? They would just
10 give that student free run on a stage?

11 GLENDA GRACE: Ultimately, that's part of the
12 uhm, ideas of free speech allows that. As a lawyer,
13 you actually I think in law school, we learn that.
14 That was something that was disturbing but that is
15 the law.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: We did. That is the
17 law but my question is, would CUNY, is there anything
18 that CUNY would do to talk to that student to try to
19 prevent that student from speaking?

20 GLENDA GRACE: I think what CUNY would do is what
21 we did in this instance. We would do a statement
22 condemning it, making it clear that that did not
23 represent the Bureau of the University. That we
24 think the best way to counter discord is to talk
25 about other language and other conversation.

1 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you.

2
3 Approximately how many complaints per year does CUNY
4 get about antisemitism, antisemitic incidents?

5 GLENDA GRACE: I don't have that information.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Who has that
7 information?

8 GLENDA GRACE: We can collect information about
9 the Cleary Report and we can get back to you with
10 that.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Please, can I get a
12 report about the last five years of antisemitic
13 incidents at all on CUNY?

14 GLENDA GRACE: Get five years, okay.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: I think this question
16 was asked before and I apologize if I'm repeating it
17 but to your knowledge, has anyone been disciplined
18 for being antisemitic or discriminating against
19 Jewish students or faculty?

20 GLENDA GRACE: So, the only example that I could
21 give actually does relate to, I said we didn't have
22 an instance. I do know that after the - in 2016,
23 there were incidents that students and students were
24 disciplined over some of the incidents that happened
25 about the subject of a report that was done by CUNY.

1
2 So there weren't disciplinary charges against some of
3 those students who assaulted – there was assault and
4 some other issues, so students were disciplined in
5 those instances.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: What was the nature of
7 the discipline?

8 GLENDA GRACE: I can get that, exactly what the
9 discipline – actually, I can't do that actually
10 because I cannot talk about disciplinary actions
11 specifically. I can talk about what generally can
12 happen. What generally happens and I actually think
13 Vice Chancellor Maybank can talk more about it
14 because the disciplinary, student disciplinary area
15 is in Student Affairs but they could be suspended.
16 They could have to do training. They could be
17 expelled. Those are different instances that could
18 happen in disciplinary actions but I cannot disclose
19 specific punishments that happened for specific
20 students. I'm not allowed to do that.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Well, that's okay, I'm
22 not asking you to give me the names of the
23 perpetrators. I'm just asking general, what are the
24 consequences? What is the punishment for these
25 students? You can just talk about it in a general

1
2 way. Uhm, and not just what can happen. They can
3 get suspended. They can you know, whatever it is.
4 What has actually happened? That's my question.

5 GLENDA GRACE: Okay, I can get that for you. I
6 gave you kind of formalities but we can get you that
7 information about specifically what happened in
8 those.

9 DENISE MAYBANK: Isn't there a range of sanctions
10 that are at the disposal of those adjudicating a
11 disciplinary concern. But to say specifically today
12 what may have had happened in the instance of an
13 antisemitic situation, I wouldn't know that without
14 actually having to look for that information.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you and can I
16 just get a commitment from all of you here that CUNY
17 will implement consequences for those who harass,
18 intimidate, discriminate against Jewish students and
19 professors on campus?

20 GLENDA GRACE: I think that commitment you'll
21 find. Yes, if people violate our policies or commit
22 crimes, there are consequences otherwise we can't
23 have an educational institution that we can be proud
24 of or that lives up to our values.
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2 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you. Can one of
3 you define antisemitism?

4 GLENDA GRACE: I can talk about it in the context
5 of our nondiscrimination policy, but obviously
6 antisemitism has to do with acts that are acts or
7 thoughts against someone because they're Jewish.

8 Our policy talks about discrimination and
9 harassment and how that's prohibited and can lead to
10 sanctions against faculty staff and students.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Would you agree that
12 the term Zionism is the movement for self-
13 determination and statehood for the Jewish people in
14 their ancestral homeland?

15 GLENDA GRACE: I believe that is what Zionism is,
16 yes.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Would you agree that
18 for many Jews, Zionism is a part of their Jewish
19 identity?

20 GLENDA GRACE: For many Jews, I know for some
21 Jews. I don't know what percentage but yes, it's
22 certainly part of - it's important.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Well, I can tell you
24 that it is for me.

25 GLENDA GRACE: Okay.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Do you agree that if
3 Zionism is a part of their Jewish identity than
4 discriminating against Zionist Jews is inherently
5 antisemitic?

6 GLENDA GRACE: I think what I would do is I
7 would look at what our policy says and if someone is
8 acting against someone because of a protected status,
9 uhm and treating them differently, then it would be
10 discrimination and harassment.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: So, you agree that
12 Zionism should be part of that definition, is that
13 correct?

14 GLENDA GRACE: Actually what - uhm, no, what I
15 said is, what our policy says.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Okay, well than do you
17 agree with the IHRA definition of antisemitism. I'm
18 not sure if you're familiar with that is.

19 GLENDA GRACE: I am familiar with it. I don't
20 agree or disagree and plus I'm here - my own opinion
21 about it actually isn't relevant in really talking
22 about what's going on with the University and what
23 the University, how the University implements its
24 policies.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Well, you said you're
3 here to represent the University, correct?

4 GLENDA GRACE: Absolutely yes.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: So, does the University
6 agree that Ira, the IHRA definition of antisemitism
7 should be used?

8 GLENDA GRACE: We have not used it, no. We have
9 not used that definition.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Why not?

11 GLENDA GRACE: Because we believe the definition
12 of harassment and discrimination is clear in our non-
13 discrimination and equal opportunity policy.

14 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Uhm, just a point about
15 the IHRA definition. Uhm, which I think more clearly
16 is how you know whether something is antisemitism or
17 not. The U.S. State Department utilizes this
18 definition and Governor Hochul recently declared a
19 proclamation embracing this definition.

20 So, it's not unheard of that New York State and
21 CUNY is of course a New York State Institutions,
22 utilizes this definition. I know that you wanted to
23 bring that point up.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you. So, I'm
25 just going to read some of the definition. Some of

1
2 the things from, some of the examples of the IHRA
3 definition of antisemitism.

4 So, antisemitism according to IHRA is a certain
5 perception of Jews, which maybe expressed as hatred
6 towards Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations
7 of antisemitism are directed to a Jewish or non-
8 Jewish individuals and/or their property to a Jewish
9 community institutions and religious facilities.

10 Give me just one second. And one of the examples
11 in the IHRA definition is denying the Jewish people
12 the right to self-determination by claiming that the
13 existence of the state of Israel is a racist
14 endeavor.

15 So, many countries and other schools have adopted
16 the IHRA definition of antisemitism, so my question
17 is, can CUNY commit to adopting the same IHRA
18 definition of antisemitism?

19 GLENDA GRACE: No, I think our - what we are
20 working under is the - our equal opportunity not
21 discrimination policy, which talks about treating an
22 individual differently or less favorably because of
23 his protected characteristics, which in this case
24 would be because they are Jewish.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: So, just from talking
3 to other Presidents of CUNY, uhm it seems that the
4 Chancellor, the CUNY Chancellor is the one telling
5 the presidents what policies to implement. Who is in
6 charge of the structure and implementing policies at
7 CUNY?

8 GLENDA GRACE: Actually, the Board of Trustee
9 adopts policies and they might be proposed by the
10 Chancellor but ultimately the support of trustees
11 adopts policies.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: And who sits on the
13 Board of Trustees?

14 GLENDA GRACE: They're I believe appointment from
15 Governor Hochul and appointment from Governor Adams,
16 Mayor Adams excuse me.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you. Has CUNY
18 Central implemented anti-racism training at CUNY?

19 GLENDA GRACE: Vice Chancellor Maybank, not
20 systemic I believe.

21 DENISE MAYBANK: Specifically from the central
22 office, not to my knowledge but campuses may have
23 through their DEI programs and may have not just done
24 racism but across the board discrimination and
25 marginalization to identify populations that are of

1
2 concern. But we have not done training at this point
3 from the student affairs perspective central office.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: But it is being done
5 throughout the CUNY system, correct?

6 DENISE MAYBANK: I'm sure there are programs on
7 different campuses. Now, remember that 25 and
8 depending on you're counting, 26 different
9 institutions and configurations and the opportunities
10 for them through their senior diversity officers to
11 be able to implement what is appropriate in the
12 context of their experiences and understandings as
13 well that support the policies of the university.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: So, you're saying that
15 there might be some CUNY schools that do not have the
16 antidiscrimination training?

17 DENISE MAYBANK: I wouldn't want to venture a yes
18 to answer you directly about that, without saying
19 okay, so let me look at each and see what's going on.
20 You know, I can't tell you definitively that there is
21 this type of training happening on this particular
22 campus sitting here today but I'm glad to get that
23 information for you and to bring it back so that you
24 have it.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Please, thank you. Has
3 CUNY Central implemented antisemitism training at
4 CUNY?

5 DENISE MAYBANK: Again, not to my knowledge from
6 Central. It is a matter of what it is that is
7 happening within the context of the climate and
8 culture of a campus. We are committed to helping the
9 campuses to explore that and to find ways, solutions,
10 opportunities, programs that might help in fulfilling
11 that need, we are committed to doing that and as you
12 heard, this is something that we're embarking on to be
13 more specific and to be very clear about how we
14 support the campuses in doing so.

15 GLENDA GRACE: We -

16 DENISE MAYBANK: Go ahead Glenda.

17 GLENDA GRACE: We did it in our testimony. We
18 talked about the training; some training that was
19 being done by Hillel. Some by the other organization
20 that are being done on a couple campuses and part of
21 the work that is being embarked on by the Student
22 Affairs Office, with the University Director of
23 Student Intercultural Engagement and Dialogue is
24 determined what needs to be done systematically.
25 What options we can get, so that we can do more in

1
2 the future to make sure that we're dealing with the
3 problem that we're dealing with today, antisemitism.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you.

5 DENISE MAYBANK: Thank you Glenda and you know
6 again; I go back to my statement about the fact that
7 we can do things but is it going to be the thing
8 that's going to matter for our students today? That
9 is why we are listening and trying to dialogue and
10 engage the students in such a way that we can clearly
11 respond in a way that will matter.

12 Not just respond because we're being challenged
13 to respond but respond because it matters for our
14 students and that's our effort.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you and I
16 appreciate that and I look forward to working with
17 you.

18 DENISE MAYBANK: Thank you.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: To implement those -

20 DENISE MAYBANK: And I will reach out for you to
21 do that. I really will.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you. So, amidst
23 the 300- a 300 percent rise in antisemitism. Is
24 there any single CUNY campus that has implemented
25 antisemitism training?

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2 DENISE MAYBANK: I'm not aware of any particular
3 program.

4 GLENDA GRACE: I mean, we have as we listed and
5 you have the written testimony, talked about
6 different work that's being done on individual
7 campuses. I think we mentioned a number of campuses
8 but in terms of talking about an absolute curricula,
9 that's part of what we're determining whether that's
10 going to be the most effective for us to do.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Well, I believe that it
12 would help.

13 GLENDA GRACE: No question, that's one of the
14 reasons why we're trying to dialogue. So, we
15 appreciate that.

16 DENISE MAYBANK: And I want you to know that
17 we've reached out to various organizations, Jewish
18 organizations and entities to talk with us. I've met
19 with I'd say two different rabi's who are in this
20 space and really trying to make certain that Jewish
21 identity and culture is clear and is embracing of a
22 dialogue. And so, it has been informative for me as
23 a person who graduated from Brooklyn College and had
24 amazing experience in that context. But who also has
25 worked alongside Hillel's across the country, as my

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2 career has taken me to different places. Being able
3 to have the conversations with leaders from the
4 community makes a difference. And you know I don't
5 want to give out people's names because I believe
6 they're working with us in good faith to help us make
7 a difference. And to really guide our understanding
8 and facilitate our being successful in doing what's
9 meaningful, responsive and useful for our student
10 population. And I'm honored by the opportunity to do
11 that.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you very much.
13 Uhm, are you aware that although Title VI of the
14 Civil Rights Act of 1964 does not explicitly include
15 religion as a protected group? Guidance was issued
16 by federal agencies directing that if an individual
17 or group is discriminated against based on shared
18 ancestry or ethnicity, they are protected under Title
19 VI?

20 GLENDA GRACE: Well, I'm not - actually, I'd love
21 to say I'd remember that. I trust what you tell me.
22 I know that under our policy, religion is a protected
23 characteristic.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: So, would you agree
25 that when Jewish students are discriminated against

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2 based on their nationality, religion, origin or
3 identity, it creates a hostile environment for Jewish
4 students?

5 DENISE MAYBANK: Of course.

6 GLENDA GRACE: It depends. Certainly for one
7 person, it could create something hostile for them.
8 It depends. As you know, the definition of a hostile
9 environment, a legal hostile environment as opposed
10 to the use of an everyday word, hostile environment,
11 you know that that's different but yes, it's
12 challenging. That's why we're trying to do the work.
13 That's why we're trying to have those conversations
14 with our students to make sure that they don't feel
15 that and we stop things before they happen and before
16 they escalate.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you, so the
18 answer is yes, right?

19 GLENDA GRACE: If you actually repeat the
20 question again?

21 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Sure, no, no problem.
22 Would you agree that when Jewish students are
23 discriminated against based on their nationality,
24 religion, origin or identity, when they identify as
25

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2 being Zionist for example. It creates a hostile
3 environment for Jewish students.

4 GLENDA GRACE: I would say it could create a
5 hostile environment. It could create a hostile
6 environment, yes.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you. Are you
8 familiar with the term boycott, divest and sanction?

9 GLENDA GRACE: We actually talked about it in our
10 testimony, yes.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: I apologize. I must
12 have missed that part. Are you aware of any campaign
13 on any CUNY campus to boycott, divest, and sanction
14 any of these countries for their human rights
15 violations Russia?

16 GLENDA GRACE: Not aware, no.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: China?

18 GLENDA GRACE: I'm not aware.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Iran?

20 GLENDA GRACE: I'm not aware.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Saudi Arabia?

22 GLENDA GRACE: I am not aware, no.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: North Korea?

24 GLENDA GRACE: Not aware.
25

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: How about the State of
3 Israel?

4 GLENDA GRACE: Uh, we talked about the BDS
5 Resolutions that were passed at the Law School and
6 we've condemned them. So, yes, there have been for
7 Israel, yes.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: New York State
9 Executive Order 157, which unequivocally rejects the
10 BDS campaign and does not permit its investment
11 activity to further BDS. Are you aware that the
12 practical implications of that executive order are
13 that it directs state agencies to divest public funds
14 from entities supporting a BDS campaign against
15 Israel?

16 GLENDA GRACE: That's actually in the testimony I
17 presented, saying that we understand that CUNY's
18 prohibited from participating in or supporting BDS
19 activity and is required to divest public funds from
20 any companies that do. That's in the written
21 testimony that was submitted.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you. On May 12th
23 of 2022, CUNY law faculty by unanimous consent, voted
24 to endorse a BDS Resolution that previously passed a
25 CUNY law student government association last

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2 December. Do you understand that the central message
3 of BDS is the promotion of discrimination of unlawful
4 activity?

5 GLENDA GRACE: We've been clear that it's not
6 something we can legally do and there was a statement
7 that - there were a number of statements actually
8 where we mentioned that in the past year.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you. So, that's
10 a yes right?

11 GLENDA GRACE: Absolutely, it's a yes.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: So, you understand -
13 sorry, withdrawn. What message, yeah, I still, I'm
14 so-.

15 GLENDA GRACE: I know I haven't done this in a
16 while so.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: What message does CUNY
18 law sends to its Jewish pro-Israel students when CUNY
19 faculty who have government employees promote and
20 endorse discrimination and unlawful activity?

21 GLENDA GRACE: Look, the one thing I can't tell
22 you the message that everyone felt because I'm not
23 sitting in their shoes but I know that it was
24 disturbing to individuals because that's part of what
25 we're having the conversation about. People, they

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2 were not happy. They were upset. We condemned it,
3 CUNY condemned it because it's something we do not
4 believe is correct or morally correct. If it was,
5 the Chancellor would not have taken and gone with
6 JCRC with 12-Presidents to Israel and participate and
7 talk to people and learn to do more business. So, we
8 understand that it's absolutely upsetting but we also
9 wanted to be very clear across the board and we've
10 said it in a number of our statements, that just
11 because a law school or a faculty organization or
12 another student membership organization endorses
13 something, that does not represent the view of CUNY.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: And I just want to
15 comment to something you said earlier. I do want to
16 thank the Chancellor for taking that step to go to
17 Israel. I know there's been a lot of pressure
18 against that, so I'm grateful for that. I just wish
19 the Chancellor was here.

20 Do you believe that endorsing a Resolution that
21 promotes discrimination and unlawful activity
22 contributes to antisemitism?

23 GLENDA GRACE: I mean, this is I guess the
24 question you're asking me, look, I think you're
25 asking me a personal opinion. I think obviously from

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2 CUNY, CUNY's perspective, we took a stand. We said
3 it's not something that should happen. We said it
4 doesn't - it's something we don't agree with and
5 cannot agree with and I think that's the most; I'm
6 here to represent the University and just being clear
7 about that.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Do you believe that
9 Jewish students can feel comfortable to really
10 express their views on a campus where faculty
11 endorses discrimination against them?

12 GLENDA GRACE: What I think is that we are
13 working to make sure that our students have the tools
14 to do what they need to do to express their identity,
15 so they do not have to hide who they are. That they
16 do not have to pretend to be someone who they're not.
17 That's the job of education and what we need to do.

18 And realistically, we are a small, microcosm of
19 the world and part of our job is to give the tools to
20 our students when they leave CUNY and confront the
21 world that you describe with the statistics that you
22 give, there is antisemitism. There are people who
23 are against people. There are people who do not
24 value who they are. So, our job is to give our
25 students those tools to use wherever they need those

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2 tools. That's our job. That I believe is what we've
3 tried to set out in the work that we're doing as a
4 system and the work that being done on campuses.

5 So, one, we're trying not to – the campuses have
6 been doing some good work, not, you know, obviously
7 there are pockets that are doing better than others
8 but that's one of the reasons why we're working on
9 systemwide approaches to make sure that we do well
10 and give our students the tools they need at every
11 single campus. So, they can leave CUNY and go on and
12 live lives that are free from antisemitism and
13 oppression and discrimination.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: And I do really
15 appreciate that. Again, just emphasize but my
16 question is really, do you believe that Jewish
17 students can feel comfortable to express their views
18 on a campus or a faculty. The professors that are
19 teaching these students and give them grades, endorse
20 discrimination against the same students.

21 DENISE MAYBANK: Can they, is challenging. When
22 you are faced as an individual with a circumstance or
23 a contest where you feel people are against you,
24 that's always going to be a challenge. I want to
25 support what my colleague just said though. I

1
2 believe it is our responsibility and our opportunity
3 to help our students acquire the skills and
4 competencies to navigate those experiences. To be
5 able to speak truth to power and to say, I'm
6 uncomfortable with the way that that was handled and
7 hopefully we can get to a place where we, together
8 can be in this space of learning and intellectual
9 engagement in such a way that we can move forward.
10 Because it is through real listening that you get
11 understanding.

12 And if you feel cut off from that ability, it is
13 going to be a problem. So, I understand your
14 question but I commit to our responsibility to build
15 skill and competency around difficult conversation,
16 difficult interaction and difficult dialogue. And I
17 believe that there are ways to do that and to empower
18 students to move forward, so that not only do they
19 take charge of the experience while at CUNY but they
20 take that to the next level and go out and influence
21 their peers beyond CUNY and the world as they take
22 their places in different context.

23 They'll have skills that matter, that move our
24 society forward because this is not just a problem
25 here, it is a problem as you identified within our

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2 city, within our state, within our country, within
3 the world and we need to help those who are coming
4 along to have the ability to respond to it. So, it's
5 not just the faculty. It's not just the classroom.
6 It is broadly. The interactions of our society.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you. I just
8 would really appreciate a response and answer to
9 really just a yes or no question. Do you believe
10 that when faculty endorses discrimination against
11 Jewish students, they do not feel comfortable? It's
12 just a yes or no.

13 GLENDA GRACE: With all due respect, we've
14 answered the question and we obviously disagree that
15 it's a yes or no question.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: I'll move on.

17 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Okay, Council Member
18 Vernikov is going to ask one more question and then
19 we'll move onto other Council Member questions.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Well, it's going to be
21 one question if I get the answer.

22 What would CUNY do if students or faculty
23 demanded the exclusion of Black or Muslim students
24 and subjected them to discrimination?
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2 GLEENDA GRACE: What we would do is as we would do
3 with any incident of discrimination, we would look at
4 the – we would follow our policy and ask someone to
5 make a complaint and it would be investigated. And
6 depending on the investigation, we would act in that
7 manner.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you.

9 GLEENDA GRACE: So, I gave you the answer?

10 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Yes.

11 GLEENDA GRACE: Great, thank you.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: You will hear more from
13 me though.

14 GLEENDA GRACE: We do want to partner with you as
15 Vice Chancellor Maybank said, because this is a
16 serious issue. If it wasn't a serious issue, we
17 wouldn't be doing all of the work that we're trying
18 to do and obviously, you have comments about the work
19 we could do better and we're certainly willing and
20 want to listen because we do want to do the best job
21 we can do.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: I really appreciate it
23 and I look forward to working with you and Chair
24 promised to come back to me, so, you'll hear more
25 from me.

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GLEND A GRACE: Okay.

CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: I did, that a promise. I want to recognize that we have Council Member Feliz and Council Member Barron in the room. I'm going to turn it over for some short questions and other Council Members. I just want to highlight a few things that were said. It's really important. One is some of the language that's being used is we can and we should. I think here in this Committee, what we're interested in is, what are you doing and what specific plans are in place to address this? Because I know that you - the best way to counter certainly which is with other language and reference is what you said, in reference to the BDS Resolution.

The question of course is, did those conversations happen and is there an effort to make those conversations happen. And that's throughout some of the responses and the other thing I just want to hammer home is, we shouldn't have to guess and the question was, I would have to guess if antisemitism, anti-Jewish sentiment is included in the DEI training. That's not something that we should have to guess and I would love to hear a commitment from CUNY that you're going to review all of the DEI

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2 trainings. The diversity inclusion trainings at all
3 of your campuses and I would love to hear a
4 commitment that you're going to ensure that it
5 teaches faculty you know about some of the tropes and
6 some of the things we hear about anti-Jewish
7 sentiment.

8 GLENDA GRACE: I guess I can say obviously, if
9 we're doing diversity training, we have a diverse
10 group of people on our campuses and so, we have to
11 make sure we're doing the training for all of our
12 student groups. So, we can make that commitment.

13 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you and you know
14 it's not obvious and I've done certain trainings. I
15 was with the Department of Education; you know a city
16 agency and we did the online training for those
17 things. We've done seminars and it very often
18 excluded things that people need to know about the
19 Jewish community. Implicit biases and explicit
20 biases frankly.

21 So, I am really glad to hear about your explicit
22 commitment to include Judaism and Jewish uh, anti-
23 Jewish sentiment in the diversity and inclusion
24 training at your campuses. I'm going to turn it over
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2 to minority leader Borelli for a short question and
3 then to Council Member Yeger.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Short time, maybe one
5 more question. Uhm, some of the controversy has
6 resulted from some of the commencement speakers and
7 it's not just the most recent one. There was also
8 Linda Sarsour in the past, a prominent component of
9 BDF, uh BDS excuse me. And one of you said the best
10 way to counter language was other language. Can you
11 give an example of a moment or an event where a
12 Zionist was invited to be a commencement speaker at
13 one of the CUNY institutions?

14 GLENDA GRACE: I don't have an example. I don't
15 have an example now.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Can anyone remember a
17 time when there was a pro-Israel speaker ever at a
18 CUNY institution?

19 GLENDA GRACE: On a CUNY campus or at a CUNY
20 commencement?

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BORRELLI: As a build speaker at
22 commencement.

23 GLENDA GRACE: I don't know but we can look and
24 see if we can find one.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Has there ever been a -
3 I mean, you guys had Tony Fouche. That was a good
4 grab. He took some - what some would considered
5 shots at republicans. Have you ever had a
6 conservative as a speaker at a commencement speech at
7 a CUNY institution in the past two years?

8 GLENDA GRACE: I don't know.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Has there ever been a
10 Republican do a commencement speech at a CUNY
11 institution?

12 GLENDA GRACE: I don't know. I imagine we have
13 elected officials speak at many of our commencement
14 but explicitly, I don't know.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: I don't mean, you know,
16 I don't mean the people who just are local
17 representatives who happen to show up. I mean,
18 billing a high profile. I'll give you an example.
19 Uhm, is Vice President Pence, would he be encouraged
20 to speak at a CUNY college?

21 GLENDA GRACE: I think the colleges choose - if
22 he wanted - if someone wanted him to come, would he
23 be invited? It depends on the campus but he could be
24 invited.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: So, I mean I guess that
3 goes back to my original question of, it never
4 occurred to anyone in a diverse and free thinking
5 institution to invite prominent republicans?

6 GLENDA GRACE: Actually, I can't say yes or no in
7 terms of never occurring with anyone. That's a
8 question that's challenging to answer or pretty
9 impossible to answer. It never occurred to anyone.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Can Clarence Thomas come
11 and speak at the Commencement next year?

12 GLENDA GRACE: If you have a contact with him,
13 perhaps he can.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER BORELLI: Okay, thank you.

15 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you Minority Leader
16 Borelli. Uhm, next is Council Member Kalman Yeger.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Thank you Mr. Chairman and
18 Minority Leader and particularly to Minority Whip for
19 setting the stage for some of these questions that
20 I'll ask.

21 I want to just explore the topic of free speech
22 on CUNY campuses. I too am a proponent of free
23 speech. I believe in free speech. I took an oath in
24 this body to uphold the Constitution of the United
25 States in the State of New York. Free speech is

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2 important to me, notwithstanding that in this body,
3 we've seen free speech punished. So, the question
4 really is you know what does free speech really mean?
5 So, let's talk about how free it is and referring
6 Madam Chancellor to your testimony, we are legally
7 required to allow the expression of multiple view
8 points on campus.

9 Okay, and you've spent a lot of time today
10 talking about free speech and you may not agree with
11 it and in fact the University may condemn it but
12 nonetheless, it can't be restricted because it's
13 speech. Let's say there's a lecture hall of 1,000
14 students and one student decides that they are going
15 to yell fire. And all those students run out and
16 cause a stampede and there's no fire and the student
17 who yelled fire knows there's no fire. Is that free
18 speech?

19 GLENDA GRACE: Are you - uhm, I think that's
20 determined by a law school, a law case because it
21 creates an imminent danger and that's the line in the
22 question. Whether speech moves from an expression or
23 an expression that makes people do something, doesn't
24 insight people. That's a - so the question is
25 whether it insights people.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: But we can accept as a
3 premise that the root of that result in that law
4 school case that you and I both read, is that not all
5 free – not all speech is free.

6 GLENDA GRACE: No, no, actually, not all speech
7 is protected, right.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Not all speech is
9 protected.

10 GLENDA GRACE: We're talking about free speech
11 and free speech that's protected.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, so not all speech is
13 protected. For example, if somebody says something
14 libelous about someone else, somebody slanders
15 someone else, they can sue in court and if they make
16 their case, recover damages.

17 So, the defense of well, it's speech and I can
18 say what I want doesn't necessarily play when it comes
19 to say liable of slander. Is that correct?

20 GLENDA GRACE: Absolutely.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, so –

22 GLENDA GRACE: You remember law school better
23 than me.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, so not, not all
25 speech – thank you. I appreciate that and my

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2 professors would probably disagree but thank you very
3 much for saying that.

4 So not all speech I think we've determined is
5 protected or to colloquially call it, free. You know
6 it's obvious that anybody could say what they want.
7 It's also sometimes obvious that there are
8 ramifications or repercussions for saying the things
9 that you want if those things are not protected.

10 Uhm, the stated policy of CUNY is that the
11 creation of hostile environment is supposedly not
12 tolerated. It's not really a question, I'm just
13 saying that as a premise because I know that that's
14 what you said and I know you believe that. You can't
15 create a hostile environment at CUNY, right?

16 GLENDA GRACE: I mean, it's at -

17 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: I mean, a student can't
18 create a hostile environment for another student.

19 GLENDA GRACE: A student cannot?

20 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Cannot create a hostile
21 environment for another student. That would be
22 against your discrimination policies.

23 GLENDA GRACE: I guess the question is and this
24 is obviously I do want to go and I'm sure people who
25 are listening don't want to go through the rabbit

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2 hole of law school or law school questions. Hostile,
3 a legal hostile environment, it depends on the facts
4 of the case.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, I can accept that as
6 the answer. It depends on the facts of the case.

7 GLENDA GRACE: Absolutely.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: The, you've said that if a
9 college club or I guess a college chooses a
10 particular commencement speaker, you can't change
11 that speaker. Let me ask this question. Uh, you did
12 say that right?

13 GLENDA GRACE: We do not.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, are you required by
15 any law or rule or statute to have a commencement at
16 any of your campuses?

17 GLENDA GRACE: Given - uh, no, I don't think we
18 are because we actually didn't have commencements or
19 we didn't have in person commencements during COVID
20 and we know how challenging that was.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay. So, if let's say, I
22 don't think this would happen, I would hope but let's
23 say Brooklyn College decided to invite David Duke to
24 be the Commencement Speaker. Would the college allow
25 that to go on? Would the University allow that to go

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on? Whether you can convince the college; if you can't convince the college to remove him as a speaker, would you cancel the event?

GLEND A GRACE: Look the challenge is, is just like David Duke coming to speak or and other names we could give. We gave a name of Clarence Thomas who just uh -

COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: I don't think that's fair at all.

GLEND A GRACE: No, no, no, no, no, no.

COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: I'm speaking David Duke for now and try to keep Justice Thomas away from the category -

GLEND A GRACE: Okay, so fine. But look, I think we don't - I mean the challenge is, is if we shut down for one person, we would shut down for someone else and then that would be a huge challenge for a space where there's supposed to be an exchange of ideas.

Sometimes ideas that we disagree with and we find this really offensive but if we shut it down for one person, we would shut it down for another person. And that would really, that would really be a

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2 question about how we are an educational institution
3 and what we believe education means.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: But in that case and the
5 reason that I reacted and I apologize for cutting you
6 off but I deliberately chose the David Duke example
7 instead of the Justice Thomas example because I'm not
8 referring to political speech. I'm referring to
9 someone who I think is clearly universally accepted
10 as a hater. And not to someone who will - there's a
11 majority that would simply disagree with their
12 political views.

13 I'm talking about somebody who's clearly someone
14 who is known throughout his history for the last 30,
15 40 years as a hater in America. And I chose that
16 name specifically because I'd like to explore your
17 answer a little bit. So, let's say, let's take that
18 to the next logical conclusion. Let's say you're
19 right, if we canceled on particular event because of
20 one particular speaker, then where is the line drawn?

21 But then where is the line drawn if you don't?
22 For example, if you say that it's okay for David Duke
23 to speak because then perhaps somebody might want to
24 invite a controversial supreme court justice to speak
25 and then you would be called on to cancel that. Do

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2 we really believe that that's part of the same
3 conversation that canceling a hate monger speech
4 versus canceling a speech of somebody who is on the
5 political spectrum that is opposite to the majority
6 is the same?

