



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: A.J. MOLL		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ALICE SELF		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:29 PM

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We need to protect against the progressively increasing anti-Semitic behavior in every venue, industry, and enterprise. Thank you.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ALISA ANN DAFFIN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 1:49 PM

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I totally support this bill.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ARI BERNSTEIN	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/8/2026 5:43 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Mr. Chair and members of the committee. My name is Ari Bernstein and I am a junior at Parkway Central High School. I am eager to submit testimony in support of Representative Hruza's bill, HB 2061, because I have seen a tremendous increase in antisemitism over the past couple of years.

I'm a Jewish 16-year-old and a hockey player. I support House Bill 2061 because school should be a place where everyone feels safe and respected. On a team, you learn pretty quickly that you don't play your best if you don't feel like you belong, and the same thing is true at school. No student should have to deal with discrimination or antisemitism, and when it happens, schools need to take it seriously and know how to respond. This bill helps make expectations clear so students are protected and schools are held accountable. We all deserve a fair chance to learn and focus on what matters, not worry about being targeted for who we are.

Thank you so much for your time and consideration.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ARNIE C. AC DIENOFF-STATE PUBLIC ADVOCATE		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 11:57 PM

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I am in Full Support of this Bill. We Must rid Missouri of ANY Anti-Semitism.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ASIM TAHA TAWIL	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:20 PM

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I submit this testimony in support of HB 2061 because antisemitic actions are not abstract political disagreements, they are real acts of intimidation, exclusion, and harm directed at people based solely on identity.

Missouri has a responsibility to protect all of its residents from targeted hate, whether it comes in the form of harassment, threats, vandalism, or discriminatory conduct. Jewish communities, like many others, have historically faced hatred that begins with words and escalates into actions. Laws exist precisely to draw a firm line before that escalation occurs.

This bill does not suppress free speech or lawful criticism. It addresses conduct (actions that cross into discrimination or intimidation). Clear standards protect both civil liberties and public safety.

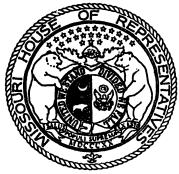
Supporting HB 2061 affirms that Missouri does not tolerate antisemitism in practice, not just in principle. It sends a message that hate-driven actions have consequences and that equal protection under the law applies to everyone.

For these reasons, I urge the committee to support HB 2061.



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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: AUDREY FINE		PHONE NUMBER: 314-498-4031
REPRESENTING:		TITLE:
ADDRESS: 7453 SOMERSET AVE		
CITY: SAINT LOUIS		STATE: IL ZIP: 63105
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: AYDEN NELSON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: BARI DIAMOND		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 5:15 PM

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My name is Bari Diamond and I am a senior at WashU. Judaism and being Jewish have always been core parts of my identity and while I knew antisemitism existed, and was often even prevalent, on college campuses I never felt it myself until after October 7th. Shortly afterwards, my campus saw a protest at my school where hundreds of people gathered, not only students but people from the surrounding community as well. For the first time I heard people chanting things like 'globalize the intifada' used as if it signified a positive rebellion and not bus bombings or civilian deaths. Across the country both deliberate and ignorant antisemitism is continuing to rise. That's why it's imperative that state legislators work to properly define antisemitism so it can be called out and minimized, keeping Jewish students across the state safe.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: BENJAMIN SCHWARTZ		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 2:06 PM

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This bill is important to protect Jewish students across all Missouri educational institutions. No student should have to fear anti-semitism.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: BEV EHLEN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/10/2026 5:45 AM

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There is growing anti-semitism especially in the young people in America. Every individual should be treated equally, without discrimination based on who/what a person is. It is the actions of an individual that require attention..



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: BRIGITTE ROSENBERG	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 7:00 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Dear Members of the House Emerging Issues Committee,
My name is Rabbi Brigitte Rosenberg, and I submit this testimony in strong support of HB 2061. For more than two decades, as a congregational rabbi, I have worked closely with Jewish families, students, and school administrators across our community. During that time, I have been present for many difficult conversations when something harmful has happened in a school setting and the administration is trying to figure out what to do next.

When antisemitism occurs, I have found administrators unsure whether what they are seeing "counts," how seriously to treat it, or how to respond. I have been asked questions, sometimes nervously, that would rarely be raised if the incident involved racism or another form of bias: Are we sure this is antisemitism? Is this just speech? Is this political? That hesitation, however well-intentioned, leads to delay, inconsistency, and, too often, inaction.

