

TALKING POINTS

Countering Antisemitism Act

National Council of Jewish Women's (NCJW) Message

For over 130 years, the National Council of Jewish Women has been dedicated to securing social justice and safeguarding individual rights and freedoms. We have always worked towards building a society free from bias and discrimination, including ending antisemitism. Our faith commands us to pursue justice, and in order to achieve this goal, we must build a society free from hate and bias.

Antisemitism in our country has been steadily on the rise for years, and it has skyrocketed in the aftermath of the terrorist attacks on Israel launched by Hamas on October 7, 2023. Thousands of antisemitic incidents have been reported on college campuses, in synagogues, and at Jewish institutions, with members of the Jewish community being harassed online and physically attacked. This hatred cannot become the status quo. Congress has the opportunity to act to protect Jewish people across the United States by passing the **bipartisan Countering Antisemitism Act (H.R. 7921/S. 4091)**, introduced in the Senate by Senators Jacky Rosen (D-NV) and James Lankford (R-OK) and in the House by Representatives Kathy Manning (D-NC) and Chris Smith (R-NJ).

- **In the last decade, antisemitic incidents have been steadily increasing.** This is made clear by the fact that anti-Jewish hate crimes continue to grow exponentially every year. Between 2021 and 2022, the last two years of hate crime data available, antisemitic hate crimes grew by 36%, rising to 1,124 reported incidents in 2022 – the highest number the FBI has ever recorded.¹ Year after year, anti-Jewish hate crimes consistently make up the highest percentage of reported religiously-based hate crimes. Since the events of October 7th, we have seen an even more dramatic rise in antisemitic hate. Nowhere in the United States feels safe for Jewish people. Antisemitic hate threatens us in schools and at universities, at our synagogues, at work, and in our neighborhoods.

¹ Tori Morales Pinales, "How reports of hate crimes in the US were already at record highs, in 4 charts," CNN, December 11, 2023, <https://www.cnn.com/2023/10/29/us/hate-crimes-antisemitism-anti-muslim-dg/index.html>.

- **This legislation puts into effect the Biden-Harris Administration’s landmark National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism, issued just last year.** This comprehensive plan mobilizes all departments of government to address the alarming rate of antisemitic acts and hate speech, growing even before the events of October 7th. The National Strategy outlines numerous actions that government agencies, Congress, state and local governments, the private sector, educators, civil society, faith leaders, and others can take to counter antisemitism.² NCJW is proud to have advocated for the release of this strategy, which will help ensure Jewish communities across the country are protected against hate. However, the National Strategy requires support in order to be fully implemented.
- **The Countering Antisemitism Act will equip our government with the necessary tools to carry out the National Strategy and protect Jewish people across the country from antisemitism.** This legislation establishes a National Coordinator to Counter Antisemitism within the Executive Office of the President. This Coordinator will serve as the primary advisor on countering domestic antisemitism, and will lead an interagency task force to implement the National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism and future government efforts. This legislation will help ensure that federal agencies are able to fulfill their responsibilities laid out in the landmark National Strategy.
- **This historic legislation is the most far-reaching antisemitism initiative ever to be introduced in Congress.** In the face of increased and growing tensions and hate on college campuses, the Countering Antisemitism Act will require the Department of Education to designate a senior official to advise and oversee the Department’s efforts to counter antisemitic discrimination at universities. The legislation also helps elected officials better understand the threat of antisemitic violent extremism and online hate. It promotes Holocaust education to raise awareness about the roots of antisemitism. And, it would formally establish Jewish American Heritage Month into law to counteract antisemitic hate and uplift the history and contributions Jewish Americans have made to our society.

Urge your Members of Congress to cosponsor and help pass the Countering Antisemitism Act!

²The White House, “The U.S. National Strategy to Counter Antisemitism: Key Actions by Pillar,” June 2, 2023, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/06/02/the-u-s-national-strategy-to-counter-antisemitism-key-actions-by-pillar-2/>.