7 GLEND A GRACE: Actually, I think we do. The one
8 thing that's great about this is that I don't have to
9 think about it on my own. I'm not an expert. I
10 don't pretend to be an expert. I do know that I've
11 been given the opportunity to talk and hear from
12 people who are experts. When I went to the summit on
13 campus antisemitism that was sponsored by the
14 American Jewish Council in partnership with Hillel
15 and the American Council on Presidents. They talked
16 specifically about this incident, this example, and
17 they actual had legal – when the President at
18 Columbia discussed it and in that conversation with
19 people from all over different campuses, the
20 understanding was the way to deal with speech as an
21 educational institution is more speech. That is the
22 way to do it. It's not canceling because if we
23 cancel, then there is no discussion. If we cancel,
24 there's no education. If we cancel, we're not giving
25 people the tools that they're going to need to deal

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2 with people like David Dukes whose been around for 40
3 years and probably has more friends now than he did
4 40-years ago.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, so -

6 GLENDA GRACE: Who had those tools. So, speech,
7 more speech.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay perfect, let's
9 explore more speech. Let's say a university, a
10 college campus did invite this David Duke to come
11 speak and your policy would be, well, we're not going
12 to cancel because that would be canceling their event
13 and we're not going to do that and free speech is
14 free speech, but we can combat free speech with more
15 speech. Would you then require that at that same
16 commencement, they have a speaker from the opposite
17 spectrum. In other words, instead of a hater, a
18 lover of people.

19 GLENDA GRACE: I require - this is all
20 hypothetical. I mean, look -

21 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: We do hypotheticals.

22 GLENDA GRACE: Okay, so I mean look, you could
23 decide to do that. You could decide to give out
24 pamphlets, you could decide if you don't want to
25 bring more attention to him, and that some people

1
2 decide to standup and turn their backs to him.

3 There's a number things that could be -

4 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: But I'm saying that that's
5 - I'm not talking about what individuals attending
6 the event or not attending the event are choosing not
7 to go or standing outside and yelling and screaming,
8 which by the way in and of itself makes for an unsafe
9 environment.

10 I'm talking about as a university, okay, the
11 policy of which is that we're not going to cancel the
12 event. We're not going to remove this person as a
13 speaker. I see that you want to say something.

14 GLENDA GRACE: I just want to say, the one thing
15 that we're leaving out is obviously there are issues
16 about time, place and manner and again, I don't want
17 to go to the esoteric for folks who aren't in law
18 school. You are not really interested but you know,
19 we want to talk about you know obviously the
20 challenge at hand. You can you know, the time, place
21 and manner with strictions that can be placed on
22 speech. That is done normally and perhaps you would
23 do. You might do that in this case.

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2 As you talked about before, fire, if a situation
3 gets to the point where there seems like there going
4 to eminent danger, that is a different discussion.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, so we're now
6 exploring this to the point where we've come to the
7 conclusion that perhaps there is a scenario in which
8 the college, the University would require a college
9 to either cancel the speaker or cancel the event. I
10 don't want to put words in your mouth.

11 GLENDA GRACE: I said, there are time, place and
12 manner restrictions that could be placed on anything,
13 right. That's allowed under the First Amendment,
14 even with free speech and protected speech and then
15 also, if they're questions about eminent danger,
16 certainly that might happen. You might shutdown an
17 event.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, so -

19 GLENDA GRACE: Probably more likely in the midst
20 of but again as a lawyer in the midst of. Because we
21 don't want to bore people with law school phrases.
22 We don't want to prior you know restrain speech
23 before it happens because that does chill first
24 amendment and the law - first amendment rights.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Do you believe that
3 canceling the event would actually be a violation of
4 - is the University's policy -

5 GLENDA GRACE: No, no, no, actually, what we're
6 talking about is a hypothetical.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: I'm not talking -

8 GLENDA GRACE: No, no, from the University, you
9 were giving me hypotheticals with minimal facts, with
10 not lots of context and we could -

11 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Well, I'll get to the real
12 live example of the antisemite team you invited to
13 speak at uh, at a college, at a campus commencement
14 on behalf of the university.

15 GLENDA GRACE: No, actually on behalf of the
16 student. It was a student speaker, unless you're
17 giving a different one.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: It's the same thing. If
19 they're speaking on your premises, whether or not, I
20 mean it's my opinion that it's the same thing. It's
21 your premises and you own it and that's the - not you
22 personally obviously -

23 GLENDA GRACE: The public actually owns it
24 because we are public entity. And so because of that

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: This is one of the
3 problems with Zoom Mr. Chairman is that when we can't
4 see each other and that's why we should actually talk
5 more and greater about whether or not we should not
6 be allowing agencies to speak on Zoom. And I think
7 that becomes a problem when we have agencies that are
8 not sitting across from each other and there's no
9 reason why the University couldn't be here in person
10 today. And I agree with my colleague who mentioned
11 that before.

12 But back to the topic at hand Madam Chancellor.

13 GLENDA GRACE: Actually, I'm a Vice Chancellor,
14 I'm not a Chancellor.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: I know but I dropped the
16 Vice just like we drop Vice when we talk about the uh
17 and deputies, when we talk about Deputy Mayor's.

18 GLENDA GRACE: Okay, okay.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: So, it's just an old
20 tradition.

21 GLENDA GRACE: Okay.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: We call Deputy Mayor's
23 Mayor. It's the same way, right. No, not really.
24 Okay, alright. The expert has corrected me.

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2 Uhm, let's - look, I think we've gotten to the
3 point where uhm I think we've agreed that there is a
4 way. I know you don't own the campus. I know it
5 doesn't belong to you. I know you're not the
6 president and stockholder, Chief Executive, etc., but
7 it belongs to the people and the people are
8 represented in this by the government officials who
9 appointed the governing body, who then in turn,
10 appointed a Chancellor, who then in turn hired you.
11 So, we're in the same place. Yes, I know it's not
12 yours and you don't get the profit from it. I didn't
13 land here yesterday but let's talk about what it
14 means to control a public place.

15 For example, we are here in a Committee room and
16 the Sergeants at Arms are able to control who can and
17 can't come up here for safety purposes. Uhm, the
18 idea that it's free speech and anybody can come and
19 say whatever they want. That's not true because when
20 the witnesses are going to testify later, they're
21 going to have a clock on them of about two minutes.
22 And if they go to two minutes and five seconds, Mr.
23 Chairman is going to pull the plug on them.

24 So, there is a restraint on speech and -

25 GLENDA GRACE: I said the time, place -

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: And there are many
3 different ways that that manifests. Whether or not
4 it's the examples that I gave in recovery, in libel
5 and slander or whether it's criminal cases regarding
6 yelling fire in a private movie theater or whether
7 it's dozens of other ways that the Supreme Court has
8 over the years restricted or – not restricted,
9 enabled government to regulate the method and the
10 manner in which people will speak and whether or not
11 as we colloquially call it, it is truly free.

12 Okay, so, uh the Chairman mentioned the
13 environment. It was in one of his first questions to
14 you Madam Vice Chancellor. I know you're not the
15 Chancellor by the way, I have met him. The Chairman
16 mentioned the environment that allows students to the
17 swastika. And so the question I have is, and again,
18 I'm not asking you a specific case but is it that –
19 do you believe, does the University believe that it
20 ought to be the policy? That if a student draws a
21 hate symbol on public property, in a university, that
22 student ought to no longer have a place in that
23 universe.

24 GLENDA GRACE: I think that they certainly need
25 to be disciplined.

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COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay.

GLENDIA GRACE: The question is what the - just like every other situation, there are certainly instances where that person could be expelled, suspended or even expelled.

COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: But there's a difference between suspension and expulsion and there's a difference between not suspension or expulsion and whatever other discipline, going to a class or having I think the word dialogue was used several hundred times today and you know, we talk about dialogue all the time. But I don't know and I said this on the Council floor just a few weeks ago, when a swastika's drawn and we say, well if only these people were educated, not to draw a swastika. If they needed education about not drawing a swastika, then they would have drawn Mickey Mouse.

They know what they're doing when they draw a swastika. They know what they are doing when they draw a hateful image or a thing on public property. They know they are doing something and what they're actually doing is they are responding to the environment in which they know they'll get away with it. They're doing it because they won't get caught.

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Most criminal acts, most unsocially acceptable acts, take place in the dark where people do not believe they're going to either get caught or if they get caught, they believe there will be no consequences. That's why bank robbers wear masks. That's why the holdup guy wears a mask. That's why cars are broken into more likely at night than during the day. People want to hide their criminal and antisocial and unacceptable behavior.

So, when somebody is drawing a swastika, they know they're not allowed to do that and the question is, whether or not there's still room for them on the CUNY campus and I'm trying to get that answer and I think that the answer that you just gave was, depending on the circumstances but also yes is an option.

GLEND A GRACE: I'm sorry, yes, is an option. That was a very long question.

COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Yes, so the question is that if somebody draws a swastika on the CUNY campus, expulsion is not automatic.

GLEND A GRACE: Because there's disciplinary processes in play that we have to have.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, and then after the
3 disciplinary process is in play, the process is to
4 determine whether or not it occurred.

5 GLENDA GRACE: And then also, to determine that
6 person might be having a mental health issue. The
7 person - also, the person might be hateful and this
8 might be something they've done three times or done
9 in another school.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: So, if they did it only
11 once - Ma'am, so if they did it only once, it's okay
12 for them to come back?

13 GLENDA GRACE: Absolutely, absolutely not. I
14 talked about there being a disciplinary process that
15 every student has to go through.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: No, I understand that but
17 a disciplinary process is, as us lawyers would say,
18 you know it's the effect of a trial right? The idea
19 is to -

20 GLENDA GRACE: Yes and it's set forward in the
21 bylaw.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Right but it's to first
23 establish that it occurred. I'm taking for granted
24 that the case that I'm talking about, it is
25 established that it occurred. You mentioned you

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2 would go back and look at video. So, I'm talking
3 about in a case where 't's already established that
4 the incident occurred, we no longer are talking about
5 there's a question of whether it occurred. Now the
6 question is what happens next?

7 So, now we've established possibly if they did it
8 three times, there's no more room for them -

9 GLENDA GRACE: No, no, no, no. I gave you
10 different specific. So, no. So, I'm sorry for
11 interrupting you.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, so my question is,
13 once it is established that a person drew hate speech
14 of any kind on the public property of a community
15 campus, is expulsion automatic?

16 GLENDA GRACE: There's no automatic expulsion for
17 any action because there is a procedure that you go
18 through. And that's the plan, so there's no is there
19 a list of five things that if you do this you're
20 automatically let go from CUNY. No there isn't.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: So, maybe I'm not using
22 automatic the right way. Uhm, let me ask it this
23 way. If somebody sets fire to Brooklyn Colleges main
24 campus and burnt it to the ground, would they be
25 invited back next year?

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2 GLEND A GRACE: Uh, actually I think there would
3 be a criminal case. Because what we would also do -

4 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Right, but let's assume -

5 let's take for granted that in New York nobody gets

6 punished for crimes anymore, so they'll be free and

7 let's say that the college which doesn't have a

8 beyond a reasonable doubt standard in its cases but

9 it would simply use clear and convincing I believe.

10 It is proven. You know you have the video of the guy

11 taking the match and throwing it with the kerosene

12 and it burns the building down to the ground. Would

13 that person be invited back next year in that

14 replaced that campus?

15 GLEND A GRACE: This is a very funny scenario

16 because I know I'm not in person, so I don't see the

17 person but I think at this point we've moved down a

18 rabbit hole.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: What I'm trying to get -

20 right Madam Vice Chancellor but the reason is because

21 - I used the Vice that time. I'm trying to get to

22 the place of what is the most unacceptable thing that

23 someone can do that would get them, you can't come to

24 a CUNY anymore?

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2 GLEENDA GRACE: Here's I guess, the challenge is,
3 if someone was committed – if someone committed a
4 homicide, there would still be a process for someone
5 who committed a homicide on CUNY's campus because
6 that's what the rules say. That's what the
7 procedures are there for and the challenge is, that
8 if you don't follow the procedures, and that's part
9 of what we're here talking about the fact that there
10 are instances where we don't follow our procedures
11 and that's wrong, right. And we're trying to not do
12 that but if you allow, there are not going to be
13 procedures, there will be issues and that's – and so,
14 I just – I don't –

15 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, let me ask it a
16 different way. I recognize there are process and
17 procedures and we're going to keep going in circles
18 if I keep on that road. So, let me go it a different
19 way. Uhm, is there anything preventing the
20 University from establishing a process and a
21 procedure that says that if you are found to have
22 committed these list of 11 things or 8 things or two
23 things. For example, if you kill somebody on campus
24 and you are found to have done that by clear and
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2 convincing evidence at a disciplinary hearing, the
3 punishment is expulsion.

4 Is there any reason that you can't say what the
5 punishment is in your policies for a particular
6 violation? Like, in other words -

7 GLENDA GRACE: [INAUDIBLE 2:28:53]-

8 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Let me clarify ma'am.
9 Have a rule that says, on our campuses you may not
10 murder and if after a hearing you are found to have
11 actually committed a murder by clear and convincing
12 evidence which is the standard of your hearings, then
13 and only then in such case, expulsion is mandatory.

14 GLENDA GRACE: Is that a possibility?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: I'm saying, can you
16 establish such a rule. Can your university have such
17 a rule?

18 GLENDA GRACE: I think that would depend on
19 whether the trustees actually voted on it.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, so we need the
21 trustees to come to this hearing so that we can -

22 GLENDA GRACE: No, I mean, you know just to be
23 clear, we were clear that the policies adopted by the
24 trustees and you also know because again, there are a
25 lot of lawyers in this Zoom room or in the

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2 conversation. You also know that for all kinds of
3 crimes, there are different, there are a range of
4 punishments. Just to be clear, we don't want people
5 who commit crimes running rampant all over our
6 campuses but we also know that people actually,
7 people change over time. And I'm not using the
8 example that you're using; we know a number of people
9 have started in one direction and moved in another
10 direction and one of the great things about CUNY is
11 that we are open to people who are ready to change
12 and to change their life and improve themselves.

13 Now, that's -

14 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, alright. Uhm, let
15 me ask this, we've already established through the
16 Minority Whip's question that there's only one
17 country in the entire world that has been subject to
18 resolutions and actions on CUNY campuses and one
19 country -

20 GLENDA GRACE: That I'm aware of.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: That you're aware of
22 right, yes fair enough. And by the way, I take for a
23 matter of I guess, you know I'm not a judge but for
24 judicial notice, if you will that the fact that you
25 were aware of only one is good enough evidence for me

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that there probably is only one because I'm assuming that you know most of what goes on your -- okay, I assume it.

GLEND A GRACE: Okay, CUNY's a big place.

COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Yes, CUNY is a big place but it's one country to the exclusion of all others and she listed a group and an exhaustive group, including China, Russia, Iran, Saudi Arabia, Venezuela, North Korea, uhm, and there's one country that has had repeated actions by not just student groups on the campuses but also the employees of the university on the campuses.

Let me ask this question, why do you suppose that is? Why do you suppose only one country has been subject to these resolutions and actions and not any others?

GLEND A GRACE: Uhm, because some people are antisemitic for some reason. For some people and other people feel like there's a political, historically, they don't have a historical context or they don't study their history.

COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, so do you -- and I think that this was asked earlier, whether or not -- and this becomes problematic when we're talking to a

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2 person who represents an institution because you
3 know, the word is do you believe? And it's do you
4 believe? Do you believe? And honestly, you're a
5 very nice person, I like you very much but who cares
6 what you believe right. Okay, exactly, it's about
7 what the University believes and I don't know if they
8 are in a position to say what the university
9 believes, maybe you are, maybe you're not but it was
10 asked in many different ways and many different
11 formats, whether or not the University considers
12 antizionism to be antisemitism. And I'm not sure
13 what the answer to that is as we still here.

14 GLENDA GRACE: The answer was, we follow and make
15 a determination about discrimination and harassment
16 based upon our policy.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay and I know that was -
18 I know that English and I'm not been facetious, I
19 really don't understand what that means.

20 I will just - I'm going to just say this. When I
21 started off this hearing - I'm going to wrap up Mr.
22 Chairman and turn it back and I'm very, very grateful
23 to the Chair for holding this hearing, as I said at
24 the beginning but also for his indulgence on a topic
25 that is incredibly important to the members of this

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2 Council who are here and hopefully to other members
3 who are not but I am so grateful to my colleagues who
4 are part of this today.

5 You know, I started off with words that weren't
6 mine and you know it was a very different time when I
7 wasn't on this earth when he served and when he was
8 removed from this planet but I also want to say, uh,
9 the antisemite rejoice is, at any opportunity to vent
10 his malice. The times have made it unpopular in the
11 West to proclaim openly a hatred of the Jews.

12 By the way, that was true in 1967, that's no
13 longer true today in 2002, in 2022. This being the
14 case, the antisemite must constantly seek new forms
15 and forums for his poison. How he must revel in the
16 new masquerade. He does not hate the Jews; he is
17 just antizionist. That is the essence of the
18 camouflage that we are seeing and that we may even
19 hear from later today. I don't know which witnesses
20 are here to testify but that the speech that we're
21 talking about is not hate speech because it's
22 political speech.

23 That they're not antisemi's and therefore in
24 violation of a college policy because antisemitism is
25 hate and that would violate the college policy but

1
2 they're just antizionist and to be antizionist is a
3 political form of expression protected by the First
4 Amendment and thus it wouldn't be subject to the
5 university discipline and I think that's what my
6 questions were designed to get at and I'm not sure if
7 they did or not but I get it in my head and I think
8 you do to and I understand the constraints under
9 which you are able to testify as to the university
10 position versus your own personal opinions and I get
11 that.

12 But what I would say is that there has to be a
13 better way to look at discipline and to protect these
14 college campuses and that's what we're here talking
15 about today. It can't be the case, as I said in my
16 opening statement that the - and as Mr. Chairman said
17 and as the Minority Whip said, that and as others
18 will probably say, that to be Jewish in New York is
19 no longer safe. It can't be the case and
20 particularly it can't be the case on what is supposed
21 to be one of the safest places. The places of
22 education and the places where young minds are
23 formed, it can't be the case and what we are seeing
24 is that not just is it the case amongst student to
25 student rhetoric and violence and violent words and

1
2 hate speech, but it is also amongst the employees of
3 the university system as represented by the PSC, the
4 Professional Staff Congress. Their own positions is
5 that they are an antisemitic organization and there
6 are real questions that I think as we end this
7 hearing later today are still going to remain about
8 what it is that the university is doing. It's not
9 dialogue. It's not more meetings and I'm glad that
10 Chancellor Matos went to Israel and it's beautiful
11 and I heard him speak about it a few weeks ago at
12 ABNY and it's great and I'm glad he did but that's
13 not the answer. That he is good with Israel and
14 knows Israel understands it is not the answer.

15 The question is whether or not ultimately, the
16 university system that the taxpayers or this city and
17 state pay for is prepared to deal with hate on its
18 campuses and as we sit here today, I don't think it
19 is.

20 And with that, Madam Vice Chancellor and other
21 Madam Vice Chancellor, Madam President, I'm very
22 grateful for your time and I turn this back over to
23 Mr. Chairman. Thank you.

24 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you Council Member
25 Yeger. Council Member Brewer.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Thank you very much. I
3 do think we're all supportive of CUNY but I have to
4 say in listening to this discussion today, I don't
5 think and I don't want to say that this is the only
6 way to approach it but I just don't think there's
7 enough central training, discussion, oversight on
8 this issue. And there's no question and you know
9 this better than I that antisemitism is way up. In
10 fact it's up more than any other hates in the City of
11 New York. We have Asian hate, we have LGBTQ, we got
12 racism, we got everything here and now of course, we
13 got the supreme court.

14 So, what we are concerned about is exactly
15 specifically, what are the programs and they have to
16 be funded, that CUNY is doing? So, just to start
17 with because we talked to, I don't even want to
18 mention Columbia, NYU, many of the campuses, JCR.
19 So, a lot of time trying to talk to people before
20 this hearing to see what works and what doesn't work
21 and one of the issues is, my understanding is,
22 there's obviously direct student support staff,
23 administrative staff who approve protests, maybe
24 graduation speakers and they participate as they
25 should in the diversity and inclusion work.

1
2 So, one of my questions to start with is, I don't
3 know how many people are on the staff but how are
4 they even trained to know content, context, free
5 speech or not? That is a specific group of people
6 and I'm just wondering if you train them.

7 DENISE MAYBANK: So, many of the campuses do
8 engage the Student Affairs staff in DEI training. I
9 would have to inventory that and tell you this one
10 does it, this one does it, this one doesn't do it.
11 In order to be responsive to that, is not something I
12 could offer you today.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: No, I understand.

14 DENISE MAYBANK: And I'm willing to do that if
15 that is what you would like. What I want to do is
16 speak to what I believe I'm hearing as your concern.
17 And that is, that we make certain the staff who are
18 interacting with students have an understanding of
19 the broader issues. Am I missing that or is that -

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: No, you're not missing
21 it. I guess my concern, you know I don't want to -
22 we have a very diverse group of universities in the
23 City of New York.

24 DENISE MAYBANK: Yes.
25

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: But so you know, both NYU
3 and Lynn Brown is submitting testimony and Columbia
4 do it centrally. Now, they're big too. God knows
5 NYU is big.

6 So, they're doing it centrally and I worry a
7 little bit - I teach at Hunter, so I know a little
8 bit of what goes on there but I do think that you're
9 leaving it up to every campus and I have to say, I
10 think that's a mistake. I think you have to have
11 much more central oversight because you know, God
12 knows the Deans, the Presidents have many issues on
13 their table. But this is important and obviously it
14 could all kinds of hate but antisemitism is so much
15 on the rise. So, what I'm saying to you is, if you
16 go to Columbia as an example, and I know that may not
17 be what you want to look to but they are now funding
18 these intergroup support. Little Grassroots
19 initiatives, people are able to get funding, you
20 talked about that earlier. They are doing antibias
21 seminar for all first year students. They are doing
22 leadership of their student government
23 representatives. They are doing a wonderful
24 expansion between Barnard, Columbia, and the Hillel's
25 and the Office of Multi-Cultural Affairs and I assume

1
2 they are working with some of the other universities
3 in the area.

4 And of course they're educating their leaders and
5 they have major consequences for hate speech. So,
6 that's on a piece of paper. I can go through all the
7 specifics, you can to. I don't see that from CUNY.
8 I don't see one, two, three, four, five and then I
9 look at Lynn Brown, I know Lynn very well. She's got
10 one, two, three, four, five, six, seven very, very
11 specifics as to what they're doing on this topic.
12 It's not theoretical and at the end, it's
13 consequences very clearly and they're spelled out.

14 So, and I understand you have a very diverse
15 campus, it's more diverse than either one of these
16 two institutions. I know them very well, but I don't
17 hear that from you and I don't see anything in
18 writing that says, this is what the deal is. So,
19 maybe you could respond to that.

20 DENISE MAYBANK: I'm glad to do so Councilperson
21 Brewer and I hope you will look at my portion of the
22 testimony, because outlined there and in bold with
23 italics, are some of the things that we are
24 addressing at this point.

1
2 As I indicated, this is an effort we are
3 embarking on. There's no question about that. Have
4 we got it down and is it exact? No, but we are
5 committed to moving forward. We're committed to
6 moving forward with our Interfaith Council, with our
7 Community Advisory Board associated with that. By
8 appointing the university director of student into
9 cultural engagement and dialogue. Addressing that
10 and it is one of the things that I talked about in
11 relation to that, that I want to come back to and
12 that's the fellowship effort to bring people together
13 in common experience. To use the resources of our
14 city. The Jewish Museum. The Museum of Jewish
15 history. The Schomburg collection, El Barrio, the
16 Museum El Barrio.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: I know them all.

18 DENISE MAYBANK: The resources that are a part of
19 our city to create common experience for a clearer
20 understanding across different -

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: And why hasn't this
22 happened up till now?

23 DENISE MAYBANK: Look, I've been here 21-months
24 okay, so I'm going to do what I can to move it
25 forward. I can't tell you why it hasn't happened

1
2 till now but I believe that there are efforts that
3 have been underway on the campuses in different ways.
4 We are trying to come up with a centralized approach
5 that still honors the autonomy of our campuses to do
6 what's relevant in the context of their climate. The
7 climate at Brooklyn will not necessarily be the
8 climate at Borough of Manhattan. And so, how do we
9 make certain that we're embracing those experiences
10 well with a standard of expectation just as you
11 described.

12 So, that is what we're about. That is where
13 we're headed and I'm glad to hear more from my
14 colleagues at Columbia and other institutions across
15 the city who have it down. We're glad to hear that
16 but our effort has to be one that honors the identity
17 of 25 different campuses in different ways, with the
18 expectation that the values of CUNY are clear across
19 the -

20 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, so St. Francis you
21 have, God help us antisemitic incident tomorrow or
22 next week. How would you handle it differently than
23 it has been handled in the past if at all?

24 GLENDA GRACE: I mean, I think, how - I mean we
25 would follow. I would say that some of incidents

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2 that we're hearing about today is the one's that we
3 don't handle well, right. That we've made a mistake
4 on right and obviously, if we were perfect, we would
5 be doing something different. We're not perfect.
6 How we handle it differently, I think what we're
7 talking about is making sure that there is training
8 in place and discussion before it's handled, right.
9 Before it happens. That's part of the issue. The
10 procedure, uhm, the procedure in place is the same
11 but we want to make sure students are not fearful to
12 report right or that students know where they're
13 supposed to go. Know that if they don't want to go
14 to a room, they can go on a website and make a
15 report. Know that they could also make an anonymous
16 report if they want to.

17 Our policy is really clear. You can decide to
18 have an anonymous report and it still has to be
19 investigated. So, for us, the difference is to make
20 sure people understand what the process is and that
21 we follow the process that's laid out and improve it
22 as we learn that there needs to be improvement across
23 the board.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Okay, and then how will
25 you - I mean, the biggest issue as we know is the

1
2 topic of Israel and Palestine. I know it only too
3 well, so how are you going to try without you know
4 have to have voices having this discussion so that we
5 hopefully stop the antisemitism and anything that is
6 anti-Palestine. What are you going to do to
7 hopefully increase that kind of dialogue so it is
8 something that people can understand.

9 GLENDA GRACE: I mean, one of the things – the
10 higher that we keep talking about is not just a
11 person right, it's a programming. But with the
12 University Director of Student Intercultural
13 engagement and dialogue, that person is actually very
14 familiar with a dialogue and what right – it's not
15 just talk right because again, people hear dialogue,
16 they think that's it but talk leads to action, leads
17 to change. But that person is very familiar with the
18 DEI incubator, which the Council has supported, which
19 leads to conversation and discussion and they're also
20 one of the longstanding members of CARRU, which is a
21 Center for Racial and uh, Racial Religious and Racial
22 Understanding at Queens, where there was conversation
23 before things happened.

24 Again, we talk about what happens when things get
25 you know when they're at the end, right but what

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2 about the beginning? People understanding what they
3 can't do, what they shouldn't do. How they should
4 have a conversation. How they should respect other
5 people. How even if you don't agree with the
6 existence of a state, that doesn't mean you
7 generalize about people who disagree with you.

8 And so part of what we're doing is trying to
9 build that or I should say expand the ecosystem that
10 works. And that's certainly part of having this
11 university director intercultural engagement and
12 dialogue, and also the continuing partnership of RC
13 and also with Hillel with some programming they are
14 doing at some schools that we, depending on the
15 conversation that we have internally, might expand to
16 other schools and other training also.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER BREWER: Alright, well I
18 appreciate this. I want to thank the Chair for
19 having the hearing because I think, just like
20 everything else, when there's a deadline to talk
21 about something, more work gets done on such an
22 important topic. I guess what I would say is yes,
23 keep talking to other campuses to see what they're
24 doing but this is you know, we got to get this right
25 and people who are unfortunately they're not – people

1
2 who hate are not just on the campus but it is where
3 we should not have hate. That's just one location
4 where we should be able to fix it. The streets are
5 another story. Thank you very much.

6 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you Council Member
7 Brewer. I just want to reiterate a few points that
8 were made and to clarify the DEI training came up and
9 you're going to send us inventory of the DEI
10 training. And you committed earlier to include
11 Judaism and antisemitism in the DEI training and of
12 course the data that we requested earlier and again
13 just what you're hearing is essentially while each of
14 the universities colleges is different centrally,
15 more needs to be done. I want to turn it over to
16 Council Member Feliz who is very familiar with CUNY.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: And especially CUNY law,
18 class of 2017. Thank you so much Chair Dinowitz and
19 colleagues for this very important hearing. And also
20 thank you, I want to start the same way that Council
21 Member colleague Brewer started. Extremely thankful
22 for all the work that CUNY does in opening doors for
23 families and students in every single corner of our
24 city.

1
2 And I want to thank you also for your comment
3 about needing the importance of more speech to
4 encourage the diversity of ideas. So, I'm a CUNY law
5 grad class of 2017 but I won't talk about my
6 experience but I will talk about the experience of
7 many students that I know have graduated from school,
8 our current students. One thing that I have
9 consistently heard is that there's a very small group
10 of students that are generally allowed. Class after
11 class, to basically control discussions and not allow
12 any other idea to be you know thoroughly discussed.
13 Not even thoroughly, not discussed at all.

14 So, a few super brief questions. Does CUNY agree
15 that we are better off when we encourage thorough
16 discussions on different sides of an issue? An idea,
17 a different, analysis, a different perspectives of
18 any matter.

19 GLEND A GRACE: Absolutely.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: And what would you say are
21 the benefits of that?

22 GLEND A GRACE: Sometimes you learn something
23 about your own point of view and sometimes you learn
24 about other peoples point of view. And so, your
25 actions are more based - your ideas are more flushed

1
2 out and sometimes you learn flexibility. Sometimes
3 you learn commonality and sometimes you learn – you
4 get clarity about certain situations.

5 DENISE MAYBANK: And a lack of understanding of
6 peoples stories and their narratives and their lives
7 and their living breeds the ability to go off in a
8 corner and make it up on your own. And so, the
9 extent to which we can elucidate for our community,
10 more about the experiences of one another. I think
11 the more we put them in place of knowing, engaging
12 and being willing to step in and learn more.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: I agree with every single
14 word that both of you said. So, in CUNY, is there
15 something that is important to CUNY School of Law?
16 Encouraging discussions of different sides of an
17 issue?

18 GLENDA GRACE: As a law school, I think it's
19 incumbent upon them to do that.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: What steps if any has CUNY
21 law taken to encourage thorough discussions on
22 different sides of an issue?

23 GLENDA GRACE: I can't specifically say that what
24 those steps are. I know a new Dean is coming in and
25 we can discuss with her what steps will be taken.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER DINOWITZ: What steps has CUNY
3 taken to encourage more speech, which as you stated
4 earlier super important, has countless benefits, and
5 leaves everybody better off?

6 GLENDA GRACE: I don't know those steps and I
7 can't document them but as Vice Chancellor Maybank
8 said, we were going to talk to CUNY Law School about
9 what outreach we did to students around the incident
10 and we can collect what steps of intake and I know
11 there were some attempts at some dialogue but let me
12 - I don't want to guess, so let me - we can make sure
13 we get that to you.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER FELIZ: Okay, thank you so much.
15 I promise my list of questions uh, were going to be
16 brief but I hope that CUNY Law could do much more to
17 encourage thorough discussions on different sides of
18 an issue. That is actually a problem that I have
19 heard student after student and also class after
20 class and I think CUNY Law is a great institution
21 that does really good work but could uhm, you know do
22 much better if it actually focuses on leaving
23 everybody better off by encouraging thorough
24 discussions on different sides of an issue, rather
25 than having one group you know control the dialogue

1
2 and the narrative and not allow any other
3 perspective, uhm, which I think is a very entitled
4 thing to do for that group. Thank you so much.

5 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you Council Member
6 Feliz, Council Member Barron.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Thank you. Thank you
8 very much. Thank you very much, I think that was
9 planned Chair. I think you set me up like that. I'm
10 going to give you a different perspective on this
11 issue of antisemitism that I think we should
12 seriously take into consideration at the University.
13 We're supposed to be thinking and discussing on a
14 high level. We're supposed to have some level of
15 intellectual security to deal with people who think
16 differently and have different interpretations of
17 especially a complex, very complex issue called the
18 so-called middle east, which is really not in the
19 middle east. It's not east to the people in China.
20 That's also an American thing but just to talk about
21 things. I've been called antisemitic all my life it
22 appears. Every time you raise some truth from your
23 perspective, intellectually, you are antisemitic.
24 You are antisemitic. [LOUD CROWD 2:54:09]

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2 You got to hold up my time? This is what I'm
3 talking about, can't handle any other perspective
4 than theirs. That's the insecurity of people who
5 lack intellectual abilities to explore the history,
6 the facts, not what you feel, not what you believe
7 but what are the historical facts? Then, when you
8 get historical facts, they say, oh, you're changing
9 history. You're a revisionist.