For students, that hesitation matters. I have seen students, including my own child, hesitate to report antisemitic behavior because they assume nothing will be done or that they will not be believed. That assumption grows when responses are uneven; whether harassment happens online, in the hallway, or face-to-face, the impact is a loss of feeling safe and a message that their experience is somehow less urgent than others.

HB 2061 directly addresses this gap in a clear and measured way. By adopting the IHRA Working Definition, the bill gives educators a practical tool to recognize antisemitism just as they do other forms of discrimination; it does not create new penalties or restrict speech. Furthermore, the bill explicitly affirms that legitimate criticism of Israel, comparable to criticism of any other country, is not antisemitic. Finally, the reporting requirements ensure transparency: when incidents are addressed through established Title VI processes, families gain confidence that concerns will not be quietly minimized or dismissed.

Antisemitism is rising nationally and locally, and many Jewish families are beginning to fear that this kind of hatred is simply something to be endured. It must not become "normal" in Missouri schools. Students deserve learning environments where they are safe, respected, and believed.

HB 2061 helps ensure that antisemitism is treated with the seriousness it deserves, no more and no less than other forms of discrimination. For these reasons, I respectfully urge the Committee to support HB 2061.

Thank you for your time and consideration.

Respectfully,

Rabbi Brigitte Rosenberg



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: BRUCE WEINGART	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:40 PM

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The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Working Definition of Antisemitism is an essential tool for understanding and combating antisemitism. It provides clear and comprehensive examples of the multiple forms antisemitism can take, including conspiracy theories, Holocaust denial, and certain forms of antisemitism that target Israel as a Jewish collectivity. The IHRA definition has been adopted by more than 40 nations and multilateral organizations and has provided essential guidance to governments and organizations for nearly two decades in their efforts to combat antisemitism. By requiring Missouri schools to integrate this definition into their codes of conduct, HB 2061 ensures that educational institutions have the clarity needed to identify and respond to antisemitic harassment and discrimination.

The bill creates Title VI coordinator positions at both the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Coordinating Board for Higher Education. These coordinators will establish formal reporting processes for complaints of antisemitic discrimination and harassment, thoroughly investigate all complaints, and compile annual reports to track trends and ensure accountability. This function is essential to ensuring that Jewish students, parents, staff and faculty have clear pathways to report incidents and that educational institutions are held accountable for addressing antisemitism. Establishing clear coordination over the handling of Title VI complaints enables schools to respond effectively and in compliance with their legal obligations.

Antisemitism continues to be a growing concern in educational settings nationwide, and Missouri is not immune. Data from ADL's Audit of Antisemitic Incidents shows that Jewish students and communities face increasing levels of harassment and discrimination. This bill provides Missouri with the tools needed to address these incidents proactively and create safe, inclusive learning environments for all students.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: CHARLENE KASS		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 5:41 PM

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The rise in anti-Semitic actions has reached us personally. I recently put a small "I stand with Israel" yard sign in front of my home in Richmond heights, Mo. That night, my car parked behind our home was vandalized, the rear windshield wiper was broken off and used to scratch the side of my car. The timing was no coincidence.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: CHARLES NATHAN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 3:24 PM

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I support this bill to prevent anti semitism in schools and other institutions



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: CHARLIE WEINGARTEN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: CYNTHIA SOLOMON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 5:27 PM
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: DAHLIA LEVY		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 11:01 PM

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My name is Dahlia Levy, and I am a current senior at WashU. I had to leave my California university after an antisemitic culture overtook my campus. Classes were cancelled so that students could participate in violence and vandalism during demonstrations, like locking one of the administrators in her office, or graffitiing the inside of a building (including statues and carpets) with red spray paint. Extra credit was given by professors for attending demonstrations in support of Hamas. When trying to show a different perspective, I was followed, screamed at, and blocked, and the university did nothing to support me or try to change the culture. This came a year after IHRA was rejected, but a “multifaith group to define antisemitism” was proposed by the student government. This is the result of not having a definition of antisemitism to refer back to. My school president could openly tell me, just days after October 7th, “It’s free speech (to celebrate October 7th and justify terrorism)” and that as a Jew, I should be supporting them because “Jews have always been at the forefront of defending people’s rights of free speech”. Adopting IHRA allows students like me (now living in Missouri) the ability to identify when something is antisemitic. It recenters the conversation around us as Jewish people who are being hurt, instead of focusing on an argument about whether or not something was antisemitic.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: DANA SILVERBLATT	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 2:55 PM

