

TESTIMONY OF ALYZA D. LEWIN

PRESIDENT

THE LOUIS D. BRANDEIS CENTER FOR HUMAN RIGHTS UNDER LAW

“NEVER TO BE SILENT: STEMMING THE TIDE OF ANTISEMITISM IN AMERICA”

TESTIMONY

BEFORE THE UNITED STATES SENATE COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY

MARCH 5, 2025

CHAIRMAN GRASSLEY, RANKING MEMBER DURBIN, AND MEMBERS OF THE
COMMITTEE ON THE JUDICIARY:

I am honored to appear before you today at this hearing on “Never To Be Silent: Stemming the Tide of Antisemitism in America.” My name is Alyza Lewin. I am the President of the Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law a non-profit organization established to advance the civil and human rights of the Jewish people and promote justice for all. The Brandeis Center engages in legal advocacy, research and education to combat the resurgence of anti-Semitism on college and university campuses, in the workplace and elsewhere.

At the Brandeis Center, I speak nearly every day with students, parents, employees, medical practitioners, patients and other individuals who have encountered anti-Semitism. Their experiences reflect a rapid and alarming growing hostility in this country toward Jews. The pattern is familiar. Jews, particularly those who recognize the Jewish people’s ancestral connection to Israel, are increasingly vilified, shunned, harassed, excluded, and even assaulted. As a result, according to a recent survey,¹ many American Jews are feeling the need to hide their Judaism. They’ve stopped wearing items that identify them as Jews, and stopped posting Judaism related content online. Some have even stopped attending public Jewish events.

¹ “The State of Antisemitism in America 2024.” AJC, February 19, 2025.
<https://www.ajc.org/AntisemitismReport2024>.

On campuses, we have seen students, often encouraged and supported by faculty², disrupt classes³, intimidate and harass Jewish students⁴, vandalize university property⁵, assault university staff⁶, and pledge support for US designated terror organizations⁷.

This hostility towards Jews is now evident in the K-12 space as well. Just two weeks ago, the Santa Ana Unified School District in California settled a lawsuit⁸ that had been filed by the Brandeis Center against the school district for introducing ethnic studies courses that had been developed in secret and infected with anti-Semitism. As part of the settlement, the school district agreed to cease instruction of several courses that contained false and damaging narratives about Israel and the Jewish people.

Jew hatred in America is spreading beyond schools and university campuses. Just two days ago, the Brandeis Center filed a lawsuit on behalf of an individual who was kicked out of a coffee shop in Oakland, California simply for wearing a hat with a Star of David on it.⁹

² "Columbia University Professors Support Student Protests Amid Campus Unrest." The New York Times, May 2, 2024. <https://www.nytimes.com/2024/05/02/us/columbia-protests-professors-support.html>

³ Vincent, Isabel. "Masked Students Disrupt Columbia Classes, Distribute Antisemitic Leaflets as College Named 'National Model' for Anti-Israel Protest." *New York Post*, January 22, 2025. <https://nypost.com/2025/01/22/us-news/masked-students-disrupt-columbia-classes-distribute-antisemitic-leaflets/>.

⁴ Russell, Josh. "Jewish Students Harassed During Gaza Protest See Discrimination Claims Advanced." *Courthouse News Service*, February 5, 2025. <https://www.courthousenews.com/jewish-students-harassed-during-gaza-protest-see-discrimination-claims-advanced/>.

⁵ Dorgan, Michael. "Anti-Israel Groups Spray-Paint Columbia University Building, 'Cemented' Sewage System." *Fox News*, January 30, 2025. <https://www.foxnews.com/us/anti-israel-groups-spray-paint-columbia-university-building-cemented-sewage-system>.

⁶ Starr, Michael. "Anti-Israel Activists Invade Barnard Building, Staff Hospitalized." *The Jerusalem Post*, February 27, 2025. <https://www.jpost.com/bds-threat/article-844081>.

⁷ Anti-Defamation League. "Israel-Hamas Ceasefire Sparks Fresh Wave of Antisemitism, Support for Terror from U.S. Anti-Zionist Activists." *Anti-Defamation League*, February 5, 2025. <https://www.adl.org/resources/article/israel-hamas-ceasefire-sparks-fresh-wave-antisemitism-support-terror-us-anti>.

⁸ Lambert, Diana. "Santa Ana to Drop Contested Ethnic Studies Courses to Settle Closely Watched Lawsuit." *EdSource*, February 28, 2025. <https://edsource.org/2025/santa-ana-to-drop-contested-ethnic-studies-courses-to-settle-closely-watched-lawsuit/727272>

⁹ Baker, Alex. "Man Kicked out of Oakland Coffeehouse for Wearing Star Of ..." *Kron4*, March 3, 2025. <https://www.kron4.com/news/bay-area/man-kicked-out-of-oakland-coffeehouse-for-wearing-star-of-david-hat-files-lawsuit>.

The Brandeis Center has also fielded numerous calls from medical practitioners and therapists who have described a growing hostile environment¹⁰ for Jews in healthcare¹¹. These include stories of blacklists¹² of Jewish practitioners¹³, and Jewish patients being denied prompt healthcare services due to anti-Semitism.¹⁴

Alongside these troubling stories, we are seeing an increase in what has been termed, “erasive anti-Semitism” – the erasure and denial of Jewish history and heritage. Jews share more than a common faith. As a people, they have a shared ancestry and ethnicity deeply rooted in the land of Israel. It is not possible to separate the history of the Jewish people from the land of Israel. The two are inextricably intertwined. And yet there are those, today, who seek to do just that. There are those who insist that the Jews are not a people and that they have no history in the land of Israel.

The United States government must use all means at its disposal to reverse this alarming trend. Nothing less than the values we hold dear as Americans is at stake. Actions to be taken should include adopting the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Definition of Antisemitism; withholding federal funding from entities that are failing to adequately protect Jews; demanding transparency when universities receive foreign funding; and investigating

¹⁰“Jewish Federations Urge Congress To Investigate Healthcare Antisemitism.” The Jewish Federations of North America, December 18, 2024. <https://www.jewishfederations.org/fedworld/jewish-federations-urge-congress-to-investigate-healthcare-antisemitism>.

¹¹ Volokh, Eugene. “Sally Satel on ‘Recent Efforts to Silence “Zionist” Therapists.” Reason, February 13, 2025. <https://reason.com/volokh/2025/02/13/sally-satel-on-recent-efforts-to-silence-zionist-therapists/>.

¹² Satel, Sally. “Inside the Campaign to Blacklist ‘Zionist’ Therapists.” The Free Press, August 12, 2024. <https://www.thefp.com/p/campaign-to-blacklist-zionist-therapists>.

¹³ “The Campaign to BLACKLIST Zionist Therapists.” YouTube, August 15, 2024. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qWKsc18quVI&ab_channel=TheFreePress.

¹⁴ akoby, Eyal (@EYakoby). "Breaking: An Israeli student at Columbia who went to see health services, was not seen as the healthcare workers stated they would not treat Zionists." *X (formerly Twitter)*, September 4, 2024. <https://x.com/EYakoby/status/1829660639373250585>.

entities that appear to be providing material support for terrorism. We must never be silent. And we must act together to stem the rising tide of anti-Semitism in America today.