10 Every person called antisemitic is not
11 antisemitic. They are criticizing the State of
12 Israel. If I say the State of Israel is occupying
13 Palestinian territory, I'm antisemitic. If I say the
14 State of Israel went into the Gaza Strip in the name
15 of getting terrorists murdered, little children, and
16 innocent women and men to the tune of thousands, the
17 whole world condemned it, we're antisemitic.

18 If I said Benjamin Netanyahu was a racist, anti-
19 Palestinian person, I'm antisemitic. If I say the -

20 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Council Member Barron.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Yes.

22 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: I said in my opening
23 statement, this is not a hearing on foreign policy.
24 What we're discussing is - what we're discu- your
25 clock is paused, don't worry. What we're discussing

1
2 is antisemitism and as it relates to peoples
3 experiences here in New York City. So, we understand
4 there are differences of you know whatever of
5 opinions, fine.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: I just beg to differ
7 because you let somebody talk about the BDS and
8 that's a foreign policy, and you allowed that to
9 happen.

10 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: No, sir.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: It is a foreign policy.

12 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: It's a domestic - it's
13 actually taken by - we're talking about actions taken
14 by the University. I'm interested to hear your
15 opinions on how we're addressing antisemitism.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: Antisemitism is an
17 international -

18 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: And so, here in New York
19 City. That's what we're interested in hearing in
20 this Committee-

21 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: I know and I'm
22 antisemitism -

23 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: I'm happy to connect you
24 with the Chair of the International Groups Committee.
25

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER BARRON: No, antisemitism is an
3 international issue. I've heard other speakers talk
4 about it and they cannot talk about antisemi- if
5 you're talking about Israel, you're talking about a
6 foreign country and I heard the name Israel
7 mentioned. That is a foreign country. You cannot
8 talk about this and not talk about a foreign country.
9 So, I'm going to continue and take it as you will.
10 This is a city university that deals with issues of
11 antisemitism. You cannot isolate it to CUNY's campus
12 and swastika signs on campuses. It's deeper than
13 that. It goes far deeper than that and others have
14 mentioned it. I listened to the testimony. You
15 didn't stop them and they went beyond New York City.
16 I heard the testimony myself.

17 So, I think you should allow me to do the same
18 thing. When you talk about antisemitism, we have to
19 allow for the university to have this kind of debate
20 without people being labeled antisemites because they
21 disagree with the state of Israel and it's terrorism
22 of the Palestinian people. From the Nakba, from the
23 Balfour Declaration, for occupying all of that. When
24 people come to New York and get on campuses and want
25 to reflect their disagreement with that, that is not

1
2 antisemitism. That is political disagreement. And
3 even if you try to play that game like, Zionism is a
4 political thing, Judaism is a religious thing. You
5 can be a Zionist and not a Judaist and you can be one
6 and when I went to the Gaza Strip myself, I went with
7 Rabbi's from the Jewish community who are Judaist and
8 they disagree with the State of Israel. So, when you
9 talk about antisemitism, we got to realize that and
10 when we were on these campuses, years ago, speaking
11 out against the partied in South Africa, they had a
12 divestment movement to divest things from the CUNY
13 campuses because they were against a partied in South
14 Africa. That's why I support the boycott divestment
15 movement because it is saying divest until they allow
16 Palestinians to return to their land, divest and
17 withdraw from occupied territories. Divest until
18 they give Palestinians the same rights they give to
19 Jewish-isms and Israel.

20 This is not a New York City, city university
21 issue. When you take on this, you got to take on the
22 broad scope of it but where it manifests from and
23 that manifestation is in the middle east. So, I
24 support the divest boycott movement. I think CUNY
25 should allow for people to have those discussions and

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2 I also think we should get to the truth. The real
3 history of the illegal, occupied, immoral, terrorist
4 state of Israel and what they're doing to the
5 Palestinian people.

6 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you Council Member
7 Barron. I appreciate that.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Mr. Chairman.

9 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: One moment. We're not -
10 I want to be clear. We're not having a debate.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: I'm not going to have a
12 debate.

13 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: This table, I just want to
14 clarify a few things. Uhm, it is interesting to hear
15 anyone say, anyone, anyone here about free speech
16 because the reality is this, for this hearing, at any
17 hearing, when people post on Yoma Shoa, Holocaust
18 Remembrance Day, it is meant with protest. People
19 are protesting antisemitism as if we shouldn't be
20 allowed to talk about it. We are talking about the
21 same thing. How can we - how can CUNY actually
22 address the fact that Jewish students feel less safe?
23 Because as we see now, the conversations are not
24 happening. One point of view from one small group of
25 lab people perhaps or maybe it's a majority are

1
2 allowed to control the entire conversation. That's
3 what's happening at CUNY and the result is, as I
4 mentioned in my opening statement, Jews being
5 attacked on the street. Almost half of hate crimes
6 in New York City are antisemitic and it is
7 impossible, it is impossible to talk about the hate
8 crime without talking about the fact that it is not
9 being addressed and where can we address it on this
10 Committee? We can address it in our college
11 campuses.

12 That's the purview of this Committee but when
13 we're having - okay, when we're having a hearing
14 about antisemitism and the hearing is protested, as
15 if it shouldn't happen, there's nothing else to call
16 it except antisemitism. When we post on our social
17 media about the Holocaust and remembering six million
18 Jews who died and nasty comments are made about that,
19 there is no other word to call it than antisemitism.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Thank you Mr. Chairman.
21 Just very briefly, this is not about a debate
22 although the gentleman departed from the room and I
23 wish that he would remain but the point that I was
24 making during my questioning of the witnesses was
25 about antisemitism on campuses as you said Mr.

1
2 Chairman and the topic of the hearing is about
3 antisemitism on campuses and the comments that I
4 quoted for example from Dr. King relating to
5 antizionism is a form of antisemitism, is simply code
6 for antisemitism and then a gentleman, a member of
7 this body, showed up here to say that exactly my
8 point, made my point for me and I'm incredibly
9 grateful for the gentleman who was here earlier, who
10 is no longer in the room because he made the exact
11 point that we're talking about. That antizionism is
12 antisemitism. That it is all about foreign policy.

13 Even though this hearing is not about foreign
14 policy and we all committed when we walked in here
15 that we were going to talk about the campuses here in
16 the City of New York and instead the gentleman
17 decided which foreign leader he can't stand and which
18 part of what world he doesn't like and this, that and
19 the other thing and not a word, not a word about the
20 hate and the violence that's going on on the campuses
21 of the colleges that belong to the taxpayers of this
22 city. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

23 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Council Member Vernikov.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you Chair.

25 Before I continue with my questioning, I just want to

1
2 quickly disavow and condemn the comments made here a
3 couple minutes ago by my colleague. Although we sit
4 on the same Committee, we do not share the same views
5 and I'm just going to say one thing. This is not a
6 foreign policy debate but when Jewish students are
7 being discriminated against and harassed, based on
8 their support for the state of Israel, that is
9 antisemitism. I'll continue with my questioning to
10 the panel. Are you aware of a student group called,
11 Students Justice for Palestine?

12 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: She's muted. Can she be
13 unmuted please?

14 GLENDA GRACE: I'm aware that there are students
15 of that group, yes.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Is it fair to say that
17 many CUNY schools have an active SJP? The Students
18 for Justice in Palestine on campuses.

19 GLENDA GRACE: I don't know the number of
20 campuses that have that group.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: But you're aware -

22 GLENDA GRACE: I know that they are across
23 campus. I couldn't say many, I couldn't say 5 or 10
24 or 12, but I know they are on campuses, yes.

25

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Okay and you're aware
3 that these groups hold events at different campuses
4 at different times?

5 GLENDA GRACE: Yes.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Okay.

7 DENISE MAYBANK: They meet.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Sure, are you aware
9 that at many of their events, they chant slogans
10 like, "Zionists out of CUNY, death to Israel and
11 globalize the intifada, and from the river to the
12 sea, Palestine will be free."

13 GLENDA GRACE: You're telling me that. I'll
14 accept what you're telling me.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Okay. Are you aware,
16 the term intifada means, a violent uprising against
17 the Jewish people?

18 GLENDA GRACE: I think that's one definition,
19 yes.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: When students on campus
21 demand to globalizing intifada, do you understand
22 what that means?

23 GLENDA GRACE: If you could explain that to me,
24 that would be helpful.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: It means that the call
3 for intifada, which is a violent uprising of the
4 Jewish people. They're asking for that call to be
5 globalized. To be taken everywhere, all over the
6 world. They're asking for the annihilation of the
7 State of Israel and for the death of the Jewish
8 people.

9 Are you aware that when Students in Justice for
10 Palestine yell, "from the river to the sea, Palestine
11 will be free," they are using a phrase used by a
12 designated foreign organization, terrorist
13 organization HAMAS, which calls for the complete
14 annihilation of the State of Israel?

15 GLENDA GRACE: I'm accepting what you're saying.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you. Are you
17 aware that calls to globalize the intifada and death
18 to Israel often leads to physical violence against
19 the Jewish people?

20 GLENDA GRACE: Uhm, I believe - I'll accept that
21 it has led to violence, yes.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you. Is there a
23 sensitivity training for antisemitism at CUNY?

24 GLENDA GRACE: I don't think there's sensitivity
25 training across the board for antisemitism or other

1
2 groups. As we talked about in our earlier testimony,
3 part of the work that we have to do to combat the
4 increase in antisemitic acts is to do more
5 programming. So, the programming that we talked
6 about, we already said that we'd be looking at the
7 DEI work that we do and make sure that there's
8 protections and information that are given about
9 Jewish folks and antisemitism.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you very much for
11 that. Do you believe that sensitivity training on
12 antisemitism would help prevent antisemitic activity
13 on campus?

14 GLENDA GRACE: I think what Vice Chancellor and I
15 don't want to speak for Vice Chancellor Maybank but
16 one of the things that we talked about doing is
17 having conversations about what's going to be
18 effective on campus. So, certainly we are looking to
19 a number of different options that we've listed and I
20 know that there's more to do. I know Council Member
21 Brewer talked about what other colleges are doing and
22 we're certainly going to consult with them about
23 what's being done. But uhm, so we're trying to
24 figure out the right menu to get the right result,
25 which is to make sure that all of our students are

1
2 able to identify who they are, express the believes
3 that they have an also, able to have difficult
4 conversations with people who disagree with them.

5 Because again, as we said, this problem isn't just at
6 CUNY, it's all over the world and we have to give our
7 students tools to have those conversations after they
8 leave campus.

9 DENISE MAYBANK: We can't guarantee that any of
10 things that we would do would eliminate that
11 possibility. We certainly can reduce the
12 possibilities and the opportunities by increasing our
13 engagement and the discussions between groups of
14 students.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: But in your opinion, as
16 experts who have been working with CUNY and with CUNY
17 students for many years, do you believe that
18 sensitivity training would be something that would be
19 potentially helpful with dealing with antisemitism at
20 CUNY?

21 GLENDA GRACE: It depends on how it's delivered.
22 We have a number of trainings, some of which are
23 incredibly effective and some of which need to be
24 improved. So, it really depends on how it's
25 delivered. And we determine how it's delivered based

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2 upon the consultation that we're going through
3 centrally. And also the feedback about some of the
4 campus events that I gave in my testimony, so we have
5 a sense of what works and what doesn't work. What
6 students go to and what students don't go to.
7 Because we could design a program, you and I, could
8 actually sit during the summer and design a program
9 and if no one listened to it, it would not be
10 effective and it would be a bad use of resources.

11 So, our job is to find what is that - what is the
12 best that we can do that's going to be effective that
13 people are going to use and listen and that's going
14 to have impact.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: I look forward to
16 sitting with you in the summer.

17 GLENDA GRACE: I mean look -

18 DENISE MAYBANK: We would like to invite you.

19 GLENDA GRACE: We can honestly, we can do that.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Great. So but would
21 you say that if properly delivered, sensitivity
22 training could be helpful to dealing with
23 antisemitism?

24 DENISE MAYBANK: It might be one vehicle. It's
25 not going to take care of everything. It really

1
2 won't but it may be one way to intervene in a way
3 that offers an opportunity for those who would be
4 responsive to that, to have new understanding and new
5 engagement.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: So, if determined that
7 it's going to be an effective way and if delivered
8 properly, will CUNY then commit to implementing
9 sensitivity training on antisemitism?

10 GLENDA GRACE: Among a menu of options, possibly.
11 It might well be that instead of having sensitivity
12 training, however we define it, it might make more
13 sense for us to partner with a different organization
14 and not develop a sensitivity training program.

15 So, it really depends on what the right menu and
16 mix is.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: I'll accept that.

18 GLENDA GRACE: But I will say, one of the reasons
19 why we're here, one of the reasons why we dialogue
20 information that waws given and done and the work
21 that we've been doing this past year is because this
22 is important. It has to – as we've said, CUNY
23 condemned the increase in antisemitic acts last year
24 and we've been working diligently to find what that
25

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2 magic – it's not magic. What the work is that has to
3 be done to do better and to help our students thrive.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Does CUNY include
5 Jewish identity in its DEI, Diverse Equity and
6 Inclusion programming, acknowledging the history of
7 discrimination, forceful uprooting and genocides, and
8 expressly addressing ongoing antisemitism?

9 GLENDA GRACE: We said we were going to audit
10 that and see if it's included or not and then include
11 information about the Jewish people and antisemitism.
12 We've already said we would do that.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you. Beyond the
14 Chancellor's statement that CUNY cannot lawfully
15 engage in BDS activities, what concrete steps is the
16 CUNY system taking to ensure that no entity within
17 the CUNY system violates New York's executive order
18 on BDS and the provisions of the human rights law
19 that prohibit discriminatory boycotts?

20 GLENDA GRACE: I would say uh, one, I guess the
21 things is is that people voting – could you repeat
22 the question please?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Sure. Beyond the
24 Chancellor's statement that CUNY cannot lawfully
25 engage in BDS activities, what concrete steps is the

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2 CUNY system taking to ensure that no entity within
3 the CUNY system violates New York's executive order
4 on BDS and the provisions of the human rights law
5 that prohibit discriminatory boycotts?

6 GLENDA GRACE: I guess the one thing that's
7 somewhat complicated about that is to say that a
8 vote; there's a question of what's the difference
9 between speech and action. And so, I think the
10 instances that we've been given are speech and not
11 action. And with regards to action, I'm not sure, I
12 would have to see what, if any action were taken.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Will CUNY formally
14 denounce the conduct advocated for by BDS supporters?

15 GLENDA GRACE: We've already said, we do not
16 support BDS. We were very clear in our statement,
17 clear in our testimony. We don't support it because
18 we don't believe in it and we don't support because
19 we are prohibited from participating.

20 So, there are two very clear indications that
21 it's not something we support and it's not something
22 that we could do even if we theoretically supported
23 it and we don't.

24

25

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Well we know that CUNY
3 does not support BDS, the question is, will CUNY
4 denounce BDS?

5 GLENDA GRACE: I'm just trying to make sure; I
6 want to look at a statement and see whether that
7 happened or not.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Take your time.

9 GLENDA GRACE: Well, I will - I'll actually just
10 refer to the statement that was made by the
11 University May 30, 2022 where we started with saying
12 we don't support and cannot participate. We reject
13 you know; we reject all assertions that the
14 university is complicit in any way with censorship
15 and harassment. Uhm, we talk about how the
16 resolution that talks about BDS is contrary to our
17 university core mission to introduce students in a
18 world that could be vastly different from their own.
19 We run international exchange programs and other
20 academic experiences and to encourage them to engage
21 a range of opinions and belief. Uhm, and that's at
22 least what we've said in statements.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Okay, well, just very
24 simple question. Will CUNY denounce BDS, yes or no?

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2 GLENDA GRACE: We've made statements already
3 discussing BDS.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: The statements that
5 CUNY previously made stated that CUNY does not
6 support BDS. My question is, will CUNY denounce BDS?

7 GLENDA GRACE: We have not - I think we're clear
8 on where we stand on BDS.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: So, is that a yes or a
10 is that a no?

11 GLENDA GRACE: Obviously, we disagreed in the
12 past about whether an answer we can give a yes or no
13 question and I've stated, we've stated, we've made a
14 number of statements about BDS.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Okay, so CUNY will not
16 denounce BDS, correct?

17 GLENDA GRACE: I've said yes. We can't have a
18 yes or no. I'm assuming you're going to draw
19 whatever conclusion you have.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Yeah, I'm going to draw
21 the conclusion that since you can't say that CUNY
22 will denounce BDS -

23 GLENDA GRACE: Look, here's - this is the one
24 thing right, we don't believe in it. We think it's
25 wrong. We can't engage in it. That to me is

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2 denouncing but if that's not denouncing to you, we
3 disagree. We can't. We think it's wrong. We don't
4 think it's right. The Chancellor went with 12 people
5 because it's important to engage with Israel and to
6 work and learn because this is a very complicated
7 issue that they're also dealing with. If that's not
8 enough, that to me equals denouncing.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Can you openly and
10 unequivocally commit that under this Chancellor at
11 CUNY, CUNY will never disallow academic exchange
12 between CUNY faculty and department and programs in
13 Israel and study abroad programs in Israel?

14 GLENDA GRACE: I think, I think that if a
15 Chancellor came in and wanted to do it, they could
16 not do it because of the executive order. But
17 realistically, we believe that there is true value in
18 exchange. We've talked about exchange of ideas. We
19 model exchange in going to Israel. It's incredibly
20 important for our students. It's incredibly
21 important for students to go before they come to us
22 on their birthright trip. It's important. It's
23 something that we believe brings value.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: I'm so glad to hear
25 that you find it important and that's why I'm asking

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2 if you will unequivocally commit to never disallowing
3 that academic exchange of ideas and programs?

4 GLENDA GRACE: I mean, I guess the only thing
5 that in terms of us, we are actually, if there were,
6 I mean we're you know just like during COVID right?
7 We were in the midst of different programs. Students
8 were all over the world and in the midst of COVID, we
9 had to bring students back, right. And that wasn't
10 our decision, that was a decision that was made by
11 the state.

12 So, that's the only reason why I wouldn't make
13 that commitment because I don't know if other
14 entities that control us might have a different
15 change because of different reasons that are outside
16 of our control. We believe in the value of these
17 programs. We're committed to these programs. We
18 think they add to the educational, the education of
19 all our students and they're incredibly important.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: So, you won't commit to
21 disallowing academic exchange between CUNY and
22 Israel?

23 GLENDA GRACE: We have no intention of doing
24 that.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: But you won't commit to
3 not doing that? I'm okay, I'm done with this line of
4 questioning. Thank you.

5 GLENDA GRACE: Okay.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: What steps will the
7 Chancellor take to educate the CUNY community about
8 the real goal of the BDS movement? Which is to
9 eliminate the State of Israel and thereby displace
10 the largest Jewish community in the world?

11 GLENDA GRACE: The goal of the Chancellor is to
12 make sure that our, I think 20,000 scholars are able
13 to do the amazing work that they do and some of
14 which, talks exactly about what you're talking about.
15 Some of the scholarship relates to what you're
16 talking about.

17 But what the Chancellor is going to do is he's
18 going to — and the University right. Because the one
19 thing that I say all the time and I think it helps me
20 when I think about my job is, CUNY is bigger than the
21 Administration. As much as some people don't want to
22 believe that. I joke every day when I was on a
23 campus that every faculty member, if I was here for a
24 year and they were here for a year, they would be
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2 here longer than me, because that's the nature of
3 academia.

4 Our job is to create a university where people
5 are able to engage in scholarship that helps ideas,
6 helps movements, helps people learn, help people
7 thrive and prove the world. And what the Chancellor
8 and the Chancellor reinvented in doing is making sure
9 that that happens. That's, I think the job of being
10 a part of – being a world class higher education
11 institution and that's what we want to continue to be
12 able to be and get better. Not make – and just
13 improve.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Well, I'm very
15 skeptical about what the Chancellor is going to do
16 because he couldn't even show up to this hearing.

17 GLENDA GRACE: Well one of the things that I
18 think that I'd like to just address that, is that we
19 basically, we had the person who is actually the Vice
20 Chancellor of the area that manages programs. We
21 have an individual from uh, from a college and we're
22 engaging and will continue to engage in a
23 conversation about how we can do better and improve
24 because we're not perfect but we can be better and
25 we're committed to being better.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you. Is
3 leadership, is CUNY leadership willing and this is my
4 last question, is CUNY leadership willing to help the
5 community understand that support for the BDS
6 movement does nothing to advance the quality of life
7 for the Palestinians and only serves to advance Jew
8 hatred in the United States and around the world?

9 GLENDA GRACE: So, here's I guess the - we, what
10 we're advancing is conversation and that's what's
11 important. And again, there's going to be somebody
12 who - there's going to be a dialogue and that's what
13 we're committed to doing is having it be a dialogue.
14 We also understand a dialogue and a conversation.
15 That is what we're committed to as a higher, an
16 institute of higher learning.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you. I just want
18 to go over a couple of things that I would be asking
19 the CUNY to implement. It's not an all-encompassing
20 list, it's not a perfect list. It's a list of ideas
21 that have worked with activists, community activists
22 experts, people of experience in antisemitism, so I'm
23 just going to and I'll follow-up with an email in
24 writing. But I'm just going to list a couple of
25 things that we think would be important.

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2 Number one, I believe it would be important for
3 CUNY to commit to implementing sensitivity training
4 on antisemitism. To commit to implementing
5 consequences for those who harass, intimidate and/or
6 discriminate against Jewish students and professors
7 at CUNY.

8 For CUNY to commit to adopting the IHRA
9 definition of antisemitism at all CUNY's.
10 Unequivocally commit that under this Chancellor, CUNY
11 will never disallow academic exchange between CUNY
12 faculty and departments and programs in Israel and
13 study a broad programs in Israel. Commit to having a
14 diversity officer specifically to deal with students
15 who are victims of antisemitism. A mechanism in
16 place to keep a record of antisemitic incidents at
17 every CUNY school. And we believe that CUNY Central
18 should come up with a clear and centralized policy on
19 antisemitism on how to respond to antisemitic
20 incidents, what the consequences are. Set up a
21 process for condemnation investigated from top down.

22 Thank you very much for your testimony today.

23 GLENDA GRACE: Thank you.

24 DENISE MAYBANK: Thank you.

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2 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you Council Member
3 Vernikov. I have a few more questions and then we're
4 going to turn it over to the very patient panel. I'm
5 going to some in-person and then virtual panel and I
6 thank you all for your patience. Obviously, this is
7 something that's very personal to many of us and we
8 feel very much for our family, our friends, our
9 constituents. And you know again, it's backed up by
10 the data, right. It's very apparent.

11 I'm going to share again, one of the concerns
12 around the language I'm hearing. I'm hearing
13 language like; we can do this. We need to do this.
14 I'm asking, what was done and what's the plan? So,
15 the biggest example, not that it's the only example
16 but CUNY Law. Where a year ago, you had people
17 telling you that this Resolution, while part of free
18 speech, makes people feel excluded. It makes people
19 feel unsafe and then it was again, passed by the
20 faculty.

21 So, in the past year, I understand you've made a
22 statement essentially, Chancellor, the Chancellor
23 made a statement disallowing it or condemning it a
24 few times but what has been done to do the exact
25 thing that you say needs to be done, which is to

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2 foster those conversations and encourage dialogue and
3 understanding about how you can have your political
4 views but you have to discuss things in a way that
5 makes people feel safe. What conversations did
6 happen?

7 GLENDA GRACE: I believe we actually said that we
8 would come back to you and give you that information.

9 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Okay, okay, so that was
10 and just, I think it was over a year ago where the
11 Resolution was first passed. For what it's worth I
12 searched you know the internet. I found the
13 statements but I didn't find anything about programs.
14 You're talking about programs now in the opening
15 statements. I didn't hear anything about programs
16 and again, addressing that free speech with more free
17 speech, which was your answer here. I haven't seen
18 that online. I am looking forward to that answer.
19 Something that I think the Chancellor could better
20 address, which is one of the reasons I wish he was
21 here but in 2016, there was an investigation, a
22 report about antisemitism and the individual schools
23 and CUNY's response, so I'm sure your familiar with
24 it. But Chancellor Milliken appointed President Gale
25 Mellow of LaGuardia Community College and the

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2 Chancellor when he was – I think it was when he was
3 President of Queens College at that point.

4 And I'm interested to know what the
5 recommendations of that taskforce was, that was
6 taskforce on campus climate. And so, I'm interested
7 to know what were the recommendations of that
8 taskforce from six years ago and how those
9 recommendations have been implemented.

10 GLENDA GRACE: I can get you a specific list
11 about that. I also can tell you that DEI incubator
12 is one of the reasons it actually came out from that
13 work. So, that you could look at best practices
14 around CUNY and then spread them to different
15 campuses but I can get you a list of how those were
16 implemented.

17 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Right because I don't
18 think we ever need to reinvent the wheel if they
19 started building the wheel back in 2016.

20 GLENDA GRACE: Absolutely.

21 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: What I don't want to see
22 and go ahead, yes.

23 GLENDA GRACE: I would just say, look, I think
24 they started on a wheel right because that's part of
25 the issue, right. Sometimes things flow, our job is

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2 to institutionalize and that's part of what we're
3 doing with this new position. This newly created
4 position is to institutionalize it, not depend on the
5 work on camp— individual campuses but to make sure
6 it's part of CUNY as a whole. So, that's part of the
7 University of Student into Cultural Engagement and
8 Dialogue. Sorry, I talk fast sometimes.

9 And also, part of the DEI work that we've asked —
10 incubator work that we've asked the Council and the
11 Council has been kind enough to continue to support,
12 which goes from school to school, working with
13 creating, giving schools to foster this dialogue.

14 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Right and what I'm — you
15 know the importance of it is this, we hear this all
16 the time. We hear from our city agencies, any
17 Council Member, elected official know we have a plan
18 for this, we have a plan and I seen in the — was it
19 your testimony? Your testimony that you outlined a
20 number of things that the university system is doing.
21 And a lot of them are things like summits or an event
22 or this exhibit that's being brought, which are
23 important components but I think what we're — and I
24 know you mentioned other things. I don't want to
25 discount that at all. What I'm saying is that back

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2 six years ago, we had this report. We had things
3 being done and what I don't want to see happen here
4 is to hear you say, over the summer we're going to
5 have these affinity groups. We're going to implement
6 this in DEI training. We're going to get the info
7 and for what happens today, did it just get lost in
8 the ether, like so often happens?

9 And this is a problem that is getting worse and
10 we need to address it now before it becomes out of
11 control. Before it becomes more out of control.

12 GLENDA GRACE: We agree. We agree.

13 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: And so, I'm looking
14 forward to the recommendations to hearing from six
15 years ago what those were and how they are being
16 implemented. I know we're looking forward to a few
17 other things I know Council Member Vernikov mentioned
18 them but including - ah, it's a long shot. For those
19 of you who can't see these are - who are watching
20 online, it's KitKats because we have been here for a
21 couple hours.

22 But committing to including antisemitism in your
23 DEI training, in your implicit and your bias
24 training, your antiracist training, of course the
25 inventory of that. The data on the discipline, the

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2 number of reports substantiated, substantiated and
3 unsubstantiated report. Just, all of that data
4 disaggregated by college, by campus within 60-days I
5 think was the ask. The same 60-days that students
6 get to get an answer about their complaints.

7 Really taking a hard look at the definition of
8 antisemitism because that will allow those
9 conversations to – it prevents a framework for those
10 conversations, right, that important piece, the
11 education piece or an educational institution. But
12 also a framework about you know around which to
13 discuss, hey is this something that is just free
14 speech, political discourse and we need to learn how
15 to talk about it or is this something that is making
16 it less safe for Jewish people. Because again, you
17 know I'll go back to the BDS mapping project. Anyone
18 can say, "oh it's a map, it's free speech." But the
19 fact is you're outlining targets and blaming them for
20 the world's problems and I have the paper here, if
21 you would like to read it. I can send it to you.
22 That's what's happening.

23 And just, you mentioned the Cleary Act before
24 uhm, but developing the Cleary Act is not
25 comprehensive. And in fact, I think if I read

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2 correctly, it excludes some hate crimes that are
3 reported to the police but developing a robust intake
4 and reporting of not just hate crimes right. It's
5 not just things that arise to the level of violence
6 and vandalism but really act of bias. Because the
7 data is so vital for us having a full grasp on what's
8 going on in our campuses and with all due respect to
9 Hillel International and the incredible work they're
10 doing, AJC and ADL and JCRC. Uhm, those practices
11 should be embedded in the CUNY system, when we
12 shouldn't have to rely on other organizations unless
13 it's purposeful but we shouldn't have to rely on them
14 because of the absence of policy and data collection
15 at CUNY.

16 And what I'd love to do is follow-up with the
17 Chancellor and we can have a schedule around his
18 schedule. I know Council Member, my colleague
19 Council Member Yeger suggested some of the trustees
20 of CUNY were happy to plan around their schedule but
21 like I said, this is a problem that in my heart, I
22 believe the Chancellor wants to address and wants to
23 take the lead on. And so, I look very much forward
24 to having conversations with him and like I said, we
25 will - we're able to plan around his schedule.

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We are going to move to the first panel and I highly encourage the Administration; I know you've been sitting here a long time and we really appreciate that and really answering each question to the best of your ability. Obviously, looking forward to the follow-ups but I highly encourage you to hear the stories of those people who are here to testify. Some with their own stories, some with solutions that have worked in other spaces.

GLEND A GRACE: Certainly. I'm going to take a quick break but certainly will.

CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Okay, our first panel and you'll be seated over there is Adela Cojab, and forgive me if I mispronounce it, you'll just tell me if I - they put a J there instead of the standard CH. Adela Cojab, Joshua Greenberg and David Herbstman and David Brodsky.

Uhm, give us one moment because there are in-person and so we may have to find the person and we usually do panels of three people at a time. David Brodsky is not here. Thank you. And again, for all the panelists who are watching on Zoom and all the panelists who are here in person, uhm, thank you for all of your patience. We're looking forward to your

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2 stories. I'm going to ask that to the best of your
3 ability, as hard as it might be because I know you
4 have a lot to say, that you keep your testimony
5 within the timeframe and what that will do, is it
6 allows us to hear from as many people as possible,
7 okay. Ms. Cojab.

8 ADELA COJAB: Thank you. The reason why there's
9 a J is because my family left Syrian Lebanon to
10 Mexico and that's where I was born. So, it's Hebrew
11 transliterated to Spanish. Adela Cojab.

12 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Love it.

13 ADELA COJAB: So, thank you everyone for being
14 here today. Thank you for listening to my testimony.
15 I did not go to a CUNY school. I went to NYU but on
16 my time on campus, I experienced severe antisemitism
17 with community experience severe antisemitism to the
18 point that I filed a Title VI complaint against NYU
19 for failing to protect the Jewish community from
20 continued discrimination and harassment. I know my
21 time is limited, so I'm going to walk you through a
22 little bit of what happened on campus and why I filed
23 my case.

24 When I first showed up, NYU as we know is a very
25 great place for Jewish students. We have a Kosher

1
2 cafeteria. We have a campus in Tel Aviv. My
3 sophomore and junior – my freshman and junior year,
4 freshman and sophomore year were wonderful. My
5 junior year, everything turned to Israel Palestine on
6 campus to the point that it became extremely unsafe
7 for Jewish students. It started with the mention of
8 the word Zionism in the same sentence as Nazism and
9 Racism by a governance council of minority students.