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Anti-semitism is on the rise globally, nationally, and, yes, in our communities across Missouri. As a parent of three school-age children, I have witnessed, heard about, and felt it in big ways and in more subtle variations. But without a standard definition of antisemitism, used across systems in our state, school districts and others have no common metric for what is considered anti-semitism -- which leads to confusion and very different practices, ultimately making our communities less safe and more vulnerable to continued attack. I am in support of HB 2061 for a more streamlined approach to antisemitism harassment and discrimination and provides some safeguards for investigating these incidents. This will also provide clear guidance to school districts and others, reducing guesswork and biases. I recognize that some opposed to HB 2016 are concerned that this may curtail expression around Israel or its government, and I firmly believe in freedom of speech and the right to critique government, leaders, policies, etc. When speech turns into harassment, discrimination, and acts of violence towards Jews or other Zionists, we have to call it what is is: antisemitism. I hope that Missouri will show its commitment to maintaining protections for students by adopting HB 2016 - while also protecting freedom of speech and not declaring all speech that critiques Israel antisemitic. These two aims are not mutually exclusive.



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WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: DAVID SOFFER		PHONE NUMBER: 917-747-6305
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: COMBAT ANTISEMITISM MOVEMENT		TITLE: DIRECTOR OF STATE ENGAGEMENT
ADDRESS: PO BOX 957		
CITY: MOUNDRIDGE		STATE: KS ZIP: 67107
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: DAVIS BREITBARD		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 6:19 PM

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My name is Davis Breitbard, and I am a Jewish student at WashU. I have experienced firsthand the kind of polarizing political terrain young people are going to school in right now. It is scary and intimidating to be openly Jewish, and a lack of understanding around antisemitism contributes to that. Adopting this bill would not only protect Jewish students, but also help legitimize the severity of antisemitism by acknowledging that change needs to occur and this issue is so prevalent that we now require legislation to protect us.

So many peers of ours try to tell us Jewish students what is and isn't antisemitic in an attempt to delegitimize and invalidate harassment and hate speech. This bill would help protect Jewish students in those situations. The bill also protects free speech and still allows for the ability to criticize the Israeli government. It just helps illuminate the boundaries for speech, and create some parameters that can protect Jewish people. Thank you for considering this bill, and for hearing our voices.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: DESTINY G ALBRITTON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 9:54 AM
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: DOUGLAS AARON FREEMAN	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/9/2026 10:56 AM

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1/9/2026: My name is Doug Freeman, and I am writing in support of HB 2061 as an individual Missouri resident.

While others will focus on the merits of this legislation, I want to remind you all of the overall picture.

Back in my time as a government relations expert during MO Governor John Ashcroft's Administration, bipartisanship was prevalent and pursued in many instances.

The fact that anyone would be against combatting anti-semitism boggles my mind.

As someone who has personally experienced, witnessed, and dealt with anti-semitism as an adult in Missouri, I really can't fathom the pain students face under such hatred.

That is the point that I think is missing in this current, silo-based, charged, political environment.

Keep things simple. Do unto others as you would want done onto you.

I have been assured by professionals that freedom of speech is not threatened. HB 2061 is well-crafted, balanced, and on-point to assist our children and young adults facing this vitriol.

Please vote for and pass HB 2061 swiftly and whole-heartedly.

Thank you.

Douglas Aaron Freeman,
16730 Chesterfield Farms Drive,
Chesterfield, MO 63005-1656

DougAaronFreeman@gmail.com

cell: (636) 236-9642



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: DR. NICOLE KRUGER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 3:35 PM

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My children have experienced incidents of antisemitism in the public schools that they attended. My youngest child, a junior in high school, has experienced the most. Hateful language directed at her, threats of violence, and rumors based on her religious background. Our principal has been responsive and appropriate in handling these events. A much more powerful statement to ensure that all Jewish children will be protected under the law of Missouri is to pass this bill!!! We need it and we need it now.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061	DATE: 1/12/2026	
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: ELI BERNE	PHONE NUMBER: 503-828-7153	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: JEWISH FEDERATIONS OF NORTH AMERICA	TITLE: STATE DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: 100 FLORIDA AVE NE 1132		
CITY: WASHINGTON	STATE: DC	ZIP: 20002
EMAIL: Eli.berne@jewishfederations.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 2:53 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Chair Christ, Vice-Chair Peters, Ranking Member Fuchs, and Members of the Committee,

