

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

June 28, 2022

The Honorable Alejandro Mayorkas
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Ave NW
Washington, DC 20016

Dear Secretary Mayorkas:

As members of Congress concerned about antisemitism in our country, we write to urge additional and urgent action to combat antisemitism and prosecute antisemitic hate crimes. In recent years, the American Jewish community has faced threats across the country, increasing in incidence and severity. Members of the Jewish community have been attacked, and sometimes killed, simply for being Jewish—from Pittsburgh to Poway, from Monsey to Jersey City, and from Lakewood to Colleyville. We appreciate your Department's efforts to confront this hate, as delineated in your March 29, 2022 letter and in your testimony before the House Judiciary Committee on April 28, 2022. Yet, more can and must be done. We urge you to exercise additional leadership on this issue, and we ask that you advise the President to prioritize the creation of an inter-agency strategy to overcome the threat of antisemitism—a threat that does not only jeopardize American Jews, but also undermines American values.

Many of us were part of the group of Members of Congress who wrote to President Biden on May 28, 2021, amidst a series of violent attacks against the Jewish community and Jewish institutions, at a time of then-rising antisemitism. When we wrote, we urged the administration to swiftly implement the COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act to help prosecute antisemitic hate crimes and also to develop an inter-agency strategy to combat antisemitism and protect the American Jewish community from those rising attacks. In the response we received from you last month, we were glad to see that steps have been taken in recent months within existing DHS programs to counter anti-Jewish extremism, and we were encouraged by the prioritization of Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP) investments—a priority we share.

Nonetheless, FBI hate crime statistics show that crimes targeting Jews comprise a majority of all religion-based hate crimes, even though Jews make up less than two percent of the population. Recent data from the Anti-Defamation League's annual Audit of Antisemitic Incidents tracked more than 2,700 reported antisemitic incidents throughout the U.S. in 2021—the worst year for antisemitism ever recorded, with an average of over seven attacks per day. Antisemitic assaults against members of the Jewish community in 2021 increased by 167 percent over 2020. According to the American Jewish Committee's 2021 State of Antisemitism in America report, one in four Jews said their Jewish institution was a target of antisemitism. It is clear the American Jewish community is on high alert and for due cause.

We are asking you to advocate for a comprehensive, whole-of-government strategy, led by your Department, to specifically address the growing problem of domestic antisemitism. We must ensure our federal, state, and local agencies are communicating with one another and have the necessary education, training, and resources to confront this threat. We must ensure every facet of our government is engaging with local community partners on the front lines. And we must ensure DHS and all its inter-agency partners are prioritizing this issue and tackling it with the urgency and coordination it warrants. Following up on the offer you made during your April 28 House Judiciary Committee testimony, we request that you meet with Members of our House Bipartisan Task Force for Combating Antisemitism to further discuss these issues. We also urge that appropriate representatives from the Departments of Justice, State, Education, Labor, and Defense, and other agencies involved in this effort be included in the discussion. Only by working together, across all branches and levels of government, across our country and throughout our society, can we address the many facets of antisemitism and ensure the safety and security of the American Jewish community.

Hate in all its forms is destructive and, unaddressed, risks fraying the fabric of our nation. We must continue to speak up and confront antisemitism head-on, whenever and wherever it arises. We appreciate your consideration of our request and look forward to continuing our work together to root out antisemitism in our country.

Sincerely,



Ted Deutch
Member of Congress



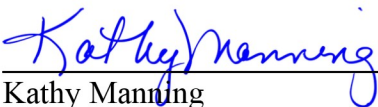
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Bradley Scott Schneider
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Andrew R. Garbarino
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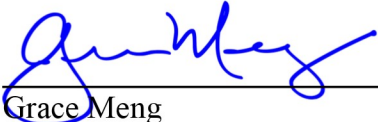
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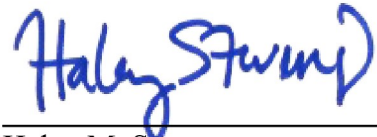
Steve Cohen
Member of Congress



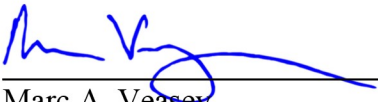
Debbie Wasserman Schultz
Member of Congress



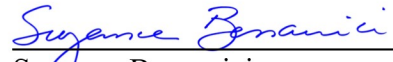
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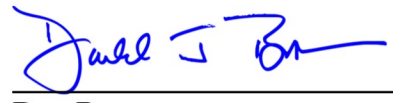
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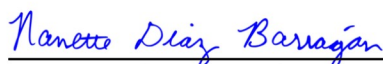
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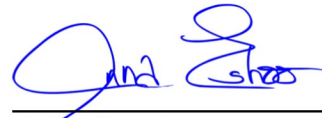
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Mike Levin
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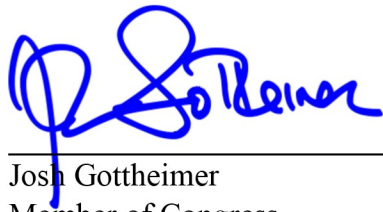
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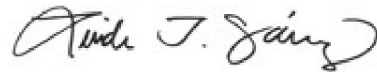
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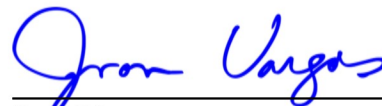
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Ami Bera, M.D.
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Frederica S. Wilson
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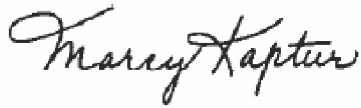
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John P. Sarbanes
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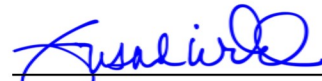
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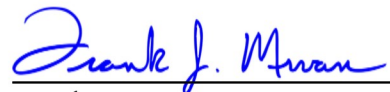
Thomas R. Suozzi
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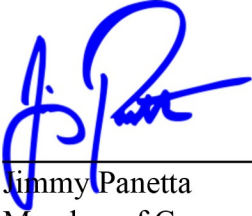
Bonnie Watson Coleman
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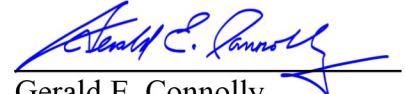
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Madeleine Dean
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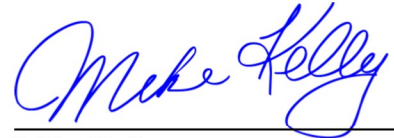
Lori Trahan
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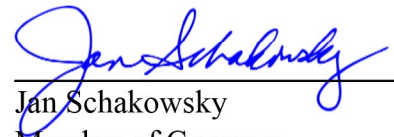
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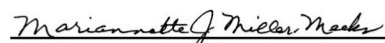
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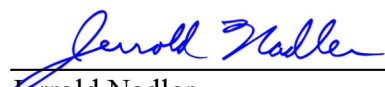
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Terrold Nadler
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Mike Doyle
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Kathy Castor
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Mary Gay Scanlon
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Lucy McBath
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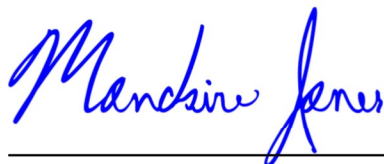
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