10 And when we saw that the Jewish community crafted
11 a response, not angry but disappointed that our
12 fellow students couldn't understand why the Jewish
13 community was hurt by this. We ultimately did not
14 publish the statement because we were told by mentors
15 that if we drew attention to the problem, it would
16 only grow. We ignored it and within three months, we
17 had BDS resolutions on student government.

18 Resolutions calling to close our NYU Tel Aviv campus
19 or at least to boycott it. We also had throughout
20 constant meetings with the administration, pictures
21 of Jewish students being posted on social media. We
22 had our events protested and leading up to our Yom
23 Ha'atzmaut celebration in the park, a Jewish student
24 was assaulted, an Israeli flag was burnt and another
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2 was torn to shreds and hung from trees and land
3 posts.

4 Now, I've heard a lot today, especially from one
5 Council Member about you know Zionism and Jewish
6 identity. What I can tell you is that every Jewish
7 student at NYU in that park, who was watching their
8 flag burn, was afraid. I can tell you that I, as a
9 Jewish student who was leading the Jewish community
10 on student government was bullied. I left my
11 position willingly because I could no longer sit on a
12 student government where everyone hated me. I didn't
13 take my final exams for my Arabic class in the same
14 room as the rest of my peers. No one would partner
15 with me for final projects.

16 And what I understand is that had that happened
17 to any other minority group on a college campus, the
18 university would have responded. In my case, it was
19 clear, university knowledge of discrimination,
20 continued discrimination, university knowledge
21 continue discrimination, physical assault, battery,
22 flag burnings, university knowledge and then the
23 school gave an award to the group that burned it.

24 Had that happened to anyone else, I doubt that'd
25 be the response.

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CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you. David?

DAVID BRODSKY: Yes, thank you. I'm a Professor of Jewish History and the Chair of the Judaic studies department at Brooklyn College. The only department of Judaic studies in CUNY. I've attended conferences and teachings by my colleagues in which they pontificate on what Judaism is and is not, without ever inquiring the opinion of those of us in the field.

Worse, they declared from the outset that only their perspective was legitimate, labeling all others complicity to genocide. I attended anyway to listen and learn, only to find them regurgitating slightly updated versions of antisemitic canards straight out of the protocols of the elders of Zion and the medieval [INAUDIBLE 3:39:42].

I obviously did not speak up because my perspective had been declared illegitimate from the outset. I document that in more detail in my written testimony. I firmly believe that my colleagues have the right to free speech to engage in antisemitism. But they don't have the right to silence those of us who disagree with them. My colleagues hide their hate speech behind lofty sounding names like the

1
2 cross CUNY Working Group against racism and
3 colonialism and the Brooklyn College Antiracist
4 Coalition. It is therefore important that we call
5 these groups out for the hate speech that they engage
6 in. This effects not just Jewish faculty but
7 students as well who report increasing fear of coming
8 to campus. Jewish enrollment attendance and in-
9 person classes is down. Jewish students have
10 testified to the administration that the vitriol
11 against Israel is so severe that they are afraid to
12 express their opinions and first hand knowledge of
13 Israel in class because they fear their grades will
14 be effected.

15 One student reported having a professor without
16 giving her a letter of recommendation unless she
17 clarified her position on Israel first. These
18 students deserve to have their free speech supported.
19 As professors, my colleagues willpower in the
20 classroom and state employees, they do not have the
21 right to stifle student speech. This would be
22 against the law even if the students were wrong but
23 it is especially egregious when they have first hand
24 knowledge of the situation and the professor
25 scholarship is not in the field.

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2 CUNY could do much more. They could reach out to
3 my department as an example and give our faculty
4 release time to offer inherent bias trying on
5 antisemitism to faculty and students. They could
6 reach out to – they could reach out and let students
7 know about our courses on antisemitism. They could
8 dedicate teaching lines to antisemitism and holocaust
9 studies. Instead, the opposite is being done. My
10 departments professor of antisemitism and holocaust
11 studies was set to retire this summer and he had to
12 cancel it because we were going to lose his line and
13 no longer have the faculty to offer those crucial
14 classes.

15 I ask you to read my written statement, which
16 develops this in greater detail and I ask you not to
17 be swayed by my colleagues technical argument that
18 what they are engaging in should not be labeled
19 antisemitism because it is antizionism instead. The
20 protocols of the elders of Zion, use the term Zion
21 rather than Jew in the title. But that didn't make
22 it any less antisemitic. Over three-fourths of the
23 world Jewish population identifies as Zionist which
24 they have long defined simply as the right of the
25 Jewish people to homeland like every other people.

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2 When my colleagues use classic antisemitic tropes to
3 demonize three fourths of the world Jewish
4 population, simply for wanting the same rights as all
5 the other people they engage in antisemitism. Thank
6 you.

7 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you. David
8 Herbstman. I realized you both have the same first
9 name when I said David. Mr. Herbstman.

10 DAVID HERBSMAN: Thank you very much Council
11 Members and Chairman Dinowitz. Uhm, so, my name is
12 David Herbstman, I'm in the John Jay campus. I'm a
13 master student in forensic mental health counseling
14 and I'm now the Vice President for our Hillel. And
15 part of that is being very engaging with many of the
16 students on campus and one of the many things that
17 I've asked them and talked about because of my
18 experience, which I'll get to in a second, was the
19 fear of you know openly being you know, identifying
20 as Jewish and wearing you know like wearing kippah or
21 you know Star of David, you know anything like that,
22 they were all very, very afraid to do that.

23 For me, when I was - last year, so we were on
24 hybrid and Zoom classes for some of the courses and
25 the first course, we never met in person and our

1
2 professor asked us, what would we want to do as
3 mental health counselors? And I openly spoke about
4 the Jewish community and another student who spoke
5 after me from I think a Muslim background, spoke up
6 and said that he wants to work with the
7 deradicalization of the Hebrews and their radical
8 ideology and the Hasid's and their radical ideology.
9 Now I was very shocked at that moment but I couldn't
10 speak up because it was in the middle of class, you
11 know my reaction was very clear but you couldn't say
12 anything because you're in the middle of a class, it
13 wasn't you could interrupt.

14 But when it came to the professor afterwards, I
15 spoke up about it. Not much was really done. The
16 professor was like oh, I didn't recognize that that
17 was a problem and you know I just glanced over and
18 continued on with that. The other thing is, uhm, as
19 a member, you know when you look at the student
20 council and part of our Hillel things, we try to post
21 for holocaust remembrance day and things relating to
22 like the Israel Day parade and things like that and
23 that is, they will not post it. They will not make
24 anything about it but when it comes to the SJP club
25 and the Palestinian having there having guests on

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2 campus, like the forementioned speaker, the
3 commencement speaker from the CUNY Law who was able
4 to come on campus and speak literally calling for the
5 murder of Jews, we couldn't really respond to that.
6 She was allowed to but we can't have Hillel really,
7 can't have other people from our groups come and
8 speak on campus and even just to have events on
9 campus is a whole - it's a tough situation.

10 So, that's a very, you know I was wearing a
11 baseball cap for a very long time, for over a year
12 just to cover up my [INAUDIBLE 3:44:46] because I
13 wouldn't want to be seen as Jewish even though I'm
14 very clearly Jewish even with that. So, it is just
15 one of the many, many aspects of on campus where we
16 are very uncomfortable, fearful and emotionally,
17 physically and mentally drained from all these
18 matters. Thank you very much.

19 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you all for your
20 testimony. I know it must have been hard to share
21 but also to go through it, to change your behavior
22 because of your religion and beliefs. And to not be
23 supported by the respective schools. So, thank you.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Mr. Chairman.
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2 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Yes, absolutely. Council
3 Member Yeger.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Have any of you ever asked
5 for or and if so been granted an audience with the
6 president of your campus on these topics?

7 ADELA COJAB: Hi, again, I did not go to a CUNY
8 school but I went to New York School NYU and I
9 consistently asked to meet with the president. The
10 highest I was able to get was the Vice President of
11 Student Affairs. I was meeting with him almost every
12 two weeks. He sent me to Center for Student Life who
13 sent me to Center for Student Conduct, who sent me to
14 Public Safety, who sent me for Center for
15 multicultural education.

16 I met with eight administrators across five
17 departments consistently and after an Israeli flag
18 was burned, a Jewish girl was assaulted and battered
19 and NYPD stepped in and made two arrests. Uhm, I met
20 with them again and less than a year later, same
21 administrators sat on a Committee and gave an award
22 to Students for Justice in Palestine who not only
23 promoted the violent behavior, but carried out the
24 violent behavior.

1
2 I was told consistently that I was imagining un-
3 existing threats but then threats were backed by
4 action, violent action and still could not get an
5 audience with the president. The best we could get
6 was after I filed a lawsuit against NYU. The
7 president of NYU wrote an op-ed that didn't even
8 address me directly.

9 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Impressive.

10 DAVID BRODSKY: Yes, our Professor Michelle
11 Anderson, our President Michelle Anderson has met
12 with us a number of times.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: At Brooklyn.

14 DAVID BRODSKY: At Brooklyn College and I want to
15 say that you know, I'm a proud member of Brooklyn
16 College and of CUNY and I think that CUNY and
17 Brooklyn College do wonderful things and should be
18 supported in that.

19 My critique is that there's a lot more that can
20 and needs to be done and that requires resources and
21 that requires them to dedicate resources. You know,
22 lines for teaching antisemitism and holocaust
23 studies. Release time for giving antibias training
24 to faculty members and students. Requiring antibias
25 training for faculty and students including

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2 antisemitism in there, which is not done. I have
3 regular trainings that I have to do every year, the
4 same training every year but on antisemitism, there
5 is nothing, right.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: But to be clear, you have
7 a dialogue with President Anderson?

8 DAVID BRODSKY: Yes. I think she's wonderful and
9 I very much support her but there's a lot more that
10 could be done.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: And the gentleman from
12 John Jay?

13 DAVID HERBSTMAN: I have not spoken with the
14 President.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Have you asked for an
16 audience with the President?

17 DAVID HERBSTMAN: I have not. I have spoken with
18 Public Safety and we've spoken with other professors
19 that are on like boards and things but not actually,
20 I've never gone to speak with the President.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Alright, thank you very
22 much. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

23 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you Council Member
24 and thank you all for your testimony. We're going to
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1
2 move on to the next in-person panel Shahr Sadeh from
3 JCRC, Barry Weiner, Tzvia Waronker, and Alyza Lewin.

4 Tzvia, hi, we're going to start with you because
5 you did your homework and you passed out your
6 testimony. Yeah, so we're going to start with you
7 and I'll say the same thing to you as I said to the
8 previous panel. To the extent possible, very heavy
9 subject but if you could keep to as close to three
10 minutes to give room, to give space to everyone to
11 share their stories, that would be appreciated.

12 Thank you. Yeah and the silver.

13 TZVIA WARONKER: It's on?

14 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Yup.

15 TZVIA WARONKER: Okay, I can hear it. Alright,
16 Dear Council Members and Guests, my name is Tzvia
17 Waronker and I am a third year Jewish student at John
18 Jay College and I'm the Vice Chair of Senior Colleges
19 of the CUNY University Student Senate.

20 For most of my education, I was in a Jewish
21 private school. On my first day in public school, I
22 was cornered in a stairway and told not to tell
23 others I was Jewish. Why? I asked. The person did
24 not answer me but the message was clear. Jews
25 weren't welcome and weren't safe there. I was so

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2 scared that I would be bullied or beat up, so I
3 tried to lay low for a while. It was especially
4 terrifying to ask for religious exemptions so I had
5 to ask the teachers at the end of the class, while
6 there was still students in the classroom. Let's
7 transition to my college experience.

8 Many Jewish students are scared to speak out
9 publicly but will sometimes share their experiences
10 with each other. One student told me about a
11 professor who was teaching an extremely charged class
12 with misinformation about Israel and Jews. I
13 reviewed the syllabus and found factually incorrect
14 information being taught in the course. So, I tried
15 to go through the proper channel to deal with my
16 complaint but my emails kept getting forwarded to
17 someone else. A year after being forwarded and
18 getting no response, I wrote an article and got it
19 published. The article was republished in many
20 Jewish spaces and the response from the reader were
21 very sad but very like similar. They were saying,
22 "oh, I had that experience too or I'm not surprised
23 that this happened in CUNY."

24 The responses refueled my drive to be heard, not
25 from me but for all the people who weren't heard, so

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2 I brought it up during a live college town hall and
3 only then did I get a response. I was put in direct
4 contact with the diversity and compliance office and
5 my claim was found unsubstantiated.

6 Later on, I found out from another student, the
7 same professor said that Jews are White power. As of
8 today, this professor is still teaching politics in
9 the Middle East Course, maybe even right now, she
10 teaches in the summer.

11 In my student advocacy, I had one on one
12 networking meetings. In one of those meetings, it
13 came up that I was Jewish and the graduate student
14 then began to unload all their antisemitic beliefs on
15 me. He told me that all Jews are rich, control the
16 world, Israelis kill babies, Jewish women are greedy
17 and are clingy. Then he began to question my hair
18 and a bunch of other stuff too but I asked him, "how
19 do you know this is true?" And he said because he
20 read it in books and articles and I said, I'm a
21 Jewish person and this isn't true. But his books and
22 articles that he read; those are true.

23 He wasn't the only one I heard say those things.
24 Snickers in the hallway. Oven Holocaust jokes in the
25 elevator to class, groans of annoyance over

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2 discussing the Holocaust in class. Antisemitic
3 statements made by the Student Council multiple
4 times, friends being called baby killers, people
5 ignoring me, a CUNY graduate co-worker refusing to
6 serve Israelis at a workplace outside of school and
7 would say awful things about them.

8 Also, we had a petition going on, a statement
9 being made that said explicitly to boycott Israeli
10 academia and culture that would prohibit our theater
11 being used by Israeli culture. That was a petition
12 that was going around.

13 Now even going back to campus, the anxiety that I
14 feel – okay, the anxiety that I feel is so real, like
15 I have had moments where I had breakdowns in the gym
16 locker room, straight up just crying in the library.
17 I can't even emotionally explain all the feelings
18 that there are and that's literally just the
19 beginning of my experiences and thank you for taking
20 the time to listen.

21 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you. Alyza.

22 ALYZA LEWIN: There we go. Thank you very much.
23 My name is Alyza Lewin, I am President of the Louis
24 D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law. A
25 non-profit that uses legal initiatives to combat

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2 antisemitism with a particular focus on university
3 campuses. Our mission is to advance the civil and
4 human rights of the Jewish people and promote justice
5 for all.

6 On campuses today, Jewish students are being
7 marginalized and excluded particularly from
8 progressive spaces. University administrators
9 misunderstand what they're witnessing. The
10 mistakenly think that what is taking place is a
11 political debate, when it's not. The reason that
12 antisemitism is increasing and not decreasing on
13 these campuses is because university administrators
14 are misdiagnosing the problem.

15 They are treating it as a speech issue rather
16 than recognizing the marginalization harassment and
17 discrimination that is actually taking place. What's
18 happening today on campuses and beyond is part of an
19 organized well-funded strategy to marginalize pro-
20 Israel Zionists and deny them a place in society.

21 So, there are student groups for example that
22 equate Zionism with ethnic cleansing, destruction,
23 mass expulsion, apartheid and death. In order to
24 label those Jews who support Israel as pariahs. But
25 the problem is that Judaism is not only a religion.

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2 Jews also share this sense of Jewish peoplehood with
3 a common ancestry and ethnicity. For centuries, Jews
4 have not only prayed facing Jerusalem, they've prayed
5 for the Jewish return to Jerusalem. I just attended
6 this week, two weddings, two Jewish weddings and
7 there's a tradition at the wedding to actually break
8 a glass in commemoration of the destruction of the
9 Jewish temple. So, there's this tradition that even
10 at the moment of the Jews of greatest joy, they
11 remember that destruction of the Jewish temple in
12 Jerusalem.

13 The yearning for Zion and the recognition of
14 Israel is the historic ancestral Jewish homeland is
15 the glue that's kept Jews connected from millennia
16 and that is the part of Jewish identity that's now
17 under attack. Of course not all Jews are Zionists
18 but for most Jews, this identification with Israel is
19 an expression of their Jewish, ethnic and ancestral
20 identity. It's as integral to their Jewish identity
21 as observing the Jewish Sabbath and maintaining a
22 kosher diet.

23 Today, Jewish students are being told that they
24 have to shed this part of their Jewish identity in
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2 order to be accepted in student clubs or even to feel
3 welcome on campus or comfortable in their classroom.

4 The climate on campus is hostile to this part of
5 Jewish identity and students feel compelled to shed
6 it. Pressuring a Jewish student to shed the Zionist
7 part of their Jewish identity is no different than
8 demanding that a student stop observing the Jewish
9 Sabbath or stop keeping a kosher diet in order to
10 gain admission. It comparable to demanding that a
11 catholic student disavow the Vatican or a Muslim
12 student shed his or her connection to Mecca. No
13 community other than the Jews is being charged such a
14 high price for admission and excluding an individual
15 in this manner on the basis of their identity is
16 discrimination and has to be recognized as such.

17 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you and before I
18 forget, I do want to recognize that Ms. Grace and Dr.
19 Maybank still are on the Zoom. I know you can't see
20 it on the screens up here and perhaps those watching
21 at home cannot but I want to recognize that the two -
22 those two from CUNY are here on the call and still
23 listening. Mr. Wiener.

24 BARRY WIENER: Thank you for permitting me to
25 speak to the Council. I am calling upon the New York

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2 City Council to denounce the antisemitic conspiracy
3 theories that have now become official policy within
4 CUNY's music departments, and their dissemination
5 both on CUNY websites and in University publications.

6 In 2019, the university's music departments
7 instituted a new antiracist policy based on the ideas
8 of Philip A. Ewell, a professor of music theory at
9 Hunter College and the Graduate Center. Ewell and
10 his many supporters demonized the early twentieth-
11 century Viennese-Jewish music theorist Heinrich
12 Schenker, as well as the few students of Schenker who
13 managed to flee to America as refugees from Nazi-
14 occupied Europe in the late 1930's.

15 Ewell has stated that Schenker and his students
16 were admirers of Adolf Hitler and that they were
17 "Aryan racial supremacists."

18 Ewell maintains that Schenker's love of the music
19 of Bach and Beethoven is conclusive proof of the
20 white supremacist nature of his musical ideas.

21 Professor Ewell has also asserted that Schenker's
22 refugee students deceptively infiltrated the American
23 music world with his Nazi-influenced musical
24 theories. Schenker's method consists of drawing
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2 graphs to analyze harmony and counterpoint in
3 European music.

4 According to Ewell, these refugee musicians
5 created the problem of racism in American academic
6 music studies, a problem that apparently did not
7 exist before.

8 Ewell has attempted to deflect any criticism of
9 his views by presenting lectures at American
10 universities about the history of antisemitism and
11 music. In these lectures Ewell has asserted that
12 Schenker was a Jewish antisemite and that Ewell's
13 critics notably Professor Timothy L. Jackson are
14 Jewish antisemites as well. Timothy Jackson who's
15 also speaking, who has criticized Ewell publicly.

16 Soon after the controversy began, a purge of the
17 musical curriculum was carried out at CUNY. Courses
18 about Schenker's ideas had previously been central to
19 the music theory curriculum but were now eliminated
20 due to his alleged "Aryan supremacist" views.

21 I hope that the New York City Council will take
22 notice of Ewell's outrageous historical fabrications,
23 in which he employs strategies that are all too
24 familiar in the history of antisemitism. At the very
25 least, the official endorsement of these toxic views

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2 by CUNY must be challenged. CUNY and other
3 universities should be pressured by the threat of the
4 government as well as private donors will without
5 funding. This scandal should be publicized
6 nationally in the same way as other similar scandals
7 have been publicized in recent years, in order to
8 deliver a message that such behavior is unacceptable
9 and that it will not be tolerated. Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you. Shahar.

11 SHAHAR SADEH: It's on now. Hi, I'm Dr. Shahar
12 Sadeh. I'm Director of the Strategic Affairs at the
13 Jewish Community Relations Council of New York and
14 for the last seven years, I've been working closely
15 with New York City campus faculty and administration,
16 trying to enhance constructive discussions about
17 Israel and the Israeli Palestinian conflict on
18 campuses across the city and thank you for holding
19 this hearing.

20 While antisemitism can come in many forms, I want
21 to emphasize the most prevalent ones in the context
22 of the campus. Often, they are harder to recognize
23 and confront. It can be easier to ignore. I'm
24 speaking about the delegitimization of Israel and
25 antizionism. Neither of these concepts are always

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2 antisemitic but there are many cases where in
3 practice, they do cross that line and often
4 legitimate and encourage conflict discussion that
5 include criticism of Israel turn into assaults of on
6 the Jewish people and on the right to self-
7 determination. I'll start by saying that the JCRC
8 has long held a close relationship with CUNY and over
9 the years, we sought to strengthen this relationship
10 by offering ways for faculty and administrators to
11 acquire more knowledge and experiences related to the
12 Israeli Palestinian conflict and new tools to discuss
13 it effectively within campus climate where there is
14 much hostility towards pro-Israel perspectives.

15 We have supported many academic programs and
16 events in CUNY, over 50-events over the years,
17 featuring Israeli and Palestinian speakers and led
18 ten scholars as bridge builders study through to
19 Israel and the west bank for faculty, diversity,
20 offer student affair professionals and college
21 presidents. We sincerely acknowledge our partners at
22 CUNY Central and within many colleges for being
23 attentive to the Jewish communities concerns, and for
24 exploring ways to improve campus climate. We commend
25 the Chancellor for setting its own free inquiry and

1
2 for embracing complexity when leading the JCRC
3 scholars as bridge builders study in Israel and the
4 West Bank. The Chancellor and the 12-Presidents
5 engage in challenging conversations and were exposed
6 to complex reality and various often opposing
7 narrative by Israeli and Palestinians we've met.

8 By participating in the tour, they've exemplified
9 what deep engagement can look like. These inquiries
10 are crucial for intellectual and let alone for
11 leaders of large academic institution in which Jewish
12 and non-Jewish students passionately debate these
13 realities and often seek to reenact the conflict on
14 their campuses. Regrettably, many CUNY faculty and
15 leaders who engage with Israel are vilified by member
16 of their own campus community who practice the
17 concept of anti-normalization and accuse those who
18 engage with Israel to be normalizing Israel policies
19 towards Palestinian.

20 Now, while academic freedom and freedom of
21 expression are sacred, the notion of anti-
22 normalization, which is relevant to the way Israeli's
23 and Palestinian engage or refuses to engage with one
24 another is 100 percent not relevant to the
25 relationship between different groups on campus. The

1
2 manifestation of anti-normalization on campus level
3 result in ostracizing and demonizing Jewish students.
4 Faculty and groups who identify as Zionist. People
5 who support Israel right to exist as a national
6 homeland for the Jewish people.

7 This is where very easily, one can see the
8 slippery slope between political, legitimate,
9 intellectual debate to harassment and the silencing
10 effect that anti-normalization creates. In some
11 cases, when slogans such Zionists out of CUNY are
12 chanted, yes, while being protected by free speech.
13 They create pain, fear, sadness and anger among parts
14 of the CUNY community. It is because of instances
15 like this that there exists the perception, an
16 ongoing perception that CUNY is unsafe for these
17 individuals.

18 This is particularly challenging perception to
19 break and therefore, we encourage CUNY official to
20 create systems to address this issue. Reactions to
21 such instances should not be focused solely on legal
22 affairs but more importantly on campus climate. I
23 want to emphasize that many young Jewish faculty are
24 also silent by the state of affairs, especially since
25 the CUNY PSC resolution was passed. These Jewish

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2 academics and there are many of them, are self-
3 censoring. They will not participate in university
4 programming around Israel and will think twice about
5 revealing their Jewishness to their colleagues and
6 students; and this is of course a problem. I will
7 end by encouraging my colleagues at CUNY to continue
8 their journey of inquiry and bridge building and my
9 strongest recommendation is to create more avenues to
10 support their staff around the issue of Jewish and
11 the Zionism and the Israel Palestinian conflict. We
12 know that Students Affairs and DEI Administrators are
13 not always as equipped as they could be to handle
14 those issues and need to be provided with relevant
15 training and tools to successfully engage and support
16 all their students.

17 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you.

18 SHAHAR SADEH: I hope, just last sentence. I
19 hope that as part of antiracism and antibias training
20 across CUNY, the current modern manifestation of
21 antisemitism are included, recognized and discussed.

22 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you and thank you to
23 the panel and I appreciate your testimony. Council
24 Member Vernikov.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you. Thank you
3 all so much for your testimony. I especially want to
4 thank Tzvia. It takes a lot of guts and bravery to
5 come out and testify about your traumatic experiences
6 and I just want to say that I'm committed to you and
7 the rest of the students at CUNY and other
8 universities to making sure that you do feel safe and
9 you do feel included.

10 I just have two questions for Ms. Lewin. Ms.
11 Lewin, can you describe the impact of BDS campaigns
12 on Jewish Zionist students on campus?

13 ALYZA LEWIN: Certainly. So, the problem with
14 the BDS campaigns, especially when they are in the
15 form of a referendum that asks the entire university
16 campus, all students to vote is that they create a
17 Litmus test on campus that ends up making students
18 choose and the idea is that you're uhm - these
19 referendums end up being supported by almost the
20 entire progressive community on campus. So, students
21 are then asked to vote for or against. The for side
22 means you're standing with all these organizations
23 that stand for social and racial justice. If you
24 vote against, you're then immediately viewed as one
25 of the racist oppressors. What happens is, if you

1
2 have a Resolution that is denying the right of Jewish
3 self-determination, the Jewish students can't vote in
4 support of it. So, automatically, the Jews are put
5 on the wrong side of that equation and it ends up
6 labeling them as pariahs. That's the climate on
7 campus that's caused by these BDS Resolutions.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you. Can you
9 discuss as JP, the groups called Students for Justice
10 in Palestine. Are they interested in a dialogue?

11 ALYZA LEWIN: Yes, I heard earlier that you
12 referenced the Students for Justice in Palestine.
13 So, actually they used to before COVID when they had
14 in-person national conferences, they used to post
15 their goals for each conference on their website.
16 And so, in 2018, and you can still reference these
17 goals if you go back to the archived websites.

18 In 2018, they actually put up their goals for
19 that years conference and in those goals they said
20 that "Zionism is ethnic cleansing, destruction, mass
21 expulsion, a partied and death." That's a quote and
22 they also talked about how Zionism can be destroyed
23 and Zionism can be broken down and dismantled.

24 And then they turned around and they said, you
25 know we're not only going to talk theory at this

1
2 conference but we're actually going to spend time
3 "developing actionable, local and regional campaigns
4 with clear targets."

5 If you talk about targets right, and you want to
6 destroy and dismantle Zionism, then your targets must
7 be pro-Israel Zionist Jews. That's not somebody
8 that's saying, I want to dialogue with a pro-Israel
9 Zionist Jew. That's not somebody saying I want to
10 understand what Zionism is. That's somebody whose
11 saying, I'm demonizing Zionism. I'm going to target
12 those Zionists. Why? To marginalize and exclude
13 those Zionists and actually, we've seen on campuses
14 now, where SJP has started using a map like this,
15 which is a map that labels all of Israel as occupied
16 territory and the entire area is Palestine. There is
17 no Israel here. They're not interested in having a
18 dialogue about the policies of the current government
19 of Israel. They're actually interested in calling
20 for the destruction of the one and only Jewish state.

21 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you. Any other
22 questions? Thank you. Thank you panel.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Mr. Chairman, just one
24 quick question for Ms. Waronker. Did I get that
25 right?

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TZVIA WARONKER: Yeah.

COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, it will be the same question I asked the previous panel. Have you tried and particularly because you serve on the USS. Have you tried to speak with the President of your campus?

TZVIA WARONKER: Yeah, so I also served on my Council for two years. I'm actually taking a break from school right now. Things have been like really intense. I've spoken to the president, not one on one but in groups, several different groups. We've had several different sessions. Has it done much? There's a lot of talking. You know, it's a lot of dialogue. We want to see things go and we talked about having a calendar with holidays. We talked about religious things. They talked about kosher food. We got some kosher muffins. It lasted a little bit, which is nice, really nice.

COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: More to my point. My question is actually uh, is it fair to say that the President of John Jay knows what's going on there?

TZVIA WARONKER: The first time we spoke to her, she was genuinely shocked and I was shocked that she was shocked. I think they know somethings but I don't think they actually understand and even, you

1
2 now hearing the other members you know testifying
3 before, I don't think actually CUNY understands what
4 antisemitism is and how it impacts the students. I
5 think they kind of understand. They have some idea
6 but they don't actually understand.

7 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: It's an incredibly power
8 statement. Thank you. Thank you Mr. Chairman.

9 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you. I actually do
10 have one more question. Did CUNY, when they
11 testified, they said, typically by 60 days, students
12 receive a response about a complaint they made. I
13 think you said in your testimony, you made a
14 complaint and did you get your response in 60-days.

15 TZVIA WARONKER: No, it took over a year. It was
16 forwarded and forwarded and forwarded. No responses,
17 just forwarded and that's because I kept on top of
18 it. If I didn't, it would take probably more than a
19 year.

20 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you.

21 TZVIA WARONKER: And that was only at a live town
22 hall that they answered me, that's why.

23 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you. I'm glad you
24 shared that again for emphasis. Alright, thank you
25 to this panel. We're going to call the next panel

1
2 up, which includes Zachary Beer from the Simon
3 Wiesenthal Center, Michael Cohen from the Simon
4 Wiesenthal Center and Joshua Kramer from AJC. And we
5 will start with Zachary.

6 ZACHARY BEER: Hello, I just want to clarify.
7 Like, I'm very friendly with Michael but I don't
8 actually work for the Simon Wiesenthal Center. So, I
9 just want to make that 100 clear.

10 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: It wasn't clear. Thank
11 you. So, Zachary Beer from CUNY. Did I get that
12 right?

13 ZACHARY BEER: Yeah, representing himself.

14 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Okay, got it, got it, got
15 it.

16 ZACHARY BEER: So, once again, my name is Zachary
17 Beer, so I am a recent graduate of the City College
18 of New York. Receiving a bachelors and a masters in
19 history, as well as a bachelors in Jewish studies.
20 I'm also pursuing rabbinic ordination at Yeshiva
21 University.

22 So, during my time at CCNY, I had a leadership
23 role in Hillel at CCNY including many positions
24 including an educational coordinator, secretary and
25 Vice President. In many of these roles, one of my

1
2 jobs was connecting with other clubs on campus to
3 engage in joint programming. This was create an
4 environment of mutual respect and understanding
5 between clubs, which is a common occurrence on my
6 campus and on many other campuses.

7 As I reached out, I noticed a pattern of clubs
8 refusing to interact with Hillel. After looking into
9 these refusals, I noticed that many of the clubs that
10 refused to interact with us did so after working with
11 Students for Justice in Palestine SJP. Furthermore,
12 one student group explicitly connected their
13 relationship to SJP as well as Hillel's official
14 position on Zionism as a reason that they refused to
15 interact with our club. I also noticed in my
16 personal interactions with members of Students for
17 Justice in Palestine, they openly did not regard
18 Hillel as representative of the Jewish community on
19 campus and did not a course the same respect they
20 would give to other clubs. Instead, they had a
21 little group such as [INAUDIBLE 4:13:37], a fringe
22 antizionist ultra-orthodox set widely understood even
23 in the ultra-orthodox world to be extremists who they
24 also invited to campus as representing "real
25 Judaism."

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2 Additionally, they identified two Jewish
3 identifying members of the young democratic socials
4 of America as comprising the true Jewish community on
5 campus. They tokenize these two individuals because
6 they were not Zionist. You know and in terms of the
7 reaction that was received from the administration,
8 it's like from a generalized email promoting positive
9 campus culture, nothing else seemed to be done about
10 this situation. On one particular occasion somebody
11 also drew a swastika on the door of the Hillel Office
12 on the fourth floor of the North Academic Center.
13 This was done as an act to intimidate and scare
14 Jewish students on campus.