On behalf of the Jewish Federations of North America, which represents a nationwide network of 141 Jewish Federations and hundreds of network communities which serve millions of Jewish Americans across the country, we appreciate the opportunity to submit testimony in strong support of this legislation. We are especially grateful to Representative Hruza, the lead sponsor, and the other cosponsors, for their leadership and moral clarity in bringing this bill forward at a moment when Jewish students and families are increasingly feeling vulnerable in educational settings.

Across the United States, Jewish communities are witnessing a deeply troubling rise in antisemitism in K-12 schools and on college campuses.

This is not an abstract concern. Jewish students are being subjected to harassment, intimidation, social exclusion, and institutional neglect that interfere with their ability to learn, participate in campus life, and feel safe. Parents are reporting that their children are afraid to identify as Jewish in class.

Faculty and staff are facing hostility and marginalization. Too often, administrators respond by saying that the conduct falls into a gray area or is merely political expression, leaving Jewish students without meaningful protection.

This legislation directly addresses that gap by providing Missouri's public educational institutions with a clear, widely accepted framework for recognizing and accurately identifying antisemitic discrimination. By adopting the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's Working Definition of Antisemitism, the bill equips schools with a practical tool that has already been utilized by the U.S. Department of State, the U.S. Department of Education, and democratic governments and universities around the world. Thirty-seven U.S. states have adopted or endorsed the IHRA definition. The IHRA definition does not suppress debate or political speech; it clarifies when conduct crosses the line from protected expression into unlawful discrimination and harassment.

That distinction matters. Antisemitism today often does not present itself in obvious or traditional forms. It is frequently expressed through conspiracy theories about Jewish power, collective blame of Jews for the actions of Israel, or the application of double standards that deny Jews the rights and protections afforded to every other group. Without a clear definition, school officials are left without guidance, and Jewish students are left without recourse. This bill provides both.

Importantly, the legislation also includes explicit and robust protections for free speech. It states

plainly that criticism of Israel comparable to criticism of any other country is not antisemitic, and that nothing in the law diminishes First Amendment rights or conflicts with existing federal or state discrimination laws. What is not permitted, just as it is not permitted for any other protected group, is conduct or action that creates a hostile, intimidating, or discriminatory environment for Jews.

From a civil-rights perspective, this bill simply brings Jewish students and employees into full parity with everyone else. Federal law already recognizes that antisemitic discrimination based on shared ancestry or ethnicity is covered by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act. This legislation ensures that Missouri's public schools and universities actually implement those protections, through clear codes of conduct, formal reporting mechanisms, mandatory investigations, and escalation to the U.S. Department of Education and Department of Justice when institutions fail to act. That accountability is essential if civil-rights protections are to mean anything in practice.

For Jewish families in Missouri, this bill sends a powerful and reassuring message: your children belong in our schools, your identity will be respected, and your safety and dignity matter. It also sends a broader message that Missouri takes discrimination seriously, regardless of the form it takes or the group it targets.

We again thank Representative Hruza for his leadership and commitment to ensuring that Missouri's educational institutions remain places of learning, not intimidation. We urge the committee to advance this legislation and affirm Missouri's commitment to equal protection, civil rights, and the safety of all students.

Sincerely,
Eli Berne
State Director, Government Relations
Jewish Federations of North America



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
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TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ELI MEISSNER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
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MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: EVAN CUTLER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 1:37 PM

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Protecting our Jewish students must be a priority.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: FAWN CHAPEL		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/9/2026 3:32 PM

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I work with so many high school kids who have experienced antisemitism. They are often uncomfortable in our beautiful Missouri and United States. Antisemitism has been surging in recent years. Please help protect this religious minority that has been the victim of bigotry for far too long.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: GARRY VICKAR		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 1:52 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Recent terrorist attacks in Mississippi and before that Australia, and before that Pittsburgh—. Do I need to go on.

