



AGENDA REPORT

Meeting Date: February 4, 2020
Item Number: D-3
To: Honorable Mayor and City Council
From: Cynthia Owens, Policy and Management Analyst
Subject: RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BEVERLY HILLS ADOPTING THE INTERNATIONAL HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE ALLIANCE WORKING DEFINITION OF ANTI-SEMITISM
Attachments: 1. Proposed Resolution

RECOMMENDATION

Staff recommends the City Council adopt a resolution memorializing the action of the Council adopting the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of anti-Semitism, which occurred on January 28, 2020.

INTRODUCTION

On January 28, 2020, the City Council adopted the IHRA working definition of anti-Semitism. This resolution, if adopted, will memorialize the action taken by the City Council (Attachment 1).

DISCUSSION

In a January 2020 Chicago Tribune article, the author noted Los Angeles had 58 anti-Semitic hate crimes in the first 10 months of 2019, compared with 29 over the same period in 2018. In part, this can be attributed to the increase in counting the appearances of swastikas as anti-Semitic hate crimes, something New York has done for years, and the improved reporting of both property crime and physical assaults.

On December 14, 2019, a person forced entry into the Nessah Synagogue and heavily ransacked the interior. The suspect overturned furniture and damaged several Jewish relics, including Torahs, scrolls, and prayer books. Additionally, the suspect took possession of the synagogue's printed materials and scattered them throughout the interior. The disruption was primarily to the Synagogue's interior contents, and there was limited structural damage. A suspect has since been arrested in this case. They have been charged with vandalism of religious property and commercial burglary. The criminal complaint also includes a penalty enhancement for a hate crime.

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Other anti-Semitic attacks in the United States in December 2019 include five people who were stabbed during a Hanukkah celebration in Monsey, New York; four people killed in a shooting at a New Jersey grocery store; and a Brooklyn woman hit in the head as she walked with her child.

Additionally, the Instructional Quality Committee of the California Department of Education drafted a curriculum of the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (ESMC) of the ESMC Curriculum for public review and comment. As proposed, the ESMC:


- Effectively erases the American Jewish experience,
- Fails to discuss Anti-Semitism,
- Reinforces negative stereotypes about Jews,
- Singles out Israel for criticism, and
- Institutionalizes the teaching of Anti-Semitic stereotypes in public schools as currently written.

Due to the recent act of the Instructional Quality Committee, and the recent rise in anti-Semitic crime, the Council strongly supported adopting the IHRA working definition of anti-Semitism, which states:

Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individual and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.

FISCAL IMPACT

There is no anticipated fiscal impact at this time.


A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'G. Yap', is written over a horizontal line.

Gabriella Yap
Approved By

Attachment 1

RESOLUTION NO. 20-R-_____

RESOLUTION OF THE COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF
BEVERLY HILLS ADOPTING THE INTERNATIONAL
HOLOCAUST REMEMBRANCE ALLIANCE
WORKING DEFINITION OF ANTI-SEMITISM

WHEREAS, as an international destination, the City of Beverly Hills is proud to embrace and celebrate religions and cultures from all over the world;

WHEREAS, in the Anti-Defamation League's (the "ADL") *Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents*, the ADL recorded 1,879 anti-Semitic incidents in the United States in 2018, the third-highest year in the past four decades;

WHEREAS, in the ADL's *Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents*, there was an 86 percent increase in reported anti-Semitic incidents at colleges and universities – from 108 incidents in 2016 to 201 incidents in 2018;

WHEREAS, in a January 2020 Chicago Tribune article, the author noted Los Angeles had 58 anti-Semitic hate crimes in the first 10 months of 2019, compared to 29 over the same period in 2018;

WHEREAS, on December 14, 2019, a person forced entry into the Nessah Synagogue and heavily ransacked the interior. The suspect overturned furniture and damaged several Jewish relics, including Torahs, scrolls, and prayer books. Additionally, the suspect took possession of the synagogue's printed materials and scattered them throughout the interior;

WHEREAS, in December 2019 there were multiple anti-Semitic incidents throughout the United States including five people who were stabbed during a Hanukkah celebration in Monsey, New York; four people were killed in a shooting at a New Jersey grocery store; and a Brooklyn woman was hit in the head as she was walking with her child;

WHEREAS, the Instructional Quality Committee of the California Department of Education drafted a curriculum of the Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum (the "ESMC"), which effectively erases the American Jewish experience, fails to discuss anti-Semitism, and reinforces negative stereotypes about Jews;

WHEREAS, on January 28, 2020 the City Council adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of anti-Semitism, which states:

Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individual and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.

NOW, THEREFORE, the Council of the City of Beverly Hills resolves as follows:

Section 1. The City of Beverly Hills hereby memorializes the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of anti-Semitism, by the City Council, which occurred on January 28, 2020.

Section 2. The City of Beverly Hills urges Congressman Ted Lieu, Senator Dianne Feinstein, Senator Kamala Harris, and other federally elected officials to co-sponsor and/or support H.R. 4009 – Anti-Semitism Awareness Act of 2019 and Senate Bill 852 - Anti-Semitism Awareness Act of 2019.

Section 3. The City Clerk shall certify to the adoption of this resolution and shall cause this resolution and her certification to be entered in the Book of Resolutions of the Council of this City.

Adopted:

JOHN A. MIRISCH
Mayor of the City of
Beverly Hills, California

ATTEST:

HUMA AHMED (SEAL)
City Clerk

APPROVED AS TO FORM:



LAURENCE S. WIENER
City Attorney

APPROVED AS CONTENT:

GEORGE CHAVEZ
City Manager