15 While Public Safety did install an additional
16 camera on that floor after this event, not much else
17 was done. After this act, I personally felt less
18 safe on campus. In fact, until campus base learning
19 was suspended due to COVID in March of 2020, I was
20 constantly nervous about worse antisemitic actions
21 occurring and I personally lessened my presence on
22 campus to this worry. I also took the opportunity
23 not to attend classes in person until this past
24 spring semester went to a single class, my final
25 class at CUNY in person.

1
2 I would like to thank the City Council Committee
3 on Higher Education for having this critical hearing.
4 It's very important that antisemitism be given the
5 same care and treatment as all other forms hatred.
6 The time arising antisemitism, this hearing gives me
7 a measure of relief that these issues are being
8 tackled and thank you very much.

9 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you and just quick
10 clarity because we have heard from CUNY, a lot of the
11 responses to the problems. You say we want to
12 encourage dialogue, encourage free speech to the
13 answer to speech, to bad speech is more free speech
14 and that we have to facilitate those conversations.
15 We just did clarification after the swastika was
16 found, it was dealt with from a security perspective
17 but from that restorative justice conversation
18 perspective, it was not addressed at all?

19 ZACHARY BEER: As far as I understand and I know
20 nothing else occurred.

21 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you. Next, we have
22 Michael Cohen from the - and he actually is from the
23 Simon Wiesenthal Center.

24 MICHAEL COHEN: Thank you.
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2 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: And make sure to just
3 speak into the microphone.

4 MICHAEL COHEN: Sure and just before I begin with
5 my four more remarks, I just want to state for the
6 record that on behalf of the Simon Wiesenthal Center,
7 we are outraged that the fact that the Chancellor of
8 CUNY has failed to appear personally at this crucial
9 hearing. This hearing was already rescheduled once
10 from its June 8th original time, specifically to
11 accommodate his schedule and because fearful students
12 under attack on his campuses, feel their plight is
13 not being heard. And now once again, he's he is
14 absent.

15 Thank you Mr. Chairman and the Committee for
16 actually making sure today that students are being
17 heard by the people of the State of New York. So, I
18 just want to thank you all for that.

19 My name is Michael Cohen, the Eastern Director of
20 the Simon Wiesenthal Center, a leading Jewish global
21 human rights organization with a constituency of over
22 400,000 families with some 150,000 residing in the
23 area. Chairman Dinowitz, members of the Committee
24 and on behalf of our members, I thank you for holding
25 this crucial oversight hearing on examining

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2 antisemitism on CUNY's college campuses. This
3 hearing acknowledges that the serving growth of
4 antisemitic activity on our city university campuses,
5 which impacts on our students, on our Jewish students
6 and faculty members. They have suffered intimidation
7 and worse, as you've heard here today.

8 Just a few weeks ago, on Yom Ha'atzmaut, on
9 Israeli Independence Day, the Wiesenthal Center was
10 invited to participate at the Brooklyn College
11 Celebration on the West Squad. Our team of student
12 volunteers set up a table and worked alongside
13 students of all backgrounds. All enjoying a festive
14 time sampling Israeli style food, listening to
15 Israeli music and experiencing a taste of the culture
16 celebrated by their Jewish peers, classmates and
17 neighbors.

18 As I was driving to the event, I received a call
19 from my team. Their voices heavy with trepidation.
20 Just outside the gate of the West Squad, members of
21 the extreme antipeace students for Justice in
22 Palestine had begun to congregate with voice
23 amplifiers, attempting to intimate any one who wished
24 to enter the event. And very quickly this situation
25 escalated where the NYPD's presence was necessary.

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2 Along with campus security to ensure access to the
3 event and the safety of the celebrates.

4 As I approached the entrance, I received menacing
5 looks and antagonist comment to myself. I made a
6 video record and took photos of these activities,
7 which I was able to share publicly to demonstrate
8 what our Jewish students and others who dare
9 celebrate the Jewish stated heritage we must contend
10 with. The signs of these extremists and the slogans
11 which they loudly chanted, were not ones of peace but
12 rather ones slogans such as, "from the river to the
13 sea, Palestine should be free." In other words, not
14 a vision of shared peace and mutual prosperity, but
15 the destruction of Israel and the Jewish people in
16 their entirety.

17 The protestors declared that their goal was to
18 drown out the Israeli music played as they attempted
19 to intimate anyone trying to enter the gate. If not
20 for the law enforcement presence there, who knows
21 what could have happened. It is in this environment
22 that student after student, including many who are
23 proud to be Jews have refused to participate in
24 today's hearings out of fear of becoming targets
25 themselves.

1
2 Many as we heard earlier today wear baseball caps
3 covering their Yamaka taking measures to hide their
4 Jewish identity and not in Russia, not in Germany,
5 not in France but right here in New York on CUNY's
6 college campuses. This dangerous and disgusting
7 bullying and intimidation must end and it's CUNY's
8 responsibility to do so.

9 Please understand that while I represent the
10 Wiesenthal Center here today, I myself am a proud
11 CUNY graduate. My wife is a proud community
12 graduate, my sister, my father, my in laws, by
13 brother in law, my sister in law. We are a CUNY
14 family and we care about the future success of CUNY.

15 But like all New Yorkers, we are also taxpayers
16 and it is past due for CUNY to be held responsible
17 for the safety of all students and faculty including
18 Jews. The Wiesenthal Center has long enjoyed an
19 incredibly productive partnership with the New York
20 City Council in combating antisemitism and hate in
21 all its forms and today, we sincerely appreciate your
22 leadership in convening this hearing, considering
23 practical steps to deal with the CUNY crisis. We of
24 course stand ready to be of assistance to the Council
25 in dealing with this crisis, most of all, we are

1
2 grateful to the City Council for inviting students
3 who are testifying here today.

4 Let us commit to hear their voices and work
5 together to ensure that hate has no place on CUNY's
6 campuses. Thank you.

7 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you and Joshua
8 Kramer from AJC.

9 JOSHUA KRAMER: Thank you Chair Dinowitz. Thank
10 you to the Committee for holding this important
11 hearing on antisemitism on CUNY and New York City
12 college campuses. My name is Josh Kramer, I'm the
13 Director of AJC, American Jewish Committee New York
14 region, one of 24 regions across the country and AJC
15 also has over a dozen offices around the world. We
16 combat antisemitism strength, advocate for a strong
17 and secure Israel and remote human rights and
18 democratic institutions.

19 I'm going to submit my written testimony for the
20 record and because it contains points that have been
21 repeated often here today and just speak a little bit
22 about what is going on from an AJC perspective. I'll
23 speak a little bit to BDS but what I really want to
24 do is briefly, we are a proud partner of the City
25 Council and committing antisemitism a proud partner

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2 of CUNY and the CUNY system as Senior Vice Chancellor
3 Grace mentioned. She and Chancellor Matos-Rodriguez
4 attended the co-sponsored by AJC Hillel International
5 and the American Council on Education Summit for
6 University of Presidents in the spring.

7 We hope that this hearing is one important step
8 of many steps that will approach solutions to the
9 problems that are being faced on college campuses
10 across New York City but in the meantime, while we
11 are focusing on this issue, the students; and this is
12 why I wanted to submit my testimony for the record
13 and just speak off the cuff. The students that we're
14 hearing from today and so many more that we're not
15 hearing from today are being cheated out of a normal
16 college education, a normal college experience. The
17 best case scenario in the culture that has been able
18 to foment on college campuses in New York City and
19 across the country are the students that we're
20 hearing from today. They've been empowered by the
21 City Council. They've been empowered by activity
22 within Jewish organizations and Jewish spaces on
23 their college campuses to speak up and speak out
24 against this rising tide. And it's, the worst case
25 scenario obviously is people feeling intimidated,

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2 people feeling marginalized but close to worst case
3 scenario are the hundreds, thousands of students who
4 are hiding their identities. They are not living
5 openly Jewish lives. They are not proud of their
6 identities on campus and that is the goal of
7 antisemitism in most cases to marginalize Jewish
8 groups to such an extent if possible.

9 So, our official policy on BDS is that it is
10 sinister antisemitic movement whose sole purpose is
11 to isolate Israel diplomatically, culturally,
12 academically and economically to undermine Israel's
13 legitimacy. When a movement seeks to delegitimize
14 Israel's right to exist, singles Israel out for
15 censure or holding no other nation to the same
16 standard or demonizes the world's only Jewish state,
17 simply because it is the world's only Jewish state,
18 then criticism of Israel has ceased to be admissible.
19 We cannot validate antisemitism under the guides of
20 anti-Israel sentiment when the sentiment itself seeks
21 to isolate and punish Jews.

22 American Jewish College, students need tangible
23 action and policy change to ensure that violent
24 antisemitism does not disrupt or derail their higher
25 education. To combat antisemitism on college

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2 campuses, I implore you to adopt a formal
3 condemnation of the BDS movement and provide training
4 to faculty and student leaders on not just
5 traditional antisemitism but new antisemitism in the
6 21st Century, which largely manifests as antizionism.

7 AJC stands behind CUNY and academia where free
8 sought must prosper and be protected but also where
9 antisemitic actions that undermine the safety of
10 Jewish students under the guides of opposition to
11 Israel's very existence must be condemned and
12 decisively rejected.

13 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you. Thank you.
14 Any questions for the panel?

15 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Yes, thank you for that
16 testimony. Mr. Kramer, I have a question for you.
17 Uhm, as you see the Chancellor is not here and I know
18 you mentioned the Chancellor. I just want to ask;
19 how do you feel about the fact that he did not show
20 up today?

21 JOSHUA KRAMER: We take this issue very
22 seriously. It's why I'm in this room and why AJC is
23 going to be presenting on a virtual testimony as
24 well. We wish that the Chancellor was here.

25 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Council Member Yeger.

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COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Thank you Mr. Chairman.

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Very briefly, Mr. Beer, you may be familiar with this

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question. I asked the previous panel, just the

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students. At City College have you had an audience

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with the President of the college at this point?

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Have you requested one? And if so, have you had one?

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ZACHARY BEER: So, I haven't personally but the

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leadership of the Hillel Club, so like the President

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as well as the Executive Director Ilya Bratman, so

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the Student Presidents who you know have changed

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their roles over the years and the Executive Director

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Ilya Bratman have met with President Boudreau on

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multiple occasions. I believe he is aware of what is

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going on. I have not met with him personally,

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however.

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COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, so you believe he's

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aware but do you know and you haven't met personally,

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do you know if any interaction or reaction has come

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out of his office on this topic at all?

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Or in essence, have you been just relegated down

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to the lower rankings of people in the college or

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have you - has this been escalated to the Presidents

24

Office?

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2 ZACHARY BEER: Uhm, I mean, I think it has been
3 brought to the presidents office. He has sent out you
4 know emails or other announcements to the college
5 when incidents have occurred, such as you know an
6 incident where the student government shared a one-
7 sided post about Israel during the recent conflict
8 and after a very charged speaker Meko Pellod(SP?) who
9 is the son of an Israeli general who is a prominent
10 antizionist radical at this point. And there was a
11 lot of harsh language going back and forth and again,
12 a lot of these emails are more – there should be you
13 know free speech on campus, less you know people
14 shouldn't be anti-Israel or antisemitic.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Thank you Mr. Beer and
16 just one comment, Mr. Kramer, it's good to see you.
17 Just one for the record to say in response to the
18 last point that you made, a Resolution came out of
19 this body six years ago, sponsored by the predecessor
20 members of the three Council Members you see sitting
21 here. Council Member Cohen from the Bronx, Council
22 Member Deutsch from Brooklyn and my own predecessor
23 Councilman Greenfield, condemning BDS and this
24 Council was a leader on that and I'm incredibly proud
25 of those three members who did that.

1
2 So, we'll continue speaking up on antisemitism
3 and BDS is that. So, thank you.

4 ZACHARY BEER: Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: I think it was sponsored
6 by a super majority of the Council. Just to
7 highlight one of the points, it sounds like, I didn't
8 hear any of you say the other students shouldn't be
9 sharing but that you've been stifled, whether it was
10 at an event and try to silenced and drowned out or
11 posts not being shared from a different perspective.
12 Is that, is that pretty fair to say? That your
13 speech was trying to be drowned out? Okay. I just
14 wanted to clarify the point. Yes.

15 ZACHARY BEER: I just wanted to make a comment to
16 Councilman Yeger. We're already in the BDS
17 Resolution, you know which just so - just to say
18 thank you to everybody here, realize that you know
19 this Council needs to be recognized as how incredible
20 they have been on such issues. That exact resolution
21 back then, the Wiesenthal Center had worked with
22 Council Member Andrew Cohen and the other members
23 involved in that Resolution, took that language that
24 the New York City Council led with and starting
25 passing it and having other municipalities pass it

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2 throughout other municipalities throughout the
3 country. Just in New Jersey alone, I think it was 35
4 different municipalities have passed the exact
5 language of the New York City Council's Resolution on
6 BDS. So, just, you know New York City leads and
7 leads this Council, so just really you should know
8 how much your leadership means and thank you very
9 much for all that you do.

10 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: And just because the
11 Resolution came up, I want to read one part of it
12 that we're hearing themes about throughout the
13 hearing, about free speech. This is whereas the
14 university base BDS efforts violate the core goals of
15 the university in global cultural development, which
16 thrive on free and open exchange and debate. Free
17 and open exchange and debate.

18 And based on the last three panels, it just
19 sounds like there is an incredibly coordinated effort
20 to stifle that free speech, which I know that CUNY
21 says they value. And I think again, what we're
22 looking for is the evidence of that value right.
23 What are the plans and what have you done so far to
24 foster that free speech and that exchange of ideas?

1
2 I thank the panel for your testimony. The next
3 in-person panel is Susan Tuchman, Azriel Genack,
4 Gerard Filitti and Barbara Kitei. And I – and I –
5 and I just want to note again that CUNY, Dr. Grace is
6 still on. You can't see but she's still on here
7 listening to the testimony, which I want to highlight
8 that we, this Committee appreciates.

9 We will start with uh, okay, we'll start with
10 Susan Tuchman from Zionist Organization of America.
11 Thank you. Is the microphone on?

12 SUSAN TUCHMAN: Okay, there we go. I'm Susan
13 Tuchman. I am the Director of the Center for Law and
14 Justice at the Zionist Organization of America. The
15 ZOA is the oldest pro-Israel organization in the U.S.
16 and we have played a leading role in fighting campus
17 antisemitism and making sure that Jewish students get
18 the safe and welcoming environment that every student
19 deserves. We filed the first case of campus
20 antisemitism that the Department of Education's Office
21 for Civil Rights ever agreed to investigate under
22 Title VI of the Civil Rights Act.

23 When the Office for Civil Rights was not
24 enforcing Title VI to protect Jewish students, the
25 ZOA led a six year battle to ensure that Jewish

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2 students would have the same legal protections that
3 other ethnic and racial groups have already enjoyed
4 for close to 50 years. As a result of our battle,
5 Jewish students are now protected under Title VI.

6 We've helped Jewish students on campuses across
7 the country including at CUNY. In 2013, we helped
8 Jewish students at Brooklyn College who were forcibly
9 removed from an anti-Israel BDS program. They were
10 ejected without justification, simply because they
11 opposed BDS. Keeping them out was a way to shutdown
12 their pro-Israel views.

13 In 2016, the ZOA alerted CUNY's leaders to the
14 harassment and intimidation the Jewish students were
15 enduring at four CUNY schools. As just one example,
16 a student rally at Hunter College that was supposed
17 to protest rising tuition, turned into a frightening
18 attack on Jews. Jewish students were threatened and
19 cursed at. They were subjected to chance like Jews
20 out of CUNY and death to Jews.

21 CUNY Law School has not been immune to these
22 problems. A CUNY Law student posted a video on
23 social media, in which he threatens to light someone
24 on fire because he's wearing a sweatshirt bearing the
25 emblem of the Israel defense forces. CUNY Law did

1
2 not condemn this conduct. It didn't investigate
3 whether the student violated CUNY policies. Instead,
4 CUNY Law justified the conduct and considers it
5 acceptable activism. The ZOA's title six action
6 against CUNY Law is currently being investigated by
7 the Office for Civil Rights. It would be reasonable
8 for us to think that since CUNY Law is under federal
9 investigation, it would be extra vigilant in ensuring
10 the Jewish and pro-Israel students feel safe and
11 welcome.

12 Not so. The law student who threatened to set
13 someone on fire for supporting Israel. A student who
14 as also openly called for the death of Zionists and
15 for Israel's destruction. A student who also
16 promotes violence and terrorism against Jews. This
17 student was selected to be a speaker at CUNY Law's
18 commencement last month. She was treated like a
19 celebrity there with cheers and applause.

20 Taxpayer money should not be supporting a school
21 that legitimizes and rewards antisemitism or any
22 other bigotry. We thank Councilwoman Vernikov for
23 pulling funding that was allocated to CUNY Law. She
24 sent the much needed message to CUNY that if you
25 tolerate antisemitism you will bear the negative

1
2 consequences. We ask the City Council to send the
3 same message to CUNY.

4 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you.

5 SUSAN TUCHMAN: I'm submitting written testimony
6 to the Committee. I've included recommendations that
7 I respectfully urge you to implement. They are
8 reasonable and doable and will help protect Jewish
9 kids on our campuses.

10 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you. Thank you for
11 your testimony.

12 SUSAN TUCHMAN: Thank you so much.

13 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Azriel Genack.

14 AZRIEL GENACK: Hello, I'm a Professor of Physics
15 at Queens College and the Graduate Center and a
16 member of the CUNY Alliance for Inclusion. One
17 doesn't have to say which groups the inclusion,
18 should be included because it's only a single group
19 that is excluded and we work to connect with students
20 and to inform the faculty at CUNY community about the
21 real Israel. We've made many attempts to contact the
22 Chancellor but we've never gotten a response or
23 notice. Okay, I'd like to say that antisemitism;
24 it's not just another hope hate and that BDS is not
25 simply a political point of view. It's really an

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2 ideology by which people can define themselves,
3 nurture their grievances and proclaim their virtue by
4 settling on a single state within the world. One
5 could go to the middle east. There are a lot of
6 conflicts going on. The number of people killed in
7 Gaza was roughly equivalent to the number of people
8 killed –

9 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Sorry to interrupt, I just
10 want to make sure that we're focusing on antisemitism
11 here on our college campuses, you know.

12 AZRIEL GENACK: I just wanted to get to a point
13 that the resolution, the PSC CUNY condemning Israel
14 for massacring Palestinians, it's not in any way
15 based in fact and it's delusional in a sense because
16 it proclaims that it is opposed to racism and
17 antisemitism but the resolution itself is antisemitic
18 by any standard and a way of saying that is to see
19 that it's only now that there's some discussion
20 coming up in a draft of a resolution on the Russian
21 invasion of Ukraine is coming up and in that case,
22 instead of calling for a boycott of Russia for its
23 brutal invasion of Ukraine, there's a statement that
24 as academics, they need to remind people that the way
25

1
2 forward in a difficult conflict is through dialogue
3 and communication.

4 So, it's an absolute double standard and those
5 that mention of the Jerusalem definition of
6 antisemitism which is a way of working around a
7 direct assault on the antisemitism inherent in BDS,
8 it should be accepted that if there's a double
9 standard applied to single people and that this
10 emphasis is so large that it becomes the essence of a
11 persons identity, that really is antisemitism. And
12 the way to move forward is for the university to
13 adopt Ira. I'd like to just say that I was an
14 organizer of the conference that was in the U.S.
15 Middle East Conference on photonics. And it was to
16 celebrate the inauguration of the photonics
17 initiative at CUNY and we invited the leaders, the
18 world leaders in photonics that celebrate the
19 contribution of middle eastern scientists.

20 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you. Thank you, if
21 you could just take another second to wrap up please.

22 AZRIEL GENACK: Okay, and just to say that that
23 conference, there was not – a single person who said
24 could not come who did not have a conflict. There
25 was fraud support for it. So, there's a real

1
2 division here between people in the sciences or
3 really based on fact I would say and people in the
4 social sciences who are looking at a broad narrative
5 or emotions to drive what they do. And I think the
6 University should really not give up on the idea that
7 facts matter.

8 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you. Next, we'll
9 hear from Gerard Filitti.

10 GERARD FILITTI: It is on now, thank you. Thank
11 you and good afternoon. My name is Gerard Filitti, I
12 am an Attorney and Senior Counsel at the Lawfare
13 Project. We are a nonprofit that fights to uphold
14 [INAUDIBLE 4:39:01] people worldwide based here in
15 New York City. I will submit my testimony in writing
16 because after listening to CUNY's testimony, I just
17 need to go off the cuff a little bit. What I saw
18 this morning and into this afternoon was an empty
19 chair. The Chancellor could not be bothered to come
20 and this is after already postponing the hearing,
21 this is unacceptable. There's a simple answer to
22 this. He needs to be replaced.

23 There are plenty of people that the Board of
24 Trustees can find to replace him. People who
25 actually care about the minority rights of the Jewish

1
2 people and the minority rights of other communities
3 as well. You don't ignore hearings on antisemitism
4 that are called by the New York City Council. What I
5 heard were empty voices. The language that was used
6 was typical of a defendant who does not answer
7 questions but answers them in a meaningless way.
8 Nothing we heard today had any merit whatsoever.

9 You know, it strikes me — everyone else has
10 talked about the issues of CUNY in depth but what
11 strikes me is that what happens in academia doesn't
12 stay in academia. It seeps out and infests our
13 community. And if Jew hatred is what's being
14 perpetuated, we're seeing that on the streets. I
15 will give you a portion of my testimony. When a
16 student, you now as Susan said, when a student filmed
17 herself apparently threatening to set a mans hoody on
18 fire while wearing it, the Administration initially
19 condemned CUNY only later to apologize, saying that
20 condemnation was inexcusable. The Administration had
21 CUNY actually apologized to condemning Jew hatred.
22 When students hold rallies at the university on
23 campuses and going out into the streets demanding to
24 globalize the intifada, to globalize violence against
25 Jews, the Administration does nothing. It's silent.

1
2 When students call for resistance by any means, the
3 administration does nothing. When students chant
4 "from the river to the sea," which is the reality and
5 cry of Hamas and PFLP designated foreign tourist
6 organizations, the Administration does nothing. What
7 happens then? We have student inspired
8 organizations. We know the names; I'm not going to
9 say them. We all know who we're talking about at
10 CUNY law. They go out onto the streets and hold
11 rallies.

12 At one of those rallies, one of my clients was
13 attacked, viciously beaten. Yesterday, a federal
14 grand jury build indictment for a federal hate crime
15 charge against this person. He went to a rally
16 inspired and hosted by these people who came out of
17 CUNY law, who come out of CUNY campuses and insight
18 violence and he was attacked for it and now we have a
19 federal hate crime pending. This is the consequence
20 of CUNY's inaction. This is the consequence of not
21 responding to all of these issues. We have real
22 world violence that's perpetuated by people who are
23 infused with hatred on these campuses and more than
24 anything, this is why action needs to be taken. We
25 don't need an empty chair. We don't need empty

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2 voices; we need action and if CUNY doesn't do
3 anything then what Council Member Vernikov did was
4 straight on. We need to cut funding. We need to
5 affect them in a way that will entice them to take
6 action. Thank you Mr. Chair.

7 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you very much for
8 your testimony and then Barbara Kitei.

9 BABARA KITEI: Thank you so much. I thank you so
10 much you know for inviting me. I was totally
11 unprepared. I just came to the rally and I'm a
12 former CUNY faculty in the English department at
13 Adjunct. I was teaching there for over 23-years at
14 City, uhm, New York City College of Technology in
15 Brooklyn where one of the CUNY reps on Zoom said
16 there was Holocaust exhibit. I never saw any such
17 thing and I noticed over the years; I was there since
18 the like 1990's and I noticed how there's like a
19 decline in the student population. There used to be
20 a lot of students in the dental hygiene clinic and a
21 lot of other clinics. I taught English at City
22 University New York, New York City College of
23 Technology in Brooklyn for over 22-years. And
24 there's a decline in the population Jewish students
25 and there's a fear, there's like this nonverbal fear

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2 there was a standing exhibit that took of the entire
3 lobby of the second floor against Israel in I think
4 2008. Stand with Us what there, I invited them to
5 come video it. There was not one thing about any
6 factual information about Israel. I asked the Vice
7 President if I could show the Case for Israel, the
8 movie. He said, "sure, go ahead." Not one professor
9 would come and bring anybody from their class until
10 finally, I showed it to my class and then one other
11 professor came up with a couple of students. And
12 every professor is afraid of saying a word against
13 anybody or anything.

14 The Muslim Student Association gets almost all
15 the money. I was like a contact professor for the
16 first Jewish students association there. They never
17 got any student money and uhm, they even have an
18 entire wing dedicated to Muslim worship, a wing, not
19 just a room. There's no rooms for any other kind of
20 worship there but there's a whole wing and they had
21 constant e-moms come in and talk about Jihad and talk
22 about peace or whatever they were talking about and
23 they got tons of money and they got tons of food.
24 Only for the Muslim students.

25

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2 So, the Jewish students were intimidated all the
3 time. I would say to them, why don't you talk to
4 them about what's going on or what you think and they
5 said, what's the point? They just shout you down and
6 they silence you and you can't open your mouth
7 because they just totally silence you.

8 So, they've silenced me too. I was fired
9 together with four other professors who were adjunct,
10 who were teaching there more than 20-years, each of
11 us. All Jewish women, all at the same time May 2021.
12 No reason, nothing. We went into our personnel
13 files, most of the material, the faculty evaluations
14 were gone. All the positive faculty pure
15 observations were gone. Everything was gone and then
16 they said, "oh, we have a separate file in the
17 English department." Where's that file? We don't
18 know.

19 So, uhm, but what I was teaching before I got
20 dismissed was how brainwashing effects racism and
21 antisemitism and I gave them a lot of examples and
22 they loved it. I gave them examples from Patty Hurst
23 and from the Jim Jones massacre and from a lot of
24 different types of diverse things and something about
25 the Holocaust.

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2 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Take another second to
3 wrap it up please.

4 BARBARA KITEI: And they didn't know anything
5 about the Holocaust. They said the public school
6 system doesn't even teach the Holocaust at all
7 anymore. All they know is that there was Hitler and
8 six million.

9 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you.

10 BARBARA KITEI: And they thanked me for telling
11 them that. After that -

12 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you for sharing.
13 Thank you so much. Thank you to the panel. Any
14 questions for the panel? Thank you so much. We have
15 one more in-person panel and then we have a virtual
16 panel and I just want to thank all of the panelists
17 and the other Council Members for really focusing on
18 the issue of what's going on here in the United
19 States. Because again, as I said in my opening
20 statement, this is not a foreign policy debate.
21 There is a reality borne out by facts that Jews are
22 facing, increased discrimination. So, I just want to
23 take a moment to thank all of the people who are
24 really focused on that. The last in-person panel is
25 Michael Mirochnick and Rabbi Israel David Wise.

1
2 RABBI DAVID WISE: With the help of the Almighty,
3 I pray to the almighty to stow upon me his truth and
4 his wisdom, then convey his message and so sanctify
5 his name and hopefully bring peace to the world.
6 We're very thankful for the leaders of CUNY and the
7 City Council who considering to melt antisemitism and
8 how to somehow bring some type of relief to the
9 growing antisemitism. But we are very concerned.
10 I'm a grandchild of my grandparents were killed in
11 Auschwitz. The majority of my family was killed in
12 Auschwitz and in the Holocaust.

13 Yet at the same time, we know that this was
14 antisemitism. We are very concerned because when you
15 conflate; when you try to incorporate into
16 antisemitism other issues, it's really unfair. It's
17 unfair to the truth. It maybe that we may be a
18 minority of Jews who are practicing religion and
19 maybe we are a minority but you cannot one and one is
20 two as a great Rabbi said. This is a fact. We
21 cannot take away from the fact that Judaism is
22 observance to God or religion of 3,000 years.
23 Zionism is a transformation to nationalism. It is a
24 mere hundred odd years and it's forbidden according
25 to occupy to kill, to steal, it's forbidden even to

1
2 have a Jewish state. The Rabbi's in Palestine. In
3 fact in Europe, there was a great Rabbi Shapiro
4 pleaded when there was a massacre in Palestine.
5 Rabbi Shapiro of less memory and he said, "we have to
6 tell people to take back that for declaration."
7 Rabbi Dushinsky in 1947 pleaded with the United
8 Nations to United Nations record. He said, we
9 furthermore wish to express our definite opposition
10 to a Jewish state in any part of Palestine and he was
11 the Chief Rabbi in Jerusalem.

12 That hundreds of thousands of Jews still live in
13 the holy land and around the world, right across the
14 bridge. And right across Williamsburg Bridge,
15 there's the largest concentration of religious Jews,
16 where you probably wont find one Israeli flag. We
17 are Jews because we serve God.

18 We're not condoning violence. We are pleading
19 that you do not take us hostage. Do not incorporate
20 something that what's going on again, uhm, uh,
21 complaints who will help people address the subject
22 called Zionism but do not conflate it and do not
23 refer to it as antisemitism because it exacerbates
24 antisemitism because people who are suffering whether
25 you say it's rightful, not rightful, it's a subject

1
2 by itself. They are frustrated, they are exacerbated
3 because they say, why are you saying that we are
4 anti-Jews when we live for hundreds of years in peace
5 and harmony. This is really not right. It's
6 untruthful and please, do not use my Judaism. What
7 we [INAUDIBLE 4:50:11] more bloodshed, whether it be
8 Jews or not Jews, it should really, you have to face
9 the truth because that's debating antisemitism.

10 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you.

11 RABBI DAVID WISE:: God help we should have peace
12 and we thank you again for trying to stop
13 antisemitism. Thank you.

14 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you for your
15 testimony. Council Member Vernikov has a question.

16 RABBI DAVID WISE:: Yes.

17 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Uh, Mr. Wise.

18 RABBI DAVID WISE: Rabbi Wise.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Are you a student at
20 CUNY?

21 RABBI DAVID WISE: No, I am not.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Are you a student at
23 any New York City University?

24 RABBI DAVID WISE: No, I am not.
25

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Have you ever been a
3 student at CUNY?

4 RABBI DAVID WISE: No.

5 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Are you a professor at
6 CUNY.

7 RABBI DAVID WISE: No, I am not.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Have you ever
9 experienced antisemitism at CUNY.

10 RABBI DAVID WISE: No, I did not.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Have you ever
12 experienced antisemitism in any college campus?

13 RABBI DAVID WISE: Not on a college campus but I
14 lived in New York and I did. But therefore -

15 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Well, I'm asking
16 specifically about a college campus.

17 RABBI DAVID WISE: I am a Jewish person. I have
18 a right to speak up for my being, my nation, my
19 people, and my religion.

20 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: I believe you haven't
21 addressed the issue of antisemitism and we're here to
22 discuss just that. Thank you, I have no more
23 questions.

24 RABBI DAVID WISE: Thank you.
25

1
2 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you so much. We're
3 going to turn to our virtual panel. Okay, the first
4 panel of five speakers. The speakers on this next
5 panel are Ofek Preis, and again, forgive me if I
6 mispronounce your name, you'll just correct me when
7 you introduce yourself. James Davis from the PSC
8 CUNY, Rena Nasar First from Stand With Us, Ilya
9 Bratman from Hillel at Baruch College, and Scott
10 Richman from the Anti-Defamation League. We'll start
11 with Ofek Preis.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

13 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Everybody on Zoom, you are
14 going to get Zoom unmute invite from a staff member.
15 When that window comes up, please accept it.

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

17 OFEK PREIS: Hello, my name is Ofek Preis. I am
18 an Israeli International Student studying at SUNY new
19 Paltz. I was recently excluded from an advocacy
20 group fighting against sexual violence on campus
21 after being labeled as a Zionist based on a post on
22 my Instagram story, which Stated that the Jewish
23 people are an ethnic group who come from Israel and
24 that you cannot colonize the land to which you are
25 indigenous.