One shouldn't be frightened to gather and worship in a safe place. Antisemitism has been out in the open more now than any other time in my 79 years. And it is taking more violent expressions. This bill is a beginning to confront and address the horrors of where the current climate leads. Thank you.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: I. RICHARD LEVY		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 4:15 PM

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Our Parkway students deserve a safe environment, and allowed ro be Jewish while getting a High School education.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ILAN BARNEA	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 7:03 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

My name is Ilan Barnea, and I am a Fall of 2025 graduate of Washington University in St. Louis. My time in Missouri and on a college campus has spanned pre and post-October 7th and has allowed me to bear witness to antisemitism in many forms, leading me to write in strong support of HB 2061 and the standardization of a proper and fully functioning definition of antisemitism.

Throughout my college career, I have had people say both to my face, over social media, and while attending protests, blatant antisemitic remarks, both due to true beliefs while also a lack of an understanding of what antisemitism truly is. By adopting the IHRA definition, the state of Missouri can pave the way to ensuring that the next generation of students, college and younger, are aware of the hatred for the Jewish people that has grown exponentially around the world. It can prevent such cases as children holding signs on our campus stating “Say No to National Zionism, with the “NA” and “ZI” highlighted to read “NAZI”, without fully being able to comprehend or grasp the implications of this sign. The IHRA definition will create a clear idea of what is and is not antisemitic and help future Jewish students navigate the college experience that awaits them, involving pure hatred and violence towards their own people by being able to point to something that clearly identifies the root of the issue.

HB 2061 shows that Missouri is on the right side of history in preventing the further spread of hatred and discrimination towards the Jewish people and tells the Jewish population, both native to Missouri and just living here for college, that Missouri cares for them.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: IRL STEPHEN SOLOMON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 7:58 PM

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I'm counting on the legislature to pass HB 2061. The State of Missouri will be blessed if the bill is passed.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JEFFREY ABRAHAM		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		

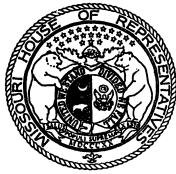


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TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JOHN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:24 PM

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This bill provides Missouri with the tools needed to address antisemitism incidents proactively and create safe, inclusive learning environments for all students.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: JORDAN KADOSH	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: ADL	TITLE:	
ADDRESS: PO BOX 16141		
CITY: CLAYTON	STATE: MO	ZIP: 63105
EMAIL: jkadosh@adl.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 2:01 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

ADL (the Anti-Defamation League) is submitting testimony in support of HB 2061, a bill that accomplishes two critical objectives – ensuring that education institutions in Missouri use the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Working Definition of Antisemitism when identifying and responding to antisemitic incidents, and outlining the responsibilities of Title VI coordinators to ensure compliance with Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, providing accountability for addressing antisemitic harassment and discrimination in K-12 schools and on college and university campuses.

Since 1913, ADL's mission has been to stop the defamation of the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment to all. ADL is a leading anti-hate organization with deep expertise in combating antisemitism, countering extremism and challenging all forms of discrimination. Through our research, education, advocacy and litigation, we strive to create a world without hate. ADL's Heartland region serves communities across Missouri, partnering with schools, law enforcement, civic leaders and community organizations to address hate and promote inclusive environments where all can thrive.

We are facing a troubling rise in antisemitism, particularly on college and university campuses and in our K-12 schools. During the 2023-2024 academic year, ADL recorded over 1,400 antisemitic incidents on campuses across the nation. On numerous occasions, disturbing rhetoric escalated into action, as protests morphed into encampments that included calls for universities to cut ties with Jewish institutions and were frequently sites of harassment against Jewish people on campus. These activities created an environment of fear and hostility for Jewish students and faculty. The ADL 2024 Audit of Antisemitic Incidents recorded multiple K-12 school-related antisemitic incidents in Missouri and involved harassment targeting Jewish students or educational institutions. This continues a troubling trend we observed in 2023, when Missouri experienced a 143% increase in antisemitic K-12 school incidents compared to 2022.

Further, ADL in partnership with Hillel International and College Pulse fielded a survey last year of college students at 135 universities across the United States. The results showed that 83% of Jewish college students have experienced or witnessed antisemitism firsthand since the October 7th attack. 41% of Jewish students felt the need to hide their Jewish identity and one-in-four felt compelled to take security precautions. The most alarming statistic is that two-thirds of Jewish students lack confidence in their university's ability to prevent antisemitic incidents.

HB 2061 requires Missouri's public schools and institutions of higher education to utilize a definition

such as the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism by integrating it into student, faculty, and employee codes of conduct. This definition is an indispensable tool for understanding and combating antisemitism - one that has been adopted by more than 40 nations and multilateral organizations, including the European Union and the Organization of American States.

