



Council Members

DOROTHY L. GOOSBY · BRUCE A. BLAKEMAN · ANTHONY P. D'ESPOSITO · DENNIS DUNNE, SR. · THOMAS E. MUSCARELLA · CHRISTOPHER CARINI

KATE MURRAY, *Town Clerk*

JEANINE C. DRISCOLL, *Receiver of Taxes*

CONTACT: Greg Blower
(516) 812-3310

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Supervisor Clavin & Council Members Adopt Resolution that Takes Aim at Antisemitism

In Effort to Boost Education & Strengthen Efforts to Combat Hatred and Bias, Supervisor & Town Board Partner with American Jewish Committee Long Island to Adopt Internationally Recognized Working Definition of Antisemitism

In an effort to enhance the Town of Hempstead's strong stance against Antisemitism, hatred and bias in its communities, Supervisor Don Clavin and the Town Board today adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Working Definition of Antisemitism. Adopting the IHRA's internationally recognized definition of antisemitism boosts the Town of Hempstead's ability to educate the community and take action on acts of antisemitism.

Clavin and the Council Members worked with AJC Long Island, a chapter of a global advocacy organization that works to connect with communities and enhance the well-being of Jewish people and Israel, while supporting democratic values and human rights for all. According to a recent report published by AJC, while 9 out of every 10 American Jews believe antisemitism is a problem in the U.S., 6 out of 10 in the general public believe it's a problem, and 50 percent of the general public doesn't know what the term antisemitism means.

"We're proud to partner with AJC Long Island to craft and adopt a resolution that demonstrates how America's largest township is at the forefront in the fight against antisemitism," Supervisor Clavin said. "The unfortunate reality is that antisemitism is still an evil scourge that exists within our nation and across the world. In a township as diverse as Hempstead Town, it is critical that we join together across our faiths to reject all forms of hatred and bias, and we stand together with the Jewish community to combat antisemitism."

"AJC Long Island is grateful to Supervisor Clavin and the Town of Hempstead Board for adopting the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Working Definition of Antisemitism," said AJC Long Island Director Eric Post. "The definition, which has been adopted by nearly 30 countries, including the U.S., and numerous multilateral bodies, is the definitive definition of antisemitism. In addition to the passage of the definition, AJC Long Island is particularly encouraged by the language of the resolution that will make the definition a widely and readily used educational tool in the Town. The Town of Hempstead's adoption and implementation of the IHRA definition has the potential to go a long way towards changing these trends."

Today's adoption is another example of how the Town of Hempstead categorically rejects antisemitism. In early October of 2020, Clavin and the Town Board immediately condemned the antisemitic graffiti that was scrawled in a local playground. Only two weeks prior, the Supervisor and Council Members announced that they would boost the presence of Public Safety patrols near synagogues as the Jewish community prepared for the High Holy Days. What's more, on December 31st, 2019, Clavin and Town Board members joined with a contingent of multi-faith clergy in a demonstration of

unity against the spate of antisemitic incidents that occurred across the state and region during Hanukkah of 2019.

The Town of Hempstead has a history of supporting Israel and its rejection of antisemitism – in 2016, the Hempstead Town Board enacted a local law that prohibits town agencies from entering into public contracts with firms that support the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement against the State of Israel.

“The existence of anti-Semitism and symbols of hate and bias in all forms are unacceptable in the Town of Hempstead,” Senior Councilwoman Dorothy Goosby said. “Here in America’s largest township, we pride ourselves on the diversity and strength of all communities, across all faiths, and I’m proud to stand with my Town Board colleagues on this important resolution aimed at combating antisemitism in our communities.”

In 2019, there were over 2,100 hate crimes reported against Jewish people in the United States, according to the Anti-Defamation League, which was the highest total since the organization began releasing the data over 40 years ago.

“The disturbing rise in antisemitism seen across the Town of Hempstead and throughout the nation cannot go unanswered,” said Councilman Bruce Blakeman. “I am happy to join with Supervisor Clavin, my Town Board colleagues and AJC Long Island to reaffirm our community’s unwavering support for the Jewish people and the State of Israel.”

“Acts of hatred and bigotry have no place in our community, and I am proud to support the Town of Hempstead’s adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Working Definition of Antisemitism.,” said Councilman Anthony D’Esposito. “We will continue to stand with our Jewish friends and neighbors in speaking out against antisemitism throughout America’s largest township.”

“This form of hatred is inadmissible in Hempstead Town and across America,” said Councilman Dennis Dunne, Sr. “We stand together with neighbors, spiritual leaders and fellow officials in the fight against anti-Semitism.”

“The Town of Hempstead will always uphold its zero tolerance policy against any form of hate,” said Councilman Thomas Muscarella. “By adopting this definition of anti-Semitism, we are recommitting our efforts against this outrageous bias.”

“I am proud to stand with my colleagues on the Town Board as we continue to condemn all hatred in America’s largest township,” said Councilman Christopher Carini. “It’s frightening to see the amount of anti-Semitic hate crimes increasing and we must do everything we can to stop all disgusting acts of hatred.”

The main description of the newly adopted working definition is that “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 individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.” The IHRA definition also includes a series of illustrations and examples for elected officials, community leaders and residents to be aware of and to consider when identifying acts of antisemitism in their neighborhoods.

Some of the illustrations include:

- “Manifestations that might include the targeting of the state of Israel, conceived as a Jewish collectivity.”
- “Antisemitism frequently charges Jews with conspiring to harm humanity, and it is often used to blame Jews for ‘why things go wrong.’”
- A series of “Contemporary examples of antisemitism in public life, the media, schools, the workplace, and in the religious sphere could, taking into account the overall context.”

The full list can be accessed along with this announcement at hempsteadny.gov.

“I thank Eric Post and AJC Long Island, as well as my colleagues on the Hempstead Town Board for their collaboration in crafting and approving this important

resolution,” Clavin said. “This is an important step in the Town of Hempstead’s ongoing fight against antisemitism, and we will continue to stand with Jewish neighbors against hatred and bias.”