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2 I am an Israeli student, a political science and
3 sociology major, and a prominent member of advocacy
4 and activist spaces on and off-campus, and a survivor
5 of sexual assault who was denied the right to fight
6 against rape culture as a result of anti-Zionism. I
7 am joining virtually from Israel today to state that
8 there is no place for antisemitism in the public
9 state and city universities of New York.

10 While I have dedicated my life and my education
11 to activism against oppression, racism and sexual
12 violence, the Anti-Zionist organization at my school
13 has accused me of being a traitor to the cause, and I
14 was given the reputation of a white supremacist and a
15 colonizer incapable of fighting for equality and
16 reform. My identity as a fighter against injustice
17 was taken from me and it was replaced by the label of
18 an oppressor. Another Jewish Survivor and I were
19 harassed with instant hostility, some even
20 instructing people to find us and spit on us. I
21 still feel unsafe on my campus, today. I still feel
22 Powerless and defenseless, and more than anything I
23 feel Isolated and excommunicated from the progressive
24 spaces in which I have a right to participate.

1
2 The members of the antisemitic organization and
3 members of the student body who contributed to the
4 hostility walked unpunished, while I and many Jewish
5 students, spent the semester at home in fear. These
6 are the detrimental impacts left by the presence of
7 antizionism in colleges and universities. This is
8 the result of promoting dialogue instead of directly
9 denouncing antizionism. It is not a matter of
10 difficult conversations but an issue of hostility,
11 isolation and discrimination. There is an immense
12 need for reform in the protection for the Jewish and
13 Israeli students of New York State. Thank you for
14 your time.

15 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you Ms. Preis and as
16 - I just want to acknowledge like how brave it is for
17 you to share your testimony, especially as a survivor
18 and to share that and try to work towards a better
19 future for your peers. Thank you.

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

21 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Uh, next we have James
22 Davis from PSC.

23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

24 JAMES DAVIS: Good afternoon Chair Dinowitz and
25 members of the Committee on Higher Education. My

1
2 name is James Davis. I'm a faculty member for the
3 last 18-years at Brooklyn College and I'm the
4 President of the Professional Staff Congress, which
5 is the labor union representing 30,000 faculty and
6 staff at CUNY. I appreciate the opportunity to
7 participate in today's important hearing and I want
8 to thank this Committee as well, for your efforts
9 during the city budget process to improve conditions
10 for CUNY faculty, students, and staff.

11 The PSC takes seriously acts of discrimination
12 and hate speech at CUNY, including acts of anti-
13 Semitism. We believe that our faculty and staff are
14 committed to the inclusive mission of CUNY to serve
15 the whole people of New York.

16 Our purpose is to lift up the students who enter
17 our classrooms, and our members work hard to support
18 the pluralistic vision at CUNY, to make sure that our
19 diversity is our strength, and that all students have
20 the opportunity to flourish, regardless of their
21 background or their ancestry. And as a faculty
22 member myself, I've seen how challenging that work is
23 and yet, how successful we have been at CUNY.

24 However, we also recognize that anti-Semitism has
25 increased in New York City and beyond, and of course

1
2 the university is not immune from the problems that
3 plague the city as a whole.

4 We are committed to combatting anti-Semitism and
5 we welcome discussion of initiatives that this
6 Committee recommends. 524 hate crimes were committed
7 in New York City in 2021, a staggering number. And of
8 these, 175 were hate crimes against Jewish people,
9 more than one-third of the total. That's
10 unacceptable. And we also recognize that incidents
11 of bias occur that may not rise to the level of a
12 hate crime to individuals but cause harm to
13 individuals and communities. Harassment and
14 discrimination may not involve a physical attack on
15 persons or property but should not go unchallenged.

16 The PSC has consistently supported efforts at the
17 university to go beyond platitudes and address the
18 root causes based on ethnicity, race, and religion.
19 As some of you know, our union passed a resolution at
20 a delegate assembly meeting last year that has been
21 criticized as anti-Semitic. The Resolution was
22 sharply critical of Israel state policy and it
23 recommended, among other things, that the Boycott,
24 Divestment, and Sanctions campaign against Israel be
25 discussed at local union meetings last Fall semester.

1
2 Some of our members were deeply upset by the
3 Resolution, and some even resigned union membership
4 in dismay and protest.

5 Chair Dinowitz and I have discussed this episode
6 on a few occasions, and I welcome further discussion
7 as the Committee wishes. The PSC has not endorsed the
8 BDS campaign -

9 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

10 JAMES DAVIS: But we do take the position - if I
11 could be permitted another 40-seconds, I can finish
12 up.

13 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Yes.

14 JAMES DAVIS: We do take the position that
15 criticism of Israeli state policy is not inherently
16 anti-Semitic, and we support our members rights to
17 express themselves publicly about the Israeli-
18 Palestinian conflict, as an issue on which our
19 members are far from united. Members of a college
20 community must not allow their political convictions
21 to bias their treatment toward students or
22 colleagues, but the quality of a college education
23 depends on open and vigorous debate on the issues of
24 the day, so we need to balance the need to support
25 and respect for all with the need to preserve

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2 academic freedom, which is the lifeblood of the
3 American university. The PSC has in fact taken
4 important steps to condemn violent acts of anti-
5 Semitism at CUNY and beyond. Our Executive Council
6 issued a statement condemning the Tree of Life
7 Synagogue mass murder in Pittsburgh in 2018.

8 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you.

9 JAMES DAVIS: More recently, we have engaged in a
10 coordinated response with Queens College employees
11 against the defacement of a campus building -

12 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you Mr. President.
13 Thank you. I certainly have questions and I'm sure
14 my colleagues have questions, so we'll certainly,
15 you'll certainly have a chance to finish up some of
16 your thoughts when we have the questions.

17 The next witness is Rena Nasar First from Stand
18 With Us.

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

20 RENA NASAR FIRST: I speak before you today as an
21 employee of Stand With Us, a non-partisan Israel
22 education organization that inspires and educates
23 people of all ages and backgrounds, challenges
24 misinformation, and fights antisemitism, especially
25 on campus. But I also speak before you today as a

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2 CUNY alum who experienced antisemitism myself within
3 the CUNY system when I was a student.

4 Over the last few years, antisemitism on campus
5 has steadily increased but it has not been adequately
6 addressed. Jewish and Israeli students are being
7 subjected to a harsh litmus test, where they are
8 treated as equal members of the campus community only
9 if they are willing to limit the expression of their
10 Jewish identity, Zionism, and connection to Israel.
11 Students who fail this test face increasing animosity
12 and marginalization from students and staff, and
13 apathy from administrators.

14 This issue isn't just impacting students; all
15 stakeholders within the CUNY nucleus are affected.
16 Faculty are also being ostracized and harassed, and
17 alumni are continually disappointed by their alma
18 maters. For example, at the Silberman School of
19 Social Work, where, upon investigating an antisemitic
20 Zoom bombing incident during class, we uncovered
21 years of egregious incidents of antisemitism that the
22 administration knew about yet failed to correct. Or
23 at Kingsborough Community College, where Professor
24 Michael Goldstein was here today I see on Zoom, was
25 the victim of a smear campaign calling for his

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2 termination and even physical violence against him
3 because of his open expression of his Zionism.

4 Or at CUNY Law School, which has been referenced
5 many times today, where a commencement speech
6 referenced a harmful resolution with brazen demands
7 to end study abroad programs in Israel, terminate
8 partnerships with Israeli academics and institutions
9 and even cut ties with several Jewish organizations
10 on campus, like Hillel. These examples are mere
11 highlights of a larger, alarming trend at CUNY and I
12 want to emphasize, just as others have, we are not
13 talking about political differences or political
14 disagreements. Students are being forced to either
15 hide their Judaism and Zionism or become vulnerable
16 to intimidation, harassment and exclusion from peers
17 and professors. Jewish students deserve the same
18 protections against hate and intolerance as any other
19 community at CUNY. I'd like to offer the CUNY
20 administration the following recommendations: Create
21 a task force with Jewish students, faculty, on-campus
22 organizations like Hillel and alumni to assess the
23 overall situation on campus and make recommendations;
24 Adopt the IHRA working definition of antisemitism and
25

1
2 utilize it, as appropriate, in addressing
3 antisemitism.

4 Antisemitism grows in part because people have
5 difficulty identifying it; clarify further the
6 process for reporting antisemitic incidents.

7 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

8 RENA NASAR FIRST: And give them equal treatment.
9 Okay, finishing up.

10 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: You take another second
11 but please wrap it up.

12 RENA NASAR FIRST: Yes. Lip services is not -

13 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: And you can always submit
14 your testimony in writing, so these recommendations
15 will be shared with us.

16 RENA NASAR FIRST: Yes, thank you. I'll conclude
17 by just adding, lip service is not an option. I look
18 forward to seeing how this hearing results in
19 tangible change for all CUNY. Thank you for your
20 time.

21 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you. Thank you.
22 Next speaker is Ilya Bratman from Hillel at Baruch
23 College.

24 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.
25

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2 ILYA BRATMAN: Hello friends. Thank you so much.
3 Chair Dinowitz, Members of the Committee on Higher
4 Education, Thank you so much for the opportunity to
5 testify today. My name is Ilya Bratman I'm a Jewish
6 refugee from Russia and I'm an alumnus of Baruch
7 College. Now, I serve as a Hillel Director for a
8 number of colleges in Manhattan, namely Baruch, City,
9 John Jay Colleges at CUNY, FIT, New School, School of
10 Visual Arts, Fordham and Pace Universities. I work
11 to create and foster Jewish Life on our campuses and
12 to advocate for Jewish students' needs and concerns.

13 I am also a faculty member, teaching at Baruch
14 and John Jay Colleges. Therefore, I wear multiple
15 hats. I guide, mentor and support Jewish students in
16 various schools in Manhattan, and I teach a large
17 diverse group of students every year. I have seen
18 the impact of the past two years of isolation,
19 depression and anxiety on all of our students. In
20 addition to these obstacles, Jewish students have
21 faced an increasing number of antisemitic incidents
22 on our campuses, and a deteriorating climate of
23 hostility and harassment at our colleges. Much of the
24 harassment occurs online, many incidents occur in the
25 classrooms, often perpetrated by faculty.

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2 As faculty, we have a responsibility to present
3 unbiased, fair, balanced, and honest information to
4 our students. Our students trust us and consider us
5 as credible resources. Therefore, when faculty are
6 disingenuous, dishonest and present biased
7 information to our students, they break that trust
8 and credibility. Time and again, our faculty have
9 failed us. Faculty have used delegitimization of
10 Israel, and have attacked Zionism in order to hide
11 their animosity and hate for the existence of the
12 Jewish State, and thus the Jewish people. They have
13 allowed the atmosphere of intolerance, hate and
14 falsehood to reign supreme in our classrooms. That
15 is unacceptable. The classroom is a sacred space.
16 Our students demand integrity and impartiality from
17 our faculty. They deserve better.

18 As you have heard today, our students feel
19 uncomfortable, unsafe and fearful to exhibit and
20 express their Jewish identity on our campuses. I
21 often serve as the voice for the Jewish students on
22 our campuses. When I asked the students to testify
23 in this hearing, many had the same response: "I'm
24 afraid! I don't want to stand out. I don't want my
25 name out there." Numerous students told me that they

1
2 are intimidated to participate in this hearing or to
3 combat antisemitism on campus, because they don't
4 want that kind of attention, and they are afraid of
5 the repercussions that may follow them in the
6 classrooms, on campus, and online. Some were able to
7 testify anonymously, because of these fears of
8 intimidation.

9 I'm very thankful to the Chairman for reading the
10 testimonies. It is very important for all of us to
11 hear the gravity and intensity of the hostility on
12 our campuses. It takes courage, a lot of courage to
13 stand up to their peers, especially in these
14 uncertain times. I'm very grateful to the students
15 who are brave enough to testify today and to send in
16 their testimonies. We must create a safer
17 environment and climate on our campuses and we must
18 define antisemitism to begin with. We can't combat
19 antisemitism without knowing what it is.

20 Therefore, our students have asked to adopt the
21 IHRA Definition time and time again. Secondly, we
22 must educate students, faculty and staff about the
23 roots and the history of antisemitism. And thirdly,
24 we must combat antisemitism, denounce and condemn the
25

1
2 acts of antisemitism loudly and unapologetically, and
3 hold faculty, -

4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

5 ILYA BRATMAN: Students and staff accountable for
6 any acts of harassment.

7 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you. Thank you so
8 much for your testimony. Last in this panel and then
9 we'll have questions is Scott Richman from the Anti-
10 Defamation League.

11 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

12 SCOTT RICHMAN: Thank you so much Councilman
13 Dinowitz for convening this important hearing and for
14 your and the Council's partnership with ADL on
15 fighting all forms of hate throughout the year. My
16 name is Scott Richman, I am the Regional Director for
17 New York and New Jersey for ADL, the Anti-Defamation
18 League.

19 Since 1913, our sole mission has been to combat
20 antisemitism and all forms for hate wherever they may
21 arises on our streets, in our workplaces, on social
22 media and most relevant to today, on college
23 campuses.

24 I appear before you today with great concern
25 about the rise in antisemitism across the country,

1
2 about which Councilman Dinowitz spoke extensively
3 earlier. I'm an eye witness to that. Responding to
4 antisemitic incidents every single day as part of my
5 work and as part of my teams work. Since 2017, my
6 office alone has worked with victims to respond to 92
7 incidents of antisemitism on New York college
8 campuses, 14 of which occurred on CUNY campuses. But
9 these raw numbers do not necessarily paint the full
10 picture of the context and environment in which these
11 incidents occur.

12 The full picture as we've heard from Jewish
13 students of feeling unwelcome or unsafe because they
14 were concealing their Zionism. A core aspect of
15 their identity in order to participate in Jewish
16 life.

17 I just want to make three quick points for the
18 Council and for the CUNY Administration, which I'm
19 grateful are still on the line. Point one is the
20 ADL's analysis of the situation indicates that these
21 experiences reflect only the tip of the iceberg. In
22 partnership with Hillel, we surveyed Jewish students
23 across the country last year. It showed that 43% of
24 Jewish students on campus today either have been
25 targets of antisemitism or have observed antisemitic

1 incidents during their time in school. It's a
2 shocking thought that nearly half of all Jewish
3 students across the country are subject to
4 antisemitism during their time at school.
5

6 Moreover, the survey showed that only 25 percent
7 of those incidents were ever reported to anybody.
8 Helping them report is key and I'm grateful to hear
9 the commitment from CUNY today to encourage reporting
10 but clearly more needs to be done and we're happy to
11 partner with the Council. We're happy to partner
12 with CUNY from our experience on campuses and to make
13 that incident reporting happen.

14 Point two, is that the Council members and the
15 CUNY administration who have spoken today have made a
16 commitment to protecting free speech and free
17 academic inquiry and we do as well. We believe that
18 students can and should be exposed to ideas with
19 which they may disagree, and ideas that make them
20 feel uncomfortable. That's how they'll grow but it's
21 one thing to imagine college campuses being hot beds
22 of robust discourse. It's quite another to observe
23 what's transpired as of late, which impacts every
24 Jewish student, not just the victim and we are
25 hearing powerful testimony from students. I just

1
2 want to lift up some of the voices of the many
3 students who turned to ADL New York New Jersey for
4 help.

5 Jewish students were recently subjected to
6 screams of "baby killers" at Rutgers' campus simply
7 because -

8 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

9 SCOTT RICHMAN: They were members of a Jewish
10 fraternity and graduate students from New York
11 University who visited to Israel returned to find
12 their social media posts hijacked by other students
13 who accused them of supporting White Supremacy
14 because they traveled to Israel. When these students
15 reached out to their peers to have meaningful
16 dialogue, they were rebuffed because they were told
17 that they didn't want to engage in normalization.

18 We call upon CUNY and all campuses to speak out
19 more regularly and more consistently, not just when
20 it's so egregious as what happened at CUNY Law School
21 graduation.

22 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you.

23 SCOTT RICHMAN: And the third and final point is

24 -

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2 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: You just got another sec
3 to wrap it up and then we'll have your written
4 testimony, so that we can act on this and share with
5 CUNY of course.

6 SCOTT RICHMAN: Absolutely. So, my third and
7 final point is that we've seen the tremendous impact
8 of DEI efforts. ADL has uh, specific programs which
9 speak to that. We have our Hate Uncycled program,
10 it's a program that offers broad-based comprehensive
11 antibias training on campuses and includes
12 antisemitism as part of that. We're happy to partner
13 with this Council and partner with CUNY as well as
14 any university that wishes to move forward
15 constructively to tackle this hate on their campuses.
16 Thank you.

17 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you so much for your
18 testimony. That uhm, we have some questions for this
19 panel, so that's for people testifying on this panel
20 but I want to ask - I want to ask the president of
21 PSC, Mr. James Davis, I was uhm, obviously you
22 acknowledged that PSC last year passed this
23 Resolution. I was a little and I appreciate you
24 talking about it and talking about it openly. I was
25 a little confused by your testimony though because it

1
2 sounded like you said that the resolution itself
3 didn't support BDS. Did I hear that right?

4 JAMES DAVIS: That's correct.

5 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: So, I mean like I have it
6 here, it certainly has some of the language uhm that
7 doesn't you know engender great debate about a topic,
8 which is something that you say you want but this
9 just kind of states the way things are, which you
10 know this is part of the conversation but you're kind
11 of affirming things. Legalize racial discrimination,
12 violent incursions, and you affirm the right of
13 faculty and staff for boycott and divestment. And
14 while in the resolve, it doesn't specifically say the
15 language you used, it calls on you to facilitate
16 discussions at the chapter level to consider PSC's
17 support for BDS and sanctions. It's sort of a weird
18 distinction without a difference and I kind of don't
19 really understand how you would say that this
20 resolution, which uses all the language that honestly
21 is dangerous and stifles debate and meaningful
22 discussion and makes things more dangerous for people
23 is aligned with the value of what you said was a
24 pluralistic vision.

1
2 How many other Resolutions condemning foreign
3 policies does PSC publish? Did you pass?

4 JAMES DAVIS: Chair Dinowitz, thanks for the
5 question and I understand why you say that it's a
6 distinction without a difference. I mean, I
7 disagree. The evolution of this Resolution; an
8 amendment was attempted during the debate about this
9 Resolution for the PDH support the BDS campaign
10 amendment was defeated and the Resolution that
11 emerged said as you've indicated that the PSC
12 consider, support and facilitate this – and back by
13 the end of calendar year 2021 on those discussions,
14 on the conversations at the chapter level. Those
15 conversations occurred. We had chapters report back
16 at the delegate assembly in December of 2021. The
17 PSC did not support the BDS campaign and in fact did
18 not vote on whether to support the BDS campaign. So,
19 that's what happened. We occasionally do pass
20 Resolutions on international matters. You know we
21 passed 12 Resolutions in 2021. That was the only one
22 in 2021 on the International matter. This here as
23 one of my colleagues on a previous panel observed, we
24 also at the executive council passed a statement
25 condemning Russia's invasion of Ukraine. There are

1
2 other examples that I could give you. We have a long
3 history of condemning more including the so-called
4 war on terror of the years.

5 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: I have some of those
6 resolutions here.

7 JAMES DAVIS: I think what your question is
8 really getting at Council Member -

9 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Yeah, because I have, yes
10 -Yes, and you know and again while ultimately I guess
11 did not pass the most explicit of the Resolutions,
12 this was obviously, the BDS Resolution was obviously
13 charged enough. You had over 50 of your members
14 resign. By the way, do you know the exact number
15 that resigned?

16 JAMES DAVIS: Yeah, I checked to prepare for this
17 hearing and it's just under 100.

18 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Okay, so just under 100
19 and I just want to read some language from some of
20 your other resolutions that you've passed. And just,
21 you know just to express my point. In your May 2021
22 no cold war with China, was that right, that was you
23 PSC. You correctly state that in China bashing by
24 the media is inflaming racist ideologies and
25 triggering violence against Chinese American's which

1
2 is absolutely true. In other words, when you
3 demonize a country that represents the people, we
4 feel it here at home. And I think it's great that
5 you acknowledge that and it's one of the issues that
6 we as a city need to confront. And yet, you don't
7 feel you representing your union don't feel the same
8 way about Israel and the resolution you passed again,
9 that is supposed to engender conversation apparently,
10 talks about apartheid. Legalize discrimination and
11 murder. There's a few others, I'm not going to go
12 over all of them. There's one where in November of
13 2018, where you strongly oppose placing limitations
14 on academic travel. That was for Baruch University
15 but again, support it against Israel.

16 That's what BDS - it's the goal of BDS and those
17 are but - uh, the last one is, you have a resolution
18 and opposition to U.S. sanctions in Cuba and I'm sure
19 you know people flee Cuba because of human rights
20 violation, they find solace here in the U.S. and you
21 resolved to end the 61-year economic financial and
22 commercial blockade, fine, in Cuba. But you want to
23 start one in Israel. You want to start the boycott
24 divestment, which is essentially could be called a
25 commercial blockade. I'm just trying to understand

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2 how you have statements of values saying that you
3 don't want commercial blockades, they're so, so bad.
4 Education is a fundamental human right and we should
5 be creating links between groups of people and you
6 understand that bashing certain countries promotes
7 violence against the people, except with Israel. And
8 I'm just trying to get an understanding of what's
9 different about Israel than all these other countries
10 where you've made statements of support in things
11 that seem reasonable.

12 JAMES DAVIS: Council Member, I understand the
13 force of your question and trying to identify
14 contradictions even hypocrisy I think is what you're
15 getting at. And again, I'll just say again, the PSC
16 did not vote to endorse the BDS campaign and in fact,
17 it is still the policy of the PSC not to support an
18 academic boycott of Israeli universities, which was a
19 2007 Resolution that still stands.

20 I think we need to be able to hold space to
21 criticize other governments, including the Israeli
22 government and this is quite a part from questioning
23 when I've heard others say Israel's right to exist
24 right. But I think we need to be able to hold space
25 to criticize state policies and also to say in the

1
2 same breath yes, every student deserves a safe and
3 welcoming environment, as many of my colleagues and
4 students at CUNY have said today. And to combat
5 antisemitism here in New York City.

6 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: I hear that. I mean, to
7 be clear you support BDS? I mean that's not really
8 a?

9 JAMES DAVIS: Why would you say that Chair
10 Dinowitz?

11 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Because you said it.

12 JAMES DAVIS: Where have we said that?

13 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Uhm, I'm just going to
14 read what I wrote down. At a meeting -

15 JAMES DAVIS: I mean, I can save you the time.
16 There's a lot of charged language in that Resolution.

17 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: There's a lot of charged
18 language in -

19 JAMES DAVIS: The clause says that will sit and
20 discuss the boycott divestment and the sanctions
21 campaign in chapter meetings and report back about
22 those conversations. The delegate assembly by the
23 end of 2021, which is what happened.

24 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: So, a meeting where this
25 passed, you said, the Committee felt, you said the

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2 Committee felt U.S. labor orgs are complicit in the
3 crisis. You appreciate and develop in the resolution
4 the work. Your only issue was that you felt that you
5 said, your only issue that you spoke about at this
6 meeting was that you felt the members could be
7 persuaded tht this is a legitimate issue for
8 discussion. But the resolution simply states and
9 your issue was process oriented not content oriented.

10 In 2013, you were part of the American Studies
11 Association. This is what you said at the meeting.
12 You said you voted in favor of the resolution there
13 and I just think as president of union, it's really
14 incumbent upon you, to set examples for your members
15 but not elevating device of voices. This is not a
16 resolution that's - If I say, "hey, you're a
17 murderer. You're a baby killer. Lets have a chat."
18 That's not a way to have a conversation but again the
19 words not only in this resolution but of the BDS
20 movement, again, I cited examples of the BDS movement
21 creating maps of Jewish organizations. In Boston,
22 there was something similar that was reported here in
23 New York. That is not the basis for a conversation.
24 The basis for a conversation is not saying one side
25 is bad, one side is evil, let's have a chat.

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2 And I just think as a president, you have to
3 foster that environment of real dialogue and there's
4 a reason your members left and others are made
5 extremely uncomfortable and you've heard from
6 students. You've heard from faculty. It is a
7 problem throughout CUNY.

8 What steps are you taking then to continuously
9 have those conversations so that your members are
10 actually learning about what's going on and
11 understand how their language can impact the lives –
12 the language, which by the way, you acknowledge in
13 your China – the no cold war with China resolution,
14 make lives unsafe and unwelcoming for their students.

15 JAMES DAVIS: Right, you know our job as the
16 labor union is to balance the right that our members
17 have. Not just a free speech but the academic
18 freedom to express themselves on political matters
19 with the countervailing responsibility that we have
20 in classrooms and in offices to treat our students
21 and our colleagues respectfully.

22 And so, I hear that in your question and in your
23 challenge. One thing that we've been doing recently
24 Chair Dinowitz, is we've been working with the
25 faculty and staff at Queens College who were

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2 subjected at Delaney Hall to antisemitic defacement
3 of the corridor where the words KKK lives and a
4 swastika were scrawled on January 6th, which is the
5 one year – was the one year anniversary of the White
6 National Ku attempt on the U.S. Capital on that day.
7 The union has challenged that college administrations
8 inadequate response to that racist and antisemitic
9 defacement and we filed a grievance as the labor
10 union on behalf of the safety of the occupants of
11 those bills. We've been working with the TEEK
12 program and the Center for Ethnic Racial and
13 Religious Understanding on behalf of the students and
14 faculty and staff in that building.

15 There's a lot more probably that we could discuss
16 about the resolution and its consequences you know
17 for the union. On behalf of that, I'll just say that
18 every member who contacted us with an interest in
19 resigning as a result of that resolution, received
20 outreach either from a member of our executive
21 council or from a chapter chair to talk with them.
22 And we heard exactly why they were upset and we heard
23 about the pain and I have to say that you know as the
24 grandson of two Jewish people from Forest Hills
25 Queens and the son of a Jewish woman, the husband of

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2 a Jewish woman and the father therefore of two Jewish
3 daughters, not of this conversation gives me any
4 pleasure whatsoever but I do feel that there's a
5 different kind of a litmus test that evolves in a
6 conversation like the one we're holding in which,
7 fidelity to the State of Israel in itself becomes a
8 kind of litmus test for one's Jewishness and that is
9 very uncomfortable.

10 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: That's I think throughout
11 the hearing you've heard the exact opposite. And I
12 think for all the students and the professors who
13 have testified and all the Council Members, I don't
14 think any of them said being a Zionist is a litmus
15 test for being Jewish. I think what you heard and
16 what I hope you heard because I know you're a man who
17 listens. What you heard was that their voices are
18 being stifled. Not that everyone has to agree with
19 them. That is what was said and I just have to push
20 back on the notion that no one can have
21 disagreements. The disagreements that are not
22 acceptable are the ones that are dangerous and drown
23 out the voices of others and as was testified, makes
24 life more dangerous and results in the assaults of
25 Jewish students and the harassment of Jewish

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2 students. And again, we're looking forward into the
3 future. What kind of future are we making for our
4 children? What are we teaching them? Well, we're
5 teaching them it's okay. We're teaching them it's
6 okay to have voices of those you disagree with
7 drowned out and we are seeing the results of that in
8 all the statics that I mentioned in my opening
9 statements about the hate crimes and those, as Scott
10 Richman of ADL said, are just the tip of the iceberg.
11 I'm really interested to see the results of that
12 outreach that you said you did to those members that
13 resigned. How many of them came back to the union?

14 Can you unmute Mr. Davis, President Davis? Okay,
15 you're unmuted.

16 JAMES DAVIS: Thanks Council Member. Uhm, and I
17 appreciate the clarification on the last issue as
18 well. Uhm, I'm going to estimate. My estimate is
19 that approximately half of the members of the PSC who
20 initially contacted us about resigning from the union
21 in response to the June 2021 resolution. Ultimately
22 left and half remained.

23 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: And have you done; you
24 know we called it restorative justice in high school.

25 JAMES DAVIS: Hmm, hmm.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Have you done – have you
3 taken any proactive steps to welcome back the members
4 who resigned to reach out to them to get them back
5 and actually have those meaningful conversations
6 instead of more charged language which we see
7 trickling down into our faculty at CUNY?

8 JAMES DAVIS: We have and in fact, a number of
9 people, of course those who left the union haven't
10 been able to take part but uh the members who remain
11 and in fact, some have decided to run for elected
12 office. So, we now have delegates who have you know
13 have spoken out directly within delegate assembly
14 meetings indicating that they decided to run for that
15 position in response to the resolution and I think
16 that whatever position one takes about the conflict,
17 uhm, that's exactly the kind of response that we
18 need. We need people who when they see an
19 institution they're involved in, whether it's a labor
20 union or otherwise, acting adverse to their
21 interests. They get involved and they lend their
22 voice and so, you know and I think at the campus
23 level, the meetings that took place over the fall
24 semester that include a discussion about the BDS
25 campaign also included much more vigorous and broader

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2 discussion about what it means to be a social justice
3 union. Or what it means to try to inhabit a
4 workplace that is as diverse and pluralistic and it
5 is frankly a shot through with various kinds of hate
6 and prejudice as all of our workplaces are. So, we
7 take that very seriously.

8 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you. Well, I would
9 submit to you that it doesn't count as social justice
10 if you only promote social justice for some places
11 and not others. And only apply certain litmus tests
12 as I outlined on some of these other resolutions to
13 some nations and not others. I'm going to turn it
14 over to my colleague Council Member Vernikov.

15 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: My first line of
16 questioning is for Mr. Davis. Mr. Davis, how many
17 faculty members are a part of the PSC union?

18 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Can you please unmute the
19 president? You're unmuted.

20 JAMES DAVIS: Thank you Council Member Vernikov.
21 We represent 30,000 faculty and professional staff.

22 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Are any of the faculty
23 members Zionist?

24 JAMES DAVIS: I'm sure they are. There's 30,000
25 of them and it's New York City.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: And do you have a duty
3 to represent Zionist faculty members?

4 JAMES DAVIS: We have a duty to represent all of
5 our members.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: I'm asking about
7 Zionist faculty members.

8 JAMES DAVIS: Including Zionist faculty members,
9 yes, we do.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: How do you feel about
11 the delegates rallying slogans like "Zionist out of
12 CUNY?"

13 JAMES DAVIS: I'm not aware of our delegates
14 saying, "Zionists out of CUNY."

15 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: How do you feel about
16 the rallying of Zionists out of CUNY?

17 JAMES DAVIS: I think that's abhorrent and just
18 as we would protect the rights of people who are
19 critical of the State of Israel to express those
20 right publicly, we would absolutely protect the
21 rights of Zionist faculty members and staff to
22 express those views.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you. You
24 testified earlier that about 100 members of the
25 faculty resigned, is that correct?

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JAMES DAVIS: Faculty and staff.

COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: There's a list that's published online of about 300 faculty members resigning. Do you want to correct that number?

JAMES DAVIS: Uh, yes, I mean, I can only tell you what we have in our membership database here at the union. I'm not aware of the website that you're referring to. I know there have been various campaigns about resigning from the professional staff congress and people taking pledges to do that, so maybe that's what you're referencing. I'm just trying to report what I know accurately here from my union.

COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: So, is it inaccurate to say that there are 300 faculty members who resigned?

JAMES DAVIS: Yes, that's inaccurate.

COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Can you name — you testified earlier that about half of the staff members resigned came back, is that correct?

JAMES DAVIS: I'm estimating that based on — we kept a database of everyone who contacted us either requesting to resign, expressing their intentions to resign unless something else, contacting us objecting either with dismay or concern or just contacting us

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2 outright saying as of right now, I'm resigning
3 membership, all of the above and my estimate is that
4 based on those discussions, approximately half of
5 those members did end up resigning.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Can you name five
7 members who returned after resigning?