The IHRA Working Definition provides clear and comprehensive examples of the multiple forms antisemitism can take, including conspiracy theories, Holocaust denial, and antisemitism that targets Israel as a Jewish collectivity. It empowers victims and society at large to identify forms of antisemitism that might otherwise go unrecognized, providing valuable guidance to administrators, faculty, and law enforcement on what exactly constitutes antisemitism and the different forms it can take.

Importantly, HB 2061 states that criticism of Israel that is similar to criticism toward any other country shall not be construed to be antisemitic, and nothing in the bill shall be interpreted to diminish or infringe upon any right protected under the First Amendment to the Constitution of the United States or the Constitution of Missouri.

By using the IHRA definition when there are violations of student codes of conduct, HB 2061 provides critical guidance to help identify, understand, and address antisemitic incidents in our K-12 schools and universities.

HB 2061 also provides a framework for Title VI coordinators at both the Department of Elementary and Secondary Education and the Coordinating Board for Higher Education to oversee compliance with Title VI and ensure that Jewish students are protected from discrimination and harassment.

Title VI states that “no person in the United States shall, on the basis of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, denied the benefits of, or be subject to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.” This includes discrimination based on a group’s actual or perceived shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics. A hostile environment exists if the harassment denies or limits a student’s ability to participate in or benefit from the institution’s educational programs and activities.

Colleges and universities must take prompt action that is reasonably calculated to end the harassment, eliminate the hostile environment, and prevent the harassment from recurring, or they risk violating Title VI. However, students are not always aware of these protections under Title VI, or how to engage them effectively. At the same time, colleges and universities may not be equipped to comply with Title VI and ensure that all students are protected from discrimination and harassment.

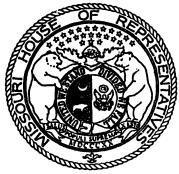
Under HB 2061, Title VI coordinators would be tasked with establishing, maintaining, and publicizing a formal reporting process by which students, parents, staff, and faculty can submit complaints of antisemitic discrimination and harassment; thoroughly investigating all complaints; notifying educational institutions of determinations and requiring them to address issues within thirty days; reporting non-compliant institutions to the United States Department of Education and the United States Department of Justice under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964; and compiling annual reports on complaints of antisemitic discrimination and harassment to be submitted to the General Assembly.

This individual would serve a purpose similar to a Title IX Coordinator, which is already in place at the University of Missouri system, state colleges, and community colleges. Establishing clear accountability and coordination over the handling of Title VI complaints will enable educational institutions to respond effectively and in compliance with their legal obligations. Transparency about the complaints received will help build community trust, show that our schools are taking these issues seriously, and give administrators the data they need to respond effectively and prevent future harm.

The 105 antisemitic incidents recorded in Missouri in 2024 demonstrate the urgent need for action. HB 2061 provides Missouri with the tools needed to address antisemitic incidents proactively and create safe, inclusive learning environments for all students. By integrating the IHRA Working Definition into codes of conduct and empowering Title VI coordinators, this legislation ensures that Jewish students, faculty, and staff have clear pathways to report incidents and that educational institutions are held accountable for addressing antisemitism.

I urge the House Emerging Issues Committee to pass HB 2061 favorably out of committee.

-Jordan Kadosh, ADL Heartland Regional Director



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JOSEPH SERBER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:18 PM

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I support passage of HB2061 because incidents of antisemitism are growing in Missouri and the U.S. generally. Our students are vulnerable to such attacks, which should be curbed by the state. Thank you.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: KATHRINE ROSE ELLENHAM		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
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MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: KEITH		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/9/2026 2:36 PM

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I'm not Jewish. I'm Catholic. I can't remain silent as Jewish hatred rages across our society.

Simmering beneath the surface around the world, especially at college campuses, is a hostility toward a group of people because of how they were born. This hatred resurfaced with troubling undertones in the wake of Hamas' barbaric attack against Israel in October 2023.

At our educational institutions Jewish students are facing harassment, being verbally assaulted, and physically attacked because of who they are.

Our Jewish neighbors having to hide their identity is reminiscent of more ominous times that we should not wish to repeat.

Students should feel safe, and Missouri's schools should be doing all they can to protect all students from threats of violence.

We can't remain silent as Jewish hatred surges across our country and the world.