8 JAMES DAVIS: No, I'm not able to do that.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Can you name one?

10 JAMES DAVIS: No, I'm not able to give names, I'm
11 sorry.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: So, would it be
13 accurate to assume then that there are no faculty
14 members who came back after resigning?

15 JAMES DAVIS: No, that's not accurate.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: But you can't name a
17 single one of them, correct?

18 JAMES DAVIS: Correct, I will not name them.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: You testified earlier
20 that you don't support BDS, is that correct?

21 JAMES DAVIS: I don't think I testified about my
22 own personal beliefs but PSC did not vote to support
23 BDS.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Do you support BDS?
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2 JAMES DAVIS: Uhm, that's not relevant to this
3 hearing.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: I think it's very
5 relevant to this hearing.

6 JAMES DAVIS: Well, I'm not willing to disclose
7 that information in this hearing.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Well, there's a video
9 of you online publicly supporting BDS.

10 JAMES DAVIS: I'm not aware of that video and I'm
11 not aware of ever having been publicly in support of
12 BDS.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Is it your testimony
14 then that you never publicly testified to supporting
15 BDS?

16 JAMES DAVIS: I'm very confused about what you're
17 asking.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: There's a video
19 published online of you publicly supporting BDS. Are
20 you denying that you were on record supporting BDS?

21 JAMES DAVIS: I'm not, I'm just not aware of the
22 video that you're citing.

23 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Did the PSC union ever
24 pass any resolutions to condemn China?
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2 JAMES DAVIS: Condemn China, not that I'm aware
3 of.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Okay, how about Iran?

5 JAMES DAVIS: Uhm, again, not that I'm aware of.
6 I've only been PSC president for a year but I've been
7 active for longer than that. It's possible that
8 there have been condemnations of Iran but not that
9 I'm aware of.

10 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: How about North Korea?

11 JAMES DAVIS: Not that I'm aware of.

12 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: How about Saudi Arabia?

13 JAMES DAVIS: Not that I'm aware of.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: How about Russia?

15 JAMES DAVIS: Yes, Russia.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: And yes Israel,
17 correct?

18 JAMES DAVIS: Yes, Israel yes.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you.

21 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Alright, thank you Mr.
22 Chairman. President Davis, good to see you. You
23 talked about a pluralistic vision and you mentioned
24 in your initial testimony, you mentioned criticism of
25 Israel not inherently antisemitic, which by the way,

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2 it's not an out of whack position to have. One can
3 criticize Israel and not necessarily be antisemitic.
4 If they're in the practice of criticizing states
5 generally, countries generally or if they're in the
6 you know, you can criticize Israel's practice with
7 regard to uh, rain water if that's - you're in the
8 business of criticizing rain water all across the
9 world.

10 Uhm, but I think that Councilwoman Vernikov's
11 points, in particular in the last exchange, made
12 clear that PSC is not in that business. PSC uhm, or
13 certainly some members of PSC's who promoted this
14 resolution, decided that they were going to go after
15 one place and one place only. And this is not a
16 hearing as the Chairman's made clear and I agree with
17 him about foreign policy. But this is a hearing
18 about safety of children, students on New York City
19 CUNY campuses and uhm, I believe and tell me if I'm
20 wrong that your resolution refers to Israel as an
21 apartheid state. Is that true?

22 JAMES DAVIS: Uh, I think the resolution quoted
23 from the Human Rights watch - I mean quoted
24 approving, just to be clear. But yes, quoted Human
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2 Rights watch just characterizing Israel as practicing
3 apartheid.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: And your – and so, it's
5 the position of PS– I mean, I'm not sure what
6 distinction you're making as it relates to answering
7 my question. Are you saying that that's not
8 necessarily PSC's position is just quoted human
9 rights watch?

10 JAMES DAVIS: Uhm, no I mean, I think it's a
11 reasonable inference right, that if we're quoting
12 Human Rights watch that that is the PSC's position,
13 yes.

14 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: And I'm not you know, the
15 reason I asked for the clarification is I'm not in
16 the business of putting words in people's mouth, so I
17 just want to make sure that I'm getting it right.
18 This is not an attack session, it's not a McCarthy
19 hearing and we're you know in a friendly space but
20 we're just trying to really address the one situation
21 that we're here to address, which is whether or not
22 New York City students on CUNY campuses who are of
23 the Jewish faith who are identifiably Jewish and I
24 don't think it's a secret because you've alluded to
25 it. That to wear a Yamaka in New York City these

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2 days is probably putting your live at some risk and I
3 say that as someone who does wear a Yamaka in New
4 York City.

5 And so, the reason I'm asking is because we know
6 that over time over the last several years to be
7 sure, it's become more and more dangerous to be
8 Jewish on a New York City CUNY campus, do you agree
9 with that?

10 JAMES DAVIS: Yes, I do.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, do you think that
12 it's helpful to the cause of keeping Jewish students
13 safe on CUNY campuses if their teachers are out there
14 calling Israel an apartheid state?

15 JAMES DAVIS: Again, I think that there's an
16 important distinction to be made about criticizing
17 state policies of Israel right, and again, you know,
18 I've heard people on this call disagree with the
19 position but we do hold the position that there is
20 distinction between expressing those criticisms,
21 which are political criticisms and fostering or even
22 holding safe harbor for hatred and bias towards Jews.
23 The latter is abhorrent and unacceptable.

24 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Do you agree and I'm going
25 to say to you as I said to the folks who testified

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2 from CUNY. And when I say you, I don't mean you, I
3 mean you on behalf of, so I just want to be clear. I
4 don't care what you think personally. You're a nice
5 guy but you know it's not about you or me.

6 But do you believe that the criticism of Israel
7 as it is expressed in the uhm, in the resolution that
8 PSC adopted is antisemitic or you don't? And I mean,
9 does PSC believe that?

10 JAMES DAVIS: Well, it's a you know, a resolution
11 comes out of a delegate assembly and delegates are
12 elected democratically. I'm elected democratically
13 right. If I hadn't been elected, I'd still be
14 teaching English back at Brooklyn College. The
15 delegates are elected democratically. The delegates
16 voted in June 2021 to approve, the majority, to
17 approve this policy, this resolution and that's PSC
18 policy.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Okay, so I'm going to ask
20 again in a different way I guess because the point is
21 not really what you believe because again, I don't
22 care what you believe but it's about the safety of
23 students on New York City CUNY campuses and whether
24 or not the policy has stated by their teachers, by
25 their educators, uhm, causes them harm. And let's

1
2 assume that it's not antisemitic. I think it is and
3 I think that those who voted for it are antisemites
4 and I want to make sure that I'm clear about that but
5 I don't think anybody thinks that I'm not clear about
6 that but the question is whether or not espousing
7 such a view, the educators on the CUNY campuses
8 publicly saying that it is their position that Israel
9 is in apartheid state and participates in murder and
10 whatnot and all that makes students unsafe. I don't
11 care if you think if it's antisemitic or not. I do
12 but whether or not you think that that resolution
13 causes unsafe, an unsafe place for students in your
14 campuses.

15 JAMES DAVIS: Right, I mean, right Council Member
16 -

17 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: And by the way I apologize
18 Mr. President, I'm going to let you go after this
19 question, so say whatever you want because the
20 Chairman is giving me a smiling face, which means I
21 have to stop. So, go ahead and say it and you know
22 we can continue another day.

23 JAMES DAVIS: Sure and I'm glad you asked and
24 I'll try to be brief. I can't say an extent to which
25 this one resolution contributes to the lack of safety

1
2 of Jewish students on our campuses. I think it's
3 incumbent and I think we have to give credit to our
4 faculty and staff to be the professionals that they
5 are and to go into classrooms and to take their
6 responsibility seriously and if there are problems
7 with that, than there are procedures in place to
8 certainly to discipline faculty members who can't
9 uphold those responsibilities.

10 Uhm, but I also think that so far you know in the
11 hearing, I haven't heard a discussion of any other of
12 the contributing factors domestically that have
13 really contributed sharply to the uptick in
14 antisemitism on college campuses and elsewhere. The
15 Chair referred to the Charlottesville March for
16 example. Nobody has spoken about the rise in you
17 know in White Christian nationalism and that
18 contribution in antisemitism, which is a domestic
19 context we need to be thinking about if we're really
20 serious about tackling antisemitism in New York City.
21 Or the entire context of the global war on terror.

22 So, you know I take your point Council Member
23 about the contribution of the resolution to that and
24 I would just place it in the context of a number of
25 other extremely important and pervasive factors.

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2 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Thank you very much. I'm
3 just going to say as a closing thought on that last
4 sentence that I'm a New Yorker my entire life. I
5 grew up in this city, I was born here and frankly,
6 with due respect, I don't believe that White
7 nationalism is a big problem in New York City CUNY
8 campuses and if you think it is, you ought to take
9 another look at those campuses. That's not what's
10 happening there. That's not what's happening there.
11 Thank you very much.

12 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you Council Member
13 and Mr. President, I know you and I will continue to
14 have discussions and I am certainly looking forward
15 to hearing more about the engagement that you're
16 doing with your members to make it safe for them and
17 so that they make it safe for our students.

18 I'm going to call the next panel and I'm going to
19 ask that you know we're running over. You know this
20 is a very deep conversation. I know that a lot of
21 Council Members to really dig in on these questions.
22 I'm going to ask that if the panelists to the extent
23 possible, limit their time to two minutes. Of the
24 panel, the panel is going to be, it was Dr. Laura
25 Shaw Frank. She is not presently on Zoom. Amanda

1
2 Berman from Zioness, it was Layla Beckwith but Tammi
3 Rossman-Benjamin is going to be testifying on her
4 behalf. And while they are getting prepared, I do
5 want to take a moment to thank all of the staff
6 members you can't see on TV, the Sergeant at Arms,
7 the Central Staff, the ones who are sitting right
8 next to me and the ones who are taking care of the
9 Zoom. The ones who are texting all us to make sure
10 that we're on point. This hearing is taking
11 significantly longer than I think they are used to.
12 It is an important topic and so I want to extend my
13 appreciation to all of the Sergeants; like I said,
14 Sergeant at Arms and all the central staff, so thank
15 you.

16 So, first up, we have Amanda Berman and if you
17 could, two minutes please.

18 AMANDA BERMAN: I'll do my best.

19 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

20 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you.

21 AMANDA BERMAN: Really quickly. First of all, I
22 want to thank you Chair Dinowitz and the Committee
23 for hosting this critical dialogue. There are so
24 many important angles to discuss, so I'm going to
25 focus just on the unique experience and insight that

1
2 I have, which is the genesis of antizionism. Why it
3 is antisemitism, especially as it is experienced by
4 students on New York City campuses.

5 I'm Amanda Berman, I'm a New York based Civil
6 Rights Attorney and the founder and Executive
7 Director of the Zioness Movement, a domestic social
8 justice activist organization mobilizing progressive
9 Jews and our allies in the fight for social, racial,
10 economic, gender and environmental justice in
11 America.

12 Zioness launched after a number of high profile
13 incidents in progressive organizing and coalition
14 building spaces, very similar to whats going on at
15 CUNY and on other campuses, in which Jews were
16 targeted with litmus tests and, sometimes, outright,
17 vitriolic antisemitism, as, quote-unquote,
18 "Zionists." Before pivoting my career to build
19 Zioness full-time, I worked as an attorney who helped
20 victims of antisemitism, including its contemporary
21 manifestation in anti-Zionism know their rights, and
22 enforce them legally.

23 One of the cases I am most proud to have worked
24 on was a groundbreaking pair of lawsuits against San
25 Francisco State University. The case was settled on

1
2 terms that are exceedingly relevant to my testimony
3 today as the university issued a public statement
4 recognizing that "for many Jews, Zionism is an
5 important part of their identity."

6 The litigation set a crucial precedent that is
7 urgent for this committee, which is that college
8 campuses that do not recognize the fundamental,
9 inarguable fact that Zionism is intrinsic and
10 inseparable from Jewish identity, for the vast
11 majority of Jews in the world, and actively protect
12 Jewish and Israeli students and faculty members from
13 antisemitism that targets Jews as Zionists, will be
14 vulnerable to similar lawsuits.

15 I'm going to skip something and just say that
16 there are those on college campus in progressive
17 movements and beyond to argue that antizionism is not
18 antisemitism because it is simply criticism of Israel
19 or advocacy for the Palestinian people. I genuinely
20 wish this were true as I personally criticize Israel
21 frequently and believe verdantly in the Palestinians
22 people right to self-determination but the claim is
23 fundamentally wrong.

24 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

25 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you.

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AMANDA BERMAN: Really?

CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Yeah, yeah, yeah, it's pretty quick but certainly ensure that you're submitting your written testimony and thank you. The next speaker is Tammi Rossman-Benjamin.

SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

TAMMI ROSSMAN-BENJAMIN: Good afternoon and apologies, I'm struggling with some voice issues, so please let me know if you can't hear me.

CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: You're good, thank you.

TAMMI ROSSMAN-BENJAMIN: My name is Tammy Rossman-Benjamin, Director of AMCHA Initiative, which investigates antisemitism on U.S. campuses. Thank you for inviting me to testify. Our studies have shown that the majority of incidents targeting Jewish students for harassment nationally are led to the victims perceived support for Israel. This is also true at CUNY where most acts of harassment are Israel related and these have more than doubled over the last year. Most incidents of Israel related harassment including those associated with the Zionist and out of CUNY campaign are compliant with an academic boycott of Israel or academic BDS whose official guidelines demand efforts to ensure that

1
2 Israel isn't normalized on college campuses. And
3 often involves behavior that excludes tuition pro-
4 Israel students from campus life. While the presence
5 of anti-Zionist student groups have strongly linked
6 to Israel related harassment both nationally and at
7 CUNY. All that's familiar but more enduring source
8 of antisemitism are academic BDS supporting faculty.

9 While faculty would like to support a boycott as
10 private citizens, our studies provide strong evidence
11 that many faculty are bringing the boycotts anti-
12 normalization campaigns into their classrooms and
13 departmental events, which in turn insights
14 harassment. Schools with academic BDS supporting
15 faculty are in fact five times more likely to have
16 incidents of Israel related harassment. Given that a
17 number of CUNY faculty are using their positions and
18 public resources to engage in academic BDS compliant
19 behavior that harms Jewish students.

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

21 AMANDA BERMAN: Thank you.

22 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you and again, I'll
23 say it to everyone, I encourage you to submit your
24 written testimony which can be submitted 72 hours, up
25

1
2 to 72-hours after this hearing. Uhm, uh, the next
3 witness, Dr. Laura Shaw Frank.

4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

5 RENI FIELD: Hi everyone. My name is Reni
6 Fields, I'm stepping in for Laura as she is on a
7 plane back from Israel right now. I'm a Young
8 Leadership Associate at AJC New York. I work with
9 college students and high school students, so I will
10 be reading Dr. Shaw Frank's testimony.

11 AJC works with campus administrators all over the
12 United States to help them ensure that their campuses
13 are safe places for Jewish students while remaining
14 places where freedom of speech is protected and
15 treasured. We are proud and gratified that CUNY
16 Chancellor and Vice Chancellor, President Rob of
17 Hunter College President Wu of Queens College and
18 President Anderson of Brooklyn College attended our
19 recent university president summit on combating
20 antisemitism. Which AJC co-organized with Hillel
21 International and ACE, the American Council on
22 Education.

23 We hope that we can continue to be of assistance
24 to CUNY as it works to combat antisemitism in its
25 university community. We recommend that CUNY take

1
2 the following steps to reverse the alarming trends we
3 are witnessing. First, protection of and sensitivity
4 towards Jewish students as well as combating
5 antisemitism must be part of the DEI strategy of the
6 University system. CUNY cannot combat antisemitism
7 without educating its community to have a full
8 understanding of what it is. Training on
9 antisemitism must be included among any series of
10 acquired DEI trainings for students, faculty and
11 staff at CUNY.

12 Faculty and staff should be trained to know how
13 to respond when Jewish students are excluded,
14 marginalized and/or harassed into their perceived or
15 real support of Israel. Second, Jewish students must
16 know that they have the support of the
17 administration. This means that administrators
18 should regularly check with Jewish students, whether
19 Hillel or other Jewish organizations and clubs. I
20 know we have heard testimony from CUNY administrators
21 that this is already happening. It should continue
22 and administrators should ensure that they are
23 reaching a wide variety of Jewish students on CUNY
24 campuses.

25

1
2 It also means that Jewish students must have a
3 clear and transparent understanding –

4 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

5 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you so much. Thank
6 you so much an again, I'll say to everyone, submit
7 your testimony in writing. I just have one quick
8 question for Amanda because this often comes up. Can
9 you give a 15-second primer for Amanda Berman on why
10 you say antizionism is antisemitism. Like, how would
11 a student like defend themselves if – verbally, why
12 antizionism is antisemitism. You're going to be
13 unmuted in a sec, don't worry. There you go.

14 AMANDA BERMAN: Thank you. So, people need to
15 understand what Zionism means to the Jewish people.
16 Zionism is the liberation and self-determination of
17 the Jewish people. It's not political. It's not
18 about the conflict. Uhm, and so, for people to
19 understand what antizionism is they have to
20 understand what Zionism means to the vast majority of
21 Jews in the world and how it manifest on college
22 campuses, regardless of peoples intentions. There
23 are people who call themselves antizionist, who don't
24 actually know necessarily what it means but the core
25 tenant of BDS, which we've been talking about

1
2 throughout the hearing is anti-normalization. It's
3 about shutting down anyone who normalizes the
4 existence of the Jewish state of Israel. It's about
5 targeting people who identify as Zionist, which again
6 is the vast majority of Jews in the world.

7 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Got it.

8 AMANDA BERMAN: So -

9 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: No, I think that that was
10 a great elevator pitch that's very helpful. I think
11 articulating like that is very helpful for our
12 college students who need to be able to articulate
13 that. It's very difficult. I thank this panel for
14 their testimony. I'm going to call the next panel.
15 We have one question from Council Member Vernikov.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: My question is for Ms.
17 Rossman. Ms. Rossman, does your organization AMCHA,
18 do any research regarding the correlation of
19 existence of groups like SJP or specifically SJP and
20 antisemitism on CUNY campuses or any campuses,
21 college campuses in New York City.

22 TAMMI ROSSMAN-BENJAMIN: Yes, can you hear me?

23 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: We can hear you.

24 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Yes.
25

1
2 TAMMI ROSSMAN-BENJAMIN: Good question. Thank
3 you. Yes, we have done lots of research. In fact
4 almost every piece of research that we've done looks
5 at the contribution of antizionist student groups to
6 acts that target students for harassment and all of
7 our studies between seven and eight times the
8 likelihood of having such acts of harassment on
9 campuses, whether active SJP or other antizionist
10 student groups.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: So, you're saying your
12 organization found that the more active SJP or an
13 antizionist organization on a campus, the worst
14 antisemitism. Is that correct?

15 TAMMI ROSSMAN-BENJAMIN: Pretty much. I mean,
16 it's the mere presence of an active group leads to or
17 is likely to lead to. But more than that, the
18 actual, the existence of the acts themselves in a
19 great many cases actually are the perpetrator was a
20 member of or the antizionist student group.

21 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you. Thank you so
22 much. Our next panel, we'll have Allyah Jacobson,
23 Michael Goldstein, Jeffrey Lax, and Timothy Jackson.
24 Two minutes each. Oh you're in person Mark Holland.
25 So, Mark Holland come on down and just to remind

1
2 people testifying, it's two minutes and a few days
3 after this hearing, they're going to post all the
4 written testimony that has been submitted online.
5 SO, it will be available at Legistar attached to this
6 hearing. So, everything that is submitted in
7 writing, if you don't get to speak about, it will be
8 there online for everyone to see. So, we'll start
9 with Aliyah Jacobson.

10 ALIYAH JACOBSON: Hello and thank you for having
11 this hearing. I just graduated from Brooklyn
12 College. The first few years were incredible but the
13 last two years were very triggering and uhm, led to a
14 lot of PTSD. I graduated [INAUDIBLE 5:56:40] to file
15 a complaint. It took days to figure out where it was
16 and when I asked Vice President Ronald Jackson to sit
17 down with him and the president, he said he had
18 already sat down with the Hillel Director and other
19 people, he didn't need to sit down with me.

20 In 2018 when I confronted [INAUDIBLE 5:56:57],
21 members of students were just in Palestine,
22 confronted my countering by parking their [INAUDIBLE
23 5:57:02] called me a murderer and brainwashed and
24 stream calls for intifada for 2.5 hours. When I
25 wrote emails to President Anderson and Vice President

1
2 Anthony Brown, I was ignored. I felt like a target.
3 I also volunteer for the Brooklyn Colleges newspaper
4 and the last article; I was slammed and I'm going to
5 read the statement now that I was slammed for and
6 humiliated. And when I was told that this was very
7 detrimental to my mental health, they said, please
8 get therapy, there's nothing we can do it's
9 journalism.

10 I'm going to read this. Dear Aliyah Jacobson,
11 The Office of Diversity and Equity Programs has
12 reviewed the allegations in your Report of Alleged
13 Misconduct from CUNY's Legal Affairs and General
14 Counsel's Office. We have also reviewed the report
15 filed on May 7, 2022, with the Office of Public
16 Safety at Brooklyn College. You stated the
17 following: "On May 4, 2021, Students for Justice in
18 Palestine wrote on their Instagram as a response to
19 our Israeli Independence Day Celebration on the quad,
20 "Zionists are not welcome on campus. Everyone is
21 welcome on campus".

22 This wouldn't be written about any other minority
23 group or accepted. This is when I shared something I
24 shouldn't have on Bulldogs for Israel as the official
25 president of the club, they had an Arab man call me

1
2 in the middle of the night to scare me and ask to sit
3 down and talk and if I could cook for him. Where
4 they got my number from is beyond. The post I shared
5 on Bulldogs for Israel was, there was some things in
6 there that should have been better qualified.

7 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

8 ALIYAH JACOBSON: Then later, this Director of
9 ten year [INAUDIBLE 5:58:32] blocked me from my
10 Instagram account so I could not apologize. CUNY
11 student gov- Brooklyn government -

12 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Wrap it up please.

13 ALIYAH JACOBSON: Released a statement call for
14 violence. And can I just have one more minute?

15 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: You could take a few more
16 seconds but we need to get to the next witness
17 please.

18 ALIYAH JACOBSON: And so my club was suspended
19 and when I reported the misconduct to judicial
20 affairs and student government, they fought for it
21 for a while and then it was unsuspended and so, they
22 said, well the statements were hurtful - well, I
23 said, while the statements have been hurtful this is
24 the general attitude and conduct held in campus.

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2 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you. Thank you and
3 I encourage you to – you know, I know you have a lot
4 to say and you know I don't want to discount your
5 trauma or experience and that's why I encourage you
6 to send in. I think you have actually sent in your
7 testimony –

8 ALIYAH JACOBSON: I have.

9 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: And that will be posted
10 online. Thank you. Our next witness is Michael
11 Goldstein.

12 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

13 MICHAEL GOLDSTEIN: Thank you all so much for
14 having me today. It's been a long time coming. My
15 name is Mike Goldstein, I'm from Kingsborough
16 Community College. I've been there for 23-years.
17 I've been at CUNY for 32-years. My father was at
18 CUNY for 50 years. My mother was at CUNY for 43-
19 years, making us all together more than 100 years at
20 CUNY. I had come from a CUNY family, I'm also a
21 graduate of CUNY Law School. So, what I'm going to
22 be talking about is really about my personal
23 experience at CUNY.

24 Everything I walk into my office at Kingsborough
25 Community College, I draw inspiration from a picture

1
2 of my father, the former president and the former
3 acting Chancellor of CUNY for more than 30-years.
4 Yet, in the last few years, antisemites turned my
5 father's photo from a source of inspiration to a
6 symbol of destruction. The vandalism marked the
7 start of a systemic and pernicious campaign in which
8 I had been targeted and harassed because of who I am
9 and what I believe. Guys, it is horrible for Jews at
10 CUNY. I am just telling you that. I've worked at
11 Kingsborough for more than 23-years and within the
12 City University for more than 30-years and the
13 antisemitic vandalism and death threats to me
14 perpetrated outside my office three years were unlike
15 anything I've ever experienced before. The reason
16 for the attack, I'm Jewish politically, conservative
17 and I believe in Zionism, the Civil Rights Movement
18 of the Jewish people and that's why they attacked me
19 and these were fellow faculty who I never met in my
20 entire life. Members of the PSC CUNY and these
21 people were horrible. PSC and PFC because they had
22 an offshoot at our college that they funded and
23 organized to attack other faculty.

24 The vandalized the face the photo of my father
25 with antisemitic graffiti including the words F-

1
2 Trump, Goldstein killed a Zionist entity. I later
3 learned that the incident came one day after
4 Kingsborough Professor Koch Perea (SP?) apparently
5 told the administrator who refused to request to fire
6 me, "I guess I will have to handle this myself."
7 Perea, who I had never met or spoken to as a member
8 of the Forget Progressive Faculty Caucus, a radical
9 faculty group supported by the PFC Mr. James Davis's
10 group.

11 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

12 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you.

13 MICHAEL GOLDSTEIN: Okay, guys, thank you so much
14 and do whatever you can. We really need your help.

15 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you, our next
16 testimony is going to come from Jeffrey Lax, two
17 minutes.

18 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

19 JEFFREY LAX: Thank you so much Chair Dinowitz
20 and Council Member Vernikov. My name is Jeffrey Lax.
21 I'm a Professor and the Department Chair at
22 Kingsborough. Several Council Members today spoke of
23 a PSC CUNY faculty rally demanding Zionism out of
24 CUNY. That means me out of CUNY. So, watch our own
25 union reps quite literally marching to get their own

1
2 Zionist Jewish members ejected from the University is
3 horrifying. It is stunning to me to hear James Davis
4 deny that this happened.

5 He knows, not only what happened, that it
6 happened and he knows who made it happen because I
7 know who made it happen and if I know, then the
8 president of the union knows. His testimony was
9 outrageous.

10 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Sir, can you just - can
11 you please - respectfully can you please focus on
12 your experience and not any of the other testimony
13 you've heard from any of the other witnesses please.
14 Thank you.

15 JEFFREY LAX: He testified that he sent everyone
16 who resigned from the union, which I'm included, a
17 call or a letter asking them what their issue was and
18 to come back. I never got a call, so that was false.
19 That's directly me with respect Councilman.

20 What is Zionism? For me, like for many Jews,
21 Zionism is a deeply religious belief that connects
22 the Jewish people to the land of Israel. It's in the
23 bible. The 16, 13 commandments, require Israel.
24 That's what religion is. For some Jews, it's an
25 integral part of their ethnicity.

1
2 One Council Member declared Zionism to be a
3 political debate over land 8,000 miles away. That is
4 patently false and it's a pretext to discriminate
5 against people like me.

6 Today's discussion has nothing to do with policy
7 across the world. It has to do with how Zionist
8 students and faculty are treated here on our campus
9 for being Zionist. It's sad that CUNY doesn't
10 understand that crucial difference. Two Vice
11 Chancellors today themselves refer to the way Jews
12 are treated here at CUNY as a political debate. This
13 is not a political debate. It's a discussion of how
14 Zionist people are discriminated against here at
15 CUNY. Pulling out political is taking the point of
16 the other side who is discriminating against us.
17 There is intolerance for Zionists and observant Jews
18 at CUNY today. You heard two Vice Chancellors today
19 down right refuse to even state whether -

20 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

21 JEFFREY LAX: Zionism is a protected class at
22 CUNY. That tells you all you need to know about why
23 CUNY has failed so miserably in addressing this
24 problem.

25 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you.

1
2 JEFFREY LAX: Very few to admit that Zionism is
3 protected at CUNY, is a departure from City, State
4 and Federal laws.

5 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you.

6 JEFFREY LAX: And I would urge the Vice
7 Chancellor to concede before they leave today that
8 Zionism is a protected class under religion,
9 ethnicity and nationality at CUNY.

10 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you very much.

11 JEFFREY LAX: And if they don't do that - Zionist
12 student victim supposed to go if they have a
13 complaint for being discriminated against for being a
14 Zionist. I'm sorry, I tried to cut it down.

15 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you. Thank you for
16 your testimony and again, and I know you've been back
17 and forth with this issue, uhm, and I know it's been
18 very hard for you over the past many years. Again, I
19 encourage you to submit your written testimony.

20 Next, we have Timothy Jackson - Mark Holland.

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

22 MARK HOLLAND: We are coordinated. I'm here
23 because of Tim Jackson. I beg your indulgence at the
24 end of a sleek stark day.

1
2 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Just go ahead and start
3 your testimony sir.

4 MARK HOLLAND: I revised my notes. Have you ever
5 heard so much academic, bureaucratic breather and
6 bologna and hogwash and double talk? The three
7 administrators seemed so impotent to do anything in
8 their leadership and ability. And the fish rots down
9 from the head. Okay.

10 I am one of the Professors of Music that Barry
11 Weiner mentioned and I'm a friend of Tim Jackson who
12 will speak to you soon. The basic issue I would say
13 is, why don't we divest and defund. Let's use their
14 language against them. Let's divest and defund
15 money. We, the taxpayers should not be forced to
16 subsidize involuntarily such Jew hatred in our own
17 public institutions. All taxpayer money going to
18 CUNY's individual schools and departments including
19 the Administration we just heard, that should
20 immediately be suspended and withheld from payment by
21 the City of New York, namely you, until further
22 notice. Let us leverage the issue where it effects
23 and hurts the haters.

24 Antisemitism is a metastasizing institutional
25 cancer at CUNY. Here, I'm proposing a kind of

1
2 chemotherapy to treat the illness. Let's see how
3 they function without money from the three million or
4 so Jews, taxpayers all who inhabit the five boroughs.
5 Let's defend CUNY. This antisemitism is especially
6 outrageous considering that CUNY was conceived of,
7 built and implemented underwritten, funded and paid
8 for by civic minded Jews and Jewish intellectuals in
9 the last century. Many of the greatest teachers and
10 graduates in the history of CUNY were Jewish or of
11 Jewish origins and now there 25,000 Jews at CUNY who
12 identify as Jewish.

13 You left out a few of the Jew hating
14 organizations by the way Hamas, CARE, Council on
15 American Relations, Free Palestine Decolonize, all of
16 them have set up cozily at CUNY. Oh please, oh.
17 Okay, they're supported and all decent standards of
18 impartiality have been thrown out the window. This
19 is precisely what happened in the early stages of the
20 lead up World War II Germany, under the Nazi's before
21 the slaughter of the millions of Jews in that very
22 Germany and the rest of Europe. The same kind of
23 talk, the same kind of behavior, attitude, denial.

24 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: You can wrap it up sir,
25 thank you.

1
2 MARK HOLLAND: Actions, the taking over the
3 academies, the purging of Jewish professions and
4 intellectuals cost so many of them to lose their jobs
5 and to flee Europe and come to America. How did that
6 work out for us?

7 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you. Thank you.

8 MARK HOLLAND: Now I yield to my friend Tim
9 Jackson, Professor of Music at University North
10 Texas, Denton who is involved in a major lawsuit on
11 this matter.

12 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Alright, thank you Mr. I
13 guess Professor Jackson.

14 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

15 TIMOTHY JACKSON: Hello, thank you. I have a
16 question to address to especially to Robin Garrell
17 and to Glenda Grace.

18 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: So, just to be clear, the
19 witnesses are testifying. They are not asking
20 questions of the Administration. You can share your
21 testimony and share your questions.

22 TIMOTHY JACKSON: So, will CUNY continue to
23 become a post truth antisemitic university? That's
24 my question.

1
2 In July 2020, faculty and graduates of the Hunter
3 College CUNY doctoral program in music, organized a
4 national censor resolution condemning music theater
5 Henry Schenker and all those who defended him as
6 "racist". But professor Philip Yule of Hunter was
7 just the tip of a much larger spear. Its shaft being
8 a group of enablers including department heads,
9 school administrators and music faculty at CUNY and
10 throughout the U.S.. So that CUNY itself became
11 complicit in scholarly fraud. This censure
12 resolution provides a clear example of the harassment
13 of Jewish professor for objecting to antisemitic
14 conspiracy theories.

15 One of the most appalling and promiscuous claims
16 published in an article posted by CUNY on the
17 graduate center website is that Schenker "supported
18 the White Supremacist and German nationalist
19 movements that presaged Hitler." In fact, Schenker
20 condemned Nazi's in as early as 1923 and again in
21 1933 and he never supported nor endorsed any proto
22 Nazi movements.

23 Published in such assertion, stings CUNY's
24 reputation as a serious research university and by
25 the way, I'm a graduate at CUNY's doctorate program.

1
2 Another clear indication of [INAUDIBLE 6:09:46]
3 difference or two or blindness towards antisemitism.
4 This silenced on the problem of antisemitism in hip
5 hop and rap music and his advocacy of using hip hop
6 and rap in music classes to discuss racism. Yule has
7 described writer -

8 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

9 TIMOTHY LAX: As an antiracist predecessor of
10 today's hip hop and rap artists.

11 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you for your, thank
12 you for your verbal testimony and I encourage you to
13 again submit it online.

14 TIMOTHY LAX: Okay.

15 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Okay, I would also uhm,
16 yeah, yeah, he's holding up the paper but if you
17 submit via at testimony@council.nyc.gov, then it will
18 be included in the record online for everyone to see.
19 Thank you so much for your testimony.

20 Our next panel includes Edwin Scott Fruehwald who
21 is not currently on Zoom, Rafaella Gunz, Jordy Gross,
22 Allegra Timsit. And we're going to start with
23 Rafaella Gunz.

24 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.
25

1
2 RAFAELLA GUNZ: Hi, my name is Rafaella Gunz, I
3 am a lifelong New Yorker and I was a student at CUNY
4 School of Law for one semester in 2019. I am a
5 progressive person. I identify as bisexual. I am a
6 feminist and I was not welcomed by my class which
7 included the aforementioned commencement speaker that
8 just spoke this year. In fact, there was a culture
9 of isolation and discrimination against me. I was
10 iced out. I was gossiped about and when I wrote
11 about my experience for the Jewish journal, which was
12 published in early 2020, I was deemed a racist, I was
13 deemed a stalker. I was deemed an Islamophob, a
14 harasser. All these types of things and this all
15 started because I said on Twitter that sometimes
16 antisemites make me want to move to Israel. Because
17 I said that benign statement in support of Israel, I
18 was labeled all these things. I was iced out on
19 campus. No one wanted to have a discussion with me
20 because that would be normalization, as was mentioned
21 earlier in these testimonies and I ended up leaving
22 the school and transferring to Yeshiva University
23 where I'm now about to graduate with a masters in
24 social work.

1
2 I left CUNY even though I'm a New Yorker and this
3 institution is supposed to represent me and went to a
4 Jewish institution because I feared for my own
5 physical and mental wellbeing. Every day that I went
6 into CUNY Law was a challenge for myself. As I felt
7 the glares of students in disapproval as I read their
8 comments about me online. After I left, they started
9 a petition denouncing people like me, saying that
10 there's a subset of Zionist student activists who
11 seek to weaponize antisemitism. I was the only
12 Zionist activist as far as I know and the Jewish
13 student law school association, the student
14 association of Jewish law students, is the only
15 antizionist one in the entire country.

16 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

17 RAFAELLA GUNZ: Please take that into
18 consideration.

19 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you for your
20 testimony. Next, we have Jordy Gross.

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

22 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: You're unmuted. Alright,
23 Jodi, we're going to come back to you. The next
24 speaker is Allegra Timsit.

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

1
2 ALLEGRA TIMSIT: Hi everyone. Good afternoon.
3 First of all, I want to thank you all for having me
4 here and listening to all of our stories. I know
5 it's long.

6 My name is Allegra Timsit and I'm currently a
7 rising senior at CUNY Brooklyn College. I'm the Vice
8 President of Simon Wiesenthal Center Government
9 Advocacy Alumni Association and I'm also the
10 President of United for Israel, which is our pro-
11 [INAUDIBLE 6:13:18] Brooklyn College Campus, as well
12 as the President of the Israeli Independence Day
13 Committee. Pretty much anything pro-Israel on
14 Brooklyn Campus, I am your go to person but life as a
15 pro-Israel Jewish student on college campuses, more
16 specifically Brooklyn college is not candy and
17 rainbows.

18 This past May as Michael mentioned before, I
19 organized the Israeli and Stay Fare on the west part
20 of my campus. We showcase different cultures. There
21 are more - there are in Israel such as Moracin's,
22 Iraqis, Christians, Jews and many more. While during
23 my event, one of my current Jewish professors came up
24 to me asking me where the Palestinian representation
25 was at my event. A very reasonable question. So, I

1
2 simply pointed at the back gate where the students
3 called, Students for Justice at Palestine as well as
4 the members of [INAUDIBLE 6:14:50] decide to have
5 their involvement affair and that's where it was
6 going to be. Students were chanting things like,
7 "from the river to the sea, Palestine will be free.
8 Hey, hey, ho, ho, Zionism has got to go and even
9 posting on Instagram pictures from the rally with a
10 caption. "We showed Brooklyn College yesterday that
11 Zionism is not welcome on our campus." Meaning that
12 by their standards, I as well as many other students,
13 are not welcome at Brooklyn College Campus.

14 While we were celebrating, they were attempting
15 violence on our campus. Police and security were at
16 high alert that day to make sure that nothing became
17 physical like years prior. When it came time to my
18 club creating a new flag for the upcoming semester,
19 we decided that we need to create something that did
20 not scream Israel, so that students felt safer to put
21 on their laptops. We created this, a for with united
22 and Israel but smaller.

23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

24 ALLEGRA TIMSIT: To keep the Israel students
25 [INAUDIBLE 6:15:45] because that is what it's come

1
2 down to on my campus. I shake when it comes down to
3 the first day of classes, when I have to explain that
4 I'm a Jew and the President of United for Israel.

5 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you.

6 ALLEGRA TIMSIT: And when preparing for this
7 testimony – can I just have one more minute.

8 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: You can have 20 more
9 seconds.

10 ALLEGRA TIMSIT: Okay, so when I was preparing
11 for this testimony, I asked my friends to come
12 testify as well and each and every one of them were
13 scared to do it because of the repercussions of
14 antisemitism on our campus and beyond. I just want
15 to share some of their stories that they –

16 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Since – I'm counting in my
17 head, ten seconds left. I would recommend that you
18 share those stories in writing and we'll put them and
19 again, they'll be on Legistar, which is our online
20 system attached to the minutes of this hearing.

21 I'm going to try to go back to Jordy Gross.
22 There were audio issues.

23 JORDY GROSS: Yeah, can you hear me now?

24 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: We sure can.

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

1
2 JORDY GROSS: Okay, great. Sorry about that.
3 Yes, my name is Jordy and I'm the President of Hillel
4 City College. I wanted to share an experience that I
5 had last year. A few people mentioned that last year
6 during the tension between Israel and Gaza in May,
7 there was a lot of stuff going on on social media and
8 part of that was actually the City College, student
9 government and Department of Student Life posted
10 things saying save Palestine and condemning the acts
11 of genocide occurring in Palestine and I felt like it
12 was alienating the Jewish community and I felt like
13 the Jewish voices – well Jewish students were really
14 feeling like their voices weren't being reflected in
15 the things that the school was posting, so I in turn
16 like posted a response on behalf of Hillel. In
17 which, it was basically an invitation for open and
18 respectful dialogue and basically in return the
19 comments like blew up. A lot of them were lovely and
20 supportive and a lot of them were just incredibly
21 hateful, telling me that our organization isn't
22 Jewish, we just have a nationalist agenda.

23 Telling me that I personally am in an oppressor
24 of Palestinian people and I remember even speaking to
25 a Jewish student who saw my post and he told me how

1
2 much he appreciated it but he was too afraid to come
3 and show support because he didn't know how people
4 would react, if people would be aggressive and to me,
5 like that's the craziest part that there were
6 students who were afraid to have their voices heard
7 because they thought it could put them in physical
8 danger.

9 So, I'll end by just saying that I'm very
10 thankful that during that time, you know as horrible
11 as it has been, I'm very thankful that we weren't on
12 campus in person because I think that a lot of Jewish
13 students would not have felt safe being on campus.
14 Uhm, and I also add that uhm, thank God, I think this
15 is an example; at least for me personally. For me
16 personally, I can say that my time at City College
17 has been really positive and usually I feel safe and
18 to me this is very reflective of the fact that in
19 just an instant that really changed very quickly and
20 because of something that was happening 6,000 miles
21 away. Which I think shows like the fact that even in
22 places where we think are really good -

23 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Time expired.

24

25

1
2 JORDY GROSS: Really can change and because of
3 things that are beyond our control. So, that's all.
4 Thank you.

5 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you for your
6 testimony. I'm going to turn it to Council Member
7 Vernikov who has a question.

8 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: A few. I'll be quick.
9 Rafaella, my question is for Rafaella Gunz.

10 RAFAELLA GUNZ: Yes.

11 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Ms. Gunz, did you ever
12 complain about what happened to you to anyone at CUNY
13 Law?

14 RAFAELLA GUNZ: Uh, yes, I complained to the Dean
15 of students on multiple occasions actually.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Did you ever put your
17 complaints in writing?

18 RAFAELLA GUNZ: I - I mean, I wrote a whole
19 article about everything that happened to me. I
20 wrote a bullet point list that was sent to Alyza
21 Lewin with the Brandeis Center of every antisemitic
22 incident that I experienced on the campus.

23 I have emails documenting that I did go and
24 complain to the Dean of Students but I do not have
25 anything formal that I wrote for them, no.

1
2 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Did anything happen as
3 a result of your complaints?

4 RAFAELLA GUNZ: Uhm, no, I was just told it was
5 free speech of course, you know.

6 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Is there an active SJP
7 at the CUNY Law School?

8 RAFAELLA GUNZ: Apparently there was not until a
9 certain [INAUDIBLE 6:20:06] showed up on campus.

10 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: So, just to be, we're not
11 here to talk about any individual, other students.

12 RAFAELLA GUNZ: Okay, I apologize, I'm just
13 saying from my experience and I was told that there
14 was not an active SJP present and that changed when I
15 got to campus and I was in the same class as the
16 certain commencement speaker that was talked about
17 earlier in the hearing.

18 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Ms. Gunz, how did this
19 harassment that took place against you at CUNY Law
20 affect your studies?

21 RAFAELLA GUNZ: Uh, I did really poorly. I'm
22 typically a very good student but it was very hard to
23 focus. It was very distracting. I had to leave
24 class multiple times because I was having panic
25

1
2 attacks and I ended up almost failing out of the
3 school actually.

4 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: I'm very sorry to hear
5 that. Was there anyone at all on campus in terms of
6 administration who came to your defense?

7 RAFAELLA GUNZ: No. In fact, the administration
8 supported the actions of the students.

9 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: And so was there any
10 action taken as a result of your complaints.

11 RAFAELLA GUNZ: No, I think everyone just doubled
12 down. The petition I mentioned in my testimony
13 received the signatures of the dean that I complained
14 to of two of my professors of numerous student groups
15 on campus. No one was on my side.

16 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: And while you were at
17 CUNY Law, did you feel physically safe?

18 RAFAELLA GUNZ: No.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER VERNIKOV: Thank you.

20 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you Council Member
21 Vernikov. Our next and last panel is Lisa Rubin,
22 Michael Mantell, Steve Greenbaum and Mormazelle
23 Barton who is not currently on Zoom.

24 So, first we'll hear from Lisa Rubin.

25 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

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2 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Lisa, you're unmuted.
3 We're going to come back to you Lisa Rubin. We're
4 going to go to Michael - Lisa.

5 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

6 LISA RUBIN: Yeah.

7 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Oh, alright, hi Lisa. We
8 hear you.

9 LISA RUBIN: Okay, just please give me one minute
10 warning when my one minute is up or whatever.

11 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Sure, I will do that.
12 Alright, you may begin.

13 LISA RUBIN: Good afternoon Chair Dinowitz,
14 members of the Committee. My name is Lisa Rubin, I'm
15 completing my second year as an evening student at
16 CUNY Law where I feel honored to attend but I am
17 deeply troubled that some recent developments at the
18 school threatened with goals of the school and the
19 university.

20 These developments include the BDS resolution
21 against Israel as sponsored by the student government
22 and ratified by its faculty council because if
23 implemented it would harm more than the many current
24 and respective members of the schools Jewish and pro-
25 Israel community. It would also set a harmful

1
2 precedent that weakens the protection of the first
3 amendment and academic freedom on this as well as
4 other campuses.

5 This is especially the case where as here,
6 members of the student government and faculty council
7 also had seats on committees that make decisions on
8 the school personnel admissions and other official
9 matters.

10 SERGEANT AT ARMS: One minute.

11 LISA RUBIN: Please note that I do not claim to
12 speak for the entire Jewish community at the school.
13 I will just address how I am impacted by the
14 resolution. As a Jewish student who believes in
15 Israel's right to exist as a Jewish state but also as
16 a member of a family that fought against government
17 suppression here in the USA, I was shaken when I
18 realized that the resolutions incredibly broad sweep;
19 it was a nightmare or I was wondering, am I seeing a
20 form of creeping McCarthyism albeit one wrapped in
21 the cloth of what is now labeled antizionism.

22 After all, the resolution, if implemented would
23 harm so many people who are or are perceived as being
24 Jewish, pro-Israel, having worked or planning to work
25 at an Israel University or cultural institution

1
2 including having presented or planning to present a
3 lecture there. Having done or planning to do
4 business in Israel or having links to any persons in
5 these categories.

6 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

7 LISA RUBIN: The rights of students on campus
8 clubs with similarly suspected ties could also be
9 jeopardized.

10 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you.

11 LISA RUBIN: It is noted that CUNY in one of its
12 earlier permutations as the City College of New York
13 already endured such a wide broom sweep.

14 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you Ms. Rubin.

15 LISA RUBIN: Community and -

16 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Can you hear me?

17 LISA RUBIN: Constitutional and academic.

18 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Perhaps you can not hear
19 me. I want to thank you for your testimony.

20 LISA RUBIN: Faculty and staff members and
21 students were dismissed based on a -

22 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Hello?

23 LISA RUBIN: Or had links -

24 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Ms. Rubin?
25

1
2 LISA RUBIN: To those who were or perceived as
3 being communists. Now, at the school where the focus

4 -

5 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Lisa, can you hear me?

6 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Ms. Rubin?

7 LISA RUBIN: The approach would be easily similar
8 with the implementation of the above EDS resolution.

9 Just substitute -

10 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Lisa?

11 LISA RUBIN: For communism.

12 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Lisa?

13 LISA RUBIN: To protect the freedoms and rights
14 that we all cherish.

15 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Ms. Rubin, do you hear us?

16 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: I'm going to guess that
17 her speakers are off, which is why she had trouble
18 logging on before and we're going to move on to the
19 next speaker and just so everyone whose watching
20 knows she does - I did speak with her earlier, she
21 does know to submit her testimony in writing.

22 The next speaker is Michael Mantell.

23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

24 MICHAEL MANTELL: Hello, thank you for this
25 opportunity. I'll be sharing a small sample of many

1
2 instances and statements made in mandatory classes,
3 at on campus events and of course readings endorsed
4 by the student government and shared by members of
5 the CUNY Hunter College Community. I will focus
6 primarily and ironically on the Silberman School of
7 Social Work.

8 I will begin with quotes, some so horrific that I
9 was advised not to restate them here, so please
10 excuse some of the language. "New York legalizes
11 pedophilia since Jews must suck on baby penises."
12 "Jews control the government and the banks." "The
13 Israel lobby led by the Antidefamation League
14 manufactures an antisemitism hype." "The holocaust
15 has been used as a tool to oppress and kill others."
16 "Jews fetishize the holocaust." "Your Zionist mind
17 games don't work on me." "One in every 500 college
18 students get shot by Israeli soldiers." "Jews out of
19 CUNY, the Jews have made a hell of a mistake this
20 time." "It's high time Jews start being viewed as
21 cockroaches or any other pests to be exterminated
22 without exception." "Death to Jews and antisemitism
23 doesn't exist here anymore."

24 In addition to those quotes, there have been
25 instances of the following: Faculty making

1
2 inappropriate comments about religious Jews, Jewish
3 students and a Jewish client. Internship supervisors
4 questioning Jewish students competency because of
5 their religious observance. Faculty denying
6 accommodations for assignments that conflict with
7 Jewish holidays. Administration offering Saturday
8 only mandatory classes for its leadership program,
9 making it inaccessible for religiously observant
10 Jewish students. Faculty telling Jewish students not
11 to join a Silberman student run Facebook group
12 because of the hate speech and antisemitic rhetoric.
13 Please be quiet for a second.

14 Mandatory class readings blaming Jews for the
15 rise in antisemitism and the lack of discourse on
16 antisemitism and accusing Jews of Hitler as a Nazi
17 like crime against humanity. The library sharing
18 book accusing Jews of controlling the African slave
19 trade. With all of this, it's no surprise or a
20 coincidence that students opinions and statements
21 after the same rhetoric found in class discussion and
22 course readings.

23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

24 MICHAEL MANTELL: At CUNY Hunter College
25 Silberman School of Social Work, faculty and

1
2 administrators are fully aware of the following
3 statement that they have heard these things before.
4 Know that they haven't done enough. That they are
5 bereaved in their course and curriculum -

6 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Wrap it up please.

7 MICHAEL MANTELL: And woefully lacking in their
8 capacity to sustain efforts to combat antisemitism.
9 The remaining part will be shared by more -

10 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you.

11 MICHAEL MANTELL: She'll be continuing in this
12 testimony. Thank you all for this time.

13 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you very much for
14 your testimony. Next, we have Steve Greenbaum.

15 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

16 STEVE GREENBAUM: Okay, thank you Chair Dinowitz
17 and members of the City Council for this long day.
18 So, I have an immediate reaction to the June 2021
19 resolution in support of BDS passed by my union.
20 Professional Staff Congress City of New York PSC
21 CUNY. I'm a son of survivors and perhaps the first
22 time in my relatively sheltered life growing up in
23 New York City, I experienced a sense of foreboding
24 similar to what academic in New York may have felt in
25 the 1930's.

1
2 The original wording of the resolution drafted by
3 the PSC was one-side and brutal vilification of
4 Israel and supportive of Israel, laced with
5 antisemitism. The anted version had passed including
6 a [INAUDIBLE 6:29:19-6:29:22] of antisemitism,
7 leaving the Israel bashing intact.

8 Addition to what I regard as a personal assault
9 on a Jew and a son of holocaust survivors, I'm deeply
10 offended by the idea that PSC activists hot heads
11 believe they can dictate which university's I can and
12 cannot work with. I have substantial and close
13 economic ties with several work class universities of
14 Israel, including Tele University and Technia.

15 Groundbreaking research on renewable energy
16 technologies. My field continues to originate Israel
17 and I'm privileged to collaborate with several groups
18 there. By the way, I'm a CUNY distinguished
19 Professor of Physics at Hunter College in the
20 Graduate Center. These efforts bring significant
21 benefits to CUNY including international recognition
22 for me and my students. To do the best science one
23 can do, shouldn't we be working with the best people
24 given the opportunity? Then of course is the
25 chilling and intimidating effect that CUNY's support

1
2 for BDS has had on our students. You've heard ample
3 examples of that this morning and this afternoon.

4 In July 2021, I resigned from the PSAQ seat for
5 the PSA union and I believe the resignation of the
6 number of people who have resigned is in fact closer
7 to 300. I dispute Presidents figure and by now,
8 there's not a single member who has resigned since we
9 joined the union. Thank you.

10 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you. I know Council
11 Member Vernikov has a question for this panel.
12 Council Member Yeger.

13 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Just real quick. Is Mr.
14 Mantell still there? He may not be. Are you able to
15 see?

16 MICHAEL MANTELL: Hi, can you hear me?

17 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Yeah, okay very good.

18 MICHAEL MANTELL: I'm still here.

19 COUNCIL MEMBER YEGER: Thank you. My question is
20 real quick because towards the end, I think you
21 mentioned that the administration of the college of
22 CUNY Hunter College was aware. And you really didn't
23 get into that and I just, I really only have about 60
24 seconds. I'm going to turn it over to you. Can you
25

1
2 tell us what your interaction with the Administration
3 was and what their response was?

4 MICHEAL MANTELL: Yeah, uhm too many to list but
5 I'll start with despite their admission faculty and
6 administrator did very little of substance. They
7 failed to address how they would ethically and
8 morally protect Jewish students and adequately
9 address antisemitism after a swastika was found on
10 campus and despite this dean of the Silberman School
11 of Social Work immediately releasing public
12 statements, all in the murder of George Floyd,
13 Derrick Chobin(SP?), a verdict and violence against
14 the AAPI community administrators rejected Jewish
15 students request for a public statement from the dean
16 to condemn antisemitism, citing people still die.
17 And Jewish students have been reporting this at least
18 since 2008. They've said that faculty have been
19 giving them run around and same with the
20 administration. They've been ignored even when
21 approaching the administration with evidence and
22 students have referred to the faculty administrations
23 lack of follow up as insult to injury, a slap in the
24 face and another said she was disheartened by the
25 lack of appropriate responses.

1
2 Students left the meetings with administrators
3 saying they feel confused, skeptical and brushed off.
4 They described the responses inadequate, unclear,
5 watered down and hypocritical and at this point don't
6 believe the administration will do a single thing.
7 In fact, our last meeting was over one year ago and
8 they said that they would get back to us and they
9 never did.

10 And I just want to remind you all that if these
11 are our allies and this is a place where Jews are
12 supposed to feel safe and CUNY, we have a problem
13 because none of these people have said that they are
14 antisemite and yet, they are causing such distress
15 and harm to Jewish students. And by the way, I can
16 go on.

17 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you. Thank you,
18 thank you very much. We're going to take a 30-second
19 break, excuse me. {BREAK 06:33:33-06:33:49} Our last
20 witness is Sophia Ellman-Golan.

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

22 SOPHIA ELLMAN-GOLAN: Uhm, hi, can you hear me?

23 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Yes.

24 SOPHIA ELLMAN-GOLAN: Okay, great. HI, thanks
25 for the time. As someone who has been personally

1
2 targeted by White nationalists and neo-Nazis in the
3 past few years, I want to address the broader context
4 in which this hearing is taking place. We are
5 currently witnessing a nationwide attack on public
6 education and liberal academic institutions: Re-
7 inserting Christian prayer in public schools;
8 removing Holocaust education literature like MAUS;
9 banning discussion and systemic racism; cracking down
10 on student organizing; and of course, an effort to
11 vilify LGBTQ people as groomers.

12 The funding behind these sources, behind these
13 efforts, sources of legislation and statements of
14 those involved indicate that this is an explicitly
15 White Christian nationalist project and it's swiftly
16 gaining power. Republican members of this City
17 Council have chosen to align with some of the most
18 powerful leaders of that movement, like Governor Ron
19 DeSantis, who one Council Member recently praised as
20 a friend to the Jewish community. There are real
21 threats fueling antisemitism and endangering Jews in
22 New York, on campus, and nationwide. Those threats
23 are not student organizers or the PSC union.

24 There is a difference between non-violent
25 political action around Israel-Palestine, and violent

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2 White supremacist movements. I'm concerned that this
3 hearing fails to adequately address the latter, and
4 that it conflates the two. Jewish New Yorkers face
5 antisemitic street violence and harassment, spurred
6 by the ubiquity of antisemitic conspiracy theories
7 that increased under Donald Trump's presidency,
8 swastikas on campus as mentioned, confederate flag
9 outside the Museum of Jewish Heritage, patriot front
10 members, White supremacist like Nick Fuentes have
11 recently held rallies and actions in our city. At
12 least one defender of the Proud Boys sits in this
13 City Council. This is the antisemitism that most
14 threatens Jewish safety in New York City.

15 Antisemitism is part of a machinery of fear and
16 division. The same machinery driving physical and
17 legal attacks on women, queer and trans people,
18 immigrants, Black and Brown people, Muslims, Asian
19 people and others. And these attacks are coming from
20 an emboldened, well-funded, White Christian
21 nationalist movement.

22 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Time expired.

23 SOPHIA ELLMAN-GOLAN: Harassment and hate are
24 never acceptable. Given the nationwide attack on
25 public education -

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CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you.

SOPHIA ELLMAN-GOLAN: And real threats to Jewish safety, the focus I've heard today on student organizing and non-violent criticism of the Israeli government is troubling.

CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you very much and I encourage you to do what I've encouraged the past few panels to do is submit the rest of your testimony in writing. It will appear Legistar within 72 hours attached to the Committee.

SOPHIA ELLMAN-GOLAN: I will do that.

CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: And Council Members? Council Member Yeger.

COUNCIL MEMEBR YEGER: Thank you very much Mr. Chairman. I would just reflect on the fact that you know I represent dozens, if not more and together with Council Member Vernikov, we probably represent well over 100 members of our community who in the last year or two have faced violent antisemitic attacks and in the cases where the perpetrators have been apprehended, in not one case that I know of and my colleague can speak for herself was the case of a neo Nazi roaming around Borough Park or Flatbush attacking people and when Hasidic Jews are knocked or

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2 have their shtreimels knocked off on Friday night in
3 Williamsburg, it's typically not neo-Nazi Trump
4 supporters who are doing it and I'm okay with a
5 witness having their own personal political opinions
6 about who they do or don't like but we're talking
7 about New York City and we're talking about the
8 safety of students on New York City college campuses
9 and the idea that the hatred that they are facing,
10 much like the hatred that my orthodox observant
11 visibly observant Jewish neighbors are facing on a
12 day to day basis where somebody wearing a Yamaka
13 feels unsafe walking the streets of this city. The
14 idea that that's coming from Trump nationalists or
15 White supremacist is some of the most silly things
16 that I've ever heard and this is a hearing that's
17 gone on now for eight hours and it's unbelievable.

18 So, I'm going to leave it at that and turn it
19 back over to Mr. Chairman. Thank you so much.

20 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you Council Member.
21 Council Member Vernikov. No, okay. That is the end
22 of witnesses. If there are people watching today and
23 they want to submit testimony, they could do so via
24 testimony@council.nyc.gov.

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2 I want to thank every single witness who
3 testified. Some of you shared very personal
4 experiences and some of you put yourselves in a place
5 that a lot of your friends and colleagues didn't want
6 to go because of you know fear of retribution. This
7 is your school, career, your college, your grad
8 school career. If you're a professor, your career,
9 your place in the union. Whatever it is, I thank you
10 for sharing your stories and I think all of us here
11 recognize that it is just a small sampling of what
12 goes on. I want to thank my colleagues in the
13 Council and especially Council Members Yeger and
14 Vernikov who stayed throughout the hearing and of
15 course the staff who have been on the Zoom, who have
16 been keeping time and keeping us safe.

17 You know, I was an educator - actually one of my
18 degrees is in music, so when I hear your testimony
19 about music; I read all your emails by the way. You
20 know education is supposed to be a place that fosters
21 discussion and disagreement and sometimes that
22 disagreement is uncomfortable. And uhm, somethings
23 it's uncomfortable and we don't like what the other
24 person has to say.

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2 But the silencing of a certain group of people is
3 different than having a different point of view. And
4 we expect certain things from CUNY. As mentioned in
5 my opening statement, the antisemitism is coming from
6 the far left and the far right. They look different
7 but it's all rooted in the same antisemitism. And we
8 expect CUNY to do more than just rely on their
9 individual campuses because we know at their
10 individual campuses there are multiple lawsuits and
11 investigations going on. We expect them to do that
12 work that they spoke about today of promoting
13 conversation, instead of what we heard today in our
14 witness statements. Instead of ignoring the issue
15 and maybe taking over a year to simply forward an
16 email back to you.

17 You know we expect them to provide the data we
18 requested about bias reporting, the incidence
19 reporting and to create clear guidelines for
20 identifying antisemitism so we can have those
21 conversations and that they do the robust outreach
22 regarding how and what to report. What does
23 harassment look like? How does it differ from a hate
24 crime? That they post the info, the information
25 online and they keep it updated so we can have a

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2 better handle of what's going on. Because as you
3 heard in testimony, only 25 percent if that of people
4 even reporting anything.

5 That you've heard time and time again that they
6 reinvest in the DEI training which includes
7 antisemitism and provide an inventory of occurring
8 DEI training. And of course, I'm looking forward
9 with my colleagues in the Council to following up
10 with CUNY and with the Chancellor on how these issues
11 are being addressed and what concrete steps are being
12 taken to ensure that our educational institution is
13 truly - it lives up to its ideals and really is a
14 place where all students can feel safe.

15 I thank everyone for coming. I thank you all for
16 watching today. Thank you.

17 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Chair, please hold on one
18 moment.

19 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Yes.

20 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Counsel is going to speak to
21 you. Crystal is going to speak to you.

22 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Oh, is anyone on Zoom -
23 you get a note but you know, it didn't say a thing.
24 But I don't - is there anyone on Zoom who has not
25 testified? Please raise your hand. I see no hands

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2 and I want to again thank Dr. Grace who again, I see
3 on the Zoom window, has stayed on, has heard your
4 testimony and in my heart, I do believe that CUNY is
5 going to take concrete steps to help address this
6 problem and truly engage with this Council and all
7 the stakeholders.

8 Joshua Greenberg, if you've already testified -
9 Joshua Greenberg, have you already testified?

10 JOSHUA GREENBERG: I have not.

11 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Oh, you haven't. Oh, that's
12 right.

13 JOSHUA GREENBERG: I was unable to make it in
14 person like I was supposed to because my flight got
15 delayed.

16 COMMITTEE COUNSEL: Yes Chair, he was marked as
17 in-person attending, so he was not joining us on
18 Zoom, so he can give his testimony.

19 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you. Joshua
20 Greenberg, two minutes.

21 SERGEANT AT ARMS: Starting time.

22 JOSHUA GREENBERG: Thank you. So, I wanted to
23 testify to the City Council about two issues in
24 particular that I have faced as a CUNY student.

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2 First off, in relation to the 60-day thing, I
3 filed a complaint regarding an antisemitic and anti-
4 disability harassment case at CUNY that where a
5 student assaulted me because I'm a Jewish disabled
6 student. They assaulted me and my friend who
7 defended me verbally and physically. I filed an
8 antisemitism complaint with the DEI office and it
9 took them over six months to even give an initial
10 response.

11 Also, at CUNY, I have faced a ton of
12 discrimination from student government who chose to
13 open their own offices without opening the Office of
14 Religious Ethnic Racial Cultural groups, like Hillel
15 and the Muslim Student Association etc.. I'm just
16 giving examples of different religious gouges but at
17 CUNY, the student government of Baruch hopes to open
18 their own offices but not religious groups offices,
19 which is a violation of our free exercise of
20 religion. In fact, when students prayed, the Office
21 of Student Life tried to break it up. It is
22 completely unacceptable what is going on at Baruch
23 College.

24 They tell us that it's because of COVID that they
25 don't let us pray or have our Jewish life, yet

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2 student government has their offices personally to
3 themselves, which is queer discrimination because
4 they are very antisemitic our student government.

5 Thank you.

6 CHAIRPERSON DINOWITZ: Thank you for your
7 testimony. Are there any other hands for people who
8 have not yet spoken on Zoom? Okay, seeing none, I
9 thank everyone who has stayed on again to testify, my
10 colleagues and I look forward to addressing this, to
11 continuing to address this issue, so that we can
12 build a better future for our students and our
13 children. Thank you very much. This hearing is
14 adjourned. [GAVEL]

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C E R T I F I C A T E

World Wide Dictation certifies that the foregoing transcript is a true and accurate record of the proceedings. We further certify that there is no relation to any of the parties to this action by blood or marriage, and that there is interest in the outcome of this matter.



Date July 30, 2022