We must stand in solidarity with our Jewish brothers and sisters and call out the antisemitic hate engulfing the world.

I urge this committee to pass HB 2061.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: KIRSCH MOSHE		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/9/2026 3:44 PM

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I support this bill that prohibits antisemitism and auto-semetic action!



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

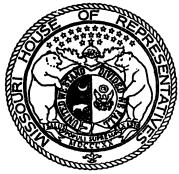
BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: LANE STEINGER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 11:55 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

As a native Missourian who returned to my home state after living away from Missouri for nearly thirty years, I strongly support HB 2061. In this time of increasing antisemitism, acts against Jews pose a dire problem.

Missouri law should clearly define antisemitism and enshrine the illegality of actions which are antisemitic, which HB 2061 will do.

Every Jewish Missourian and every Jewish visitor to our state should be welcome, safe and secure in Missouri, therefore I support HB 2061 and urge its passage.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: LARRY GRUNSPAN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:58 PM

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I strongly support this action to prohibit anti-semitic action



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: LATRICE LEE		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 6:22 PM

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I'm in support of prohibiting antisemitic actions. As a black woman, the rising tide of blind hatred towards Jews is deeply troubling.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: LEILA REDLICH, DVM		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/10/2026 9:59 PM

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To whom it may concern,
Thank you for taking this seriously. I am a daughter of a Holocaust Survivor. My father's family was decimated (except for one sister) because of antisemitism in Poland. Please protect us here in the state of Missouri.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: LINDA KRAM		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 3:31 PM
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MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: LINDA RHODES		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 1:05 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I work at a college and have experienced antisemitism in the workplace from colleagues. Please pass this legislation to protect students, staff & faculty from acts of hate.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: LISA GOTTLIEB-CYTRON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 10:12 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Please give your Jewish constituents the same protections afforded to everyone else. The world has become a frightening place for people in the Jewish community. We have, and will continue to stand in solidarity with others who face fear and discrimination, and hope that you will do the same for us. A clear definition of anti-semitism and ways to report incidents would be a very helpful beginning.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: LORENA E WILSON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 10:10 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I am writing in support of HB 2061. Denial of the Holocaust is a growing problem that is resulting in discrimination, harassment, danger and death to Jewish people and those who support them. Former President Dwight D. Eisenhower had the foresight to recognize future Holocaust denial. As a general in World War II, Eisenhower was Supreme Commander of the Allied Expeditionary Force in Europe. According to the National Parks Service website, "Eisenhower saw the importance of chronicling and collecting evidence of the Nazi atrocities ... he prioritized the documentation of the Holocaust and ensured that it would not be forgotten." Today, sadly, not only are the Nazi atrocities being forgotten, they are being denied. Jewish people are once again being blamed for problems just as Hitler's followers scapegoated their ancestors less than 100 years ago. Please pass HB 2061 because we can only defeat lies and persecution with education.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MARCIE ROSENKOETTER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 1:04 PM

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Support HB 2061



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MARTHA KREIPKE		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 3:19 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

The rise of potentially violent acts rising from antisemitism is very real. The resulting fear is very real and justified. The arson attack on the synagogue in Jackson, MS is one of the latest significant examples. The educational recommendations for this bill are some of the most important and effective means to counter these actions. As a member of the St. Louis Jewish community I want to feel safe again in own homes, gatherings, organizations, schools and houses of worship.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MARY MCLEAN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 3:00 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I would like to see this framework adopted for addressing antisemitism in Missouri's public schools and colleges/universities.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MEGAN CURTIS		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:27 PM

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I am in support of this bill to help combat dangerous things from happening to people because of things they cannot control. Before we entered into WWII there was many hateful things coming from this country onto its own Jewish citizens. Let us make sure all are treated with respect here, and protected from fake news.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MELISSA NOVOTNY	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 10:45 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I am a married 47-year-old mother of 2. I was raised Catholic, even went to Catholic schools 1st through 12th grade. I have worked at WashU Hillel, a Jewish non-profit, for 13 years now. One would think that after 13 years in a Jewish world, I would be used to the shocking differences between this and a Christian world, but I still find myself regularly shocked. For so many years, I was blissfully unaware of the daily differences in my world vs that of others in our communities. I am responsible, among other things, for hiring the officers we must use for Shabbat services and meals every week, for all Jewish holidays, for any occasion with a large number of Jews in one area. I handle the security for the premises, which even includes particular postal handling procedures because of the constant heightened threat for Jewish organizations. In a previous career, I was a safety manager in industry. That was by and large an effort in controlling the employee environment and practice; in other words, they were the threat to themselves. In my Hillel world, the threat is from the outside, from anyone, anywhere, anytime. I cannot predict or control, I cannot write a procedure to protect our students from it, I cannot engineer it out of their environment.

The phrases we now hear on the regular build an attitude of apathy to an entire religion, and not just the blatantly hateful phrases, but the same tired tropes folks still chuckle at with friends, that government officials post. It is ALL antisemitism. No amount of it should ever be tolerated, but in the real world, we have no choice but to tolerate it. Hillels, synagogues, Jewish centers, even public schools, are defaced with symbols and words, and we paint over it and go on. We all know the statistics on hate crimes against Jews, even though Jews constitute the striking minority of people. It is time to actively stop to allowing any level of antisemitic rhetoric and hate, it is time to take action against this, rather than accept it simply because it isn't happening to the majority of us, which is what has been done in policy thus far. At Hillel, we have all grown to love our officers dearly, but we would love not to have to hire them for services and events 3+ days a week, solely because we are Jewish. I want my students to grow up in the same world I did, where the thought of officers standing guard for my holiday is ridiculous, unnecessary, and unacceptable.

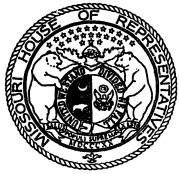


MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MELISSA WALLACE		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 5:41 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

My daughter Katie attended Parkway West High School. Her senior year she was harassed verbally and on-line for being Jewish. She heard statements like, "I'm glad October 7th happened and I hope it happens again", "I hope all your people die". This same group of people disrupted her graduation. She finished high school a semester early because she feared for her physical safety. Administration said they couldn't do anything until they actually hurt her on property. It's disgusting and we are so tired of standing up for everyone else but the world does not value Jewish lives. Please help.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MICHAEL ELLENHORN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		



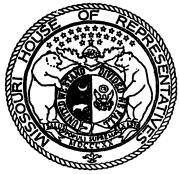
MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: MICHAEL LOURIE		PHONE NUMBER: 314-799-8133
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: JEWISH FEDERATION OF ST. LOUIS		TITLE: VP, PUBLIC AFFAIRS
ADDRESS: 12 MILLSTONE CAMPUS		
CITY: ST. LOUIS		STATE: MO
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MICHAELLA MOLL		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		



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TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: NANCY LISKER	PHONE NUMBER: 314-721-8764	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE (AJC)	TITLE: REGIONAL DIRECTOR	
ADDRESS: 13788 CONWAY RD.		
CITY: ST. LOUIS	STATE: MO	ZIP: 63141
EMAIL: liskern@ajc.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 4:12 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

There is no question that antisemitism is on the rise and that that rise has crept into educational institutions across the country. Antisemitism threatens not only Jews but the democratic fabric of the country, and Missouri is not immune. AJC therefore supports HB2061's goal of guarding against antisemitism in educational institutions and providing for effective remedies when it does surface. However, we believe that this bill needs to be strengthened in two important respects:

1. HB2061 should ensure that harassment and discrimination against Jews is treated in the same manner as race, color and national origin under Title VI. HB2061's language should ensure that all forms of discrimination under Title VI are handled appropriately, whether involving antisemitism or other forms of bias. Antisemitism should have no less, but no more protection than other forms of discrimination.
2. AJC agrees with the provision in section 160.014 that states that the IHRA definition of antisemitism should be used as a "tool and guide" in determining when speech or conduct is antisemitic. However, that framing is at odds with a later provision in section 173.001, line 19, that requires the definition to be incorporated into codes of conduct and then used as a standard for violations.
 - 2.1. We recommend revising all provisions related to IHRA to emphasize that the definition is only to be used as a tool and guide in identifying evidence of discrimination based on antisemitism, and not as a strict liability code in and of itself. The bill should emphasize that the inquiry into whether a particular act constitutes prohibited discrimination requires a detailed analysis of the allegations and evidence. This approach is consistent with the way the IHRA definition is used by the federal government. See Executive Order No. 13,899, Combating Anti-Semitism, 84 Fed. Reg. 68,779 (Dec. 11, 2019).



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: NOAM KARGER	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 11:23 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I grew up in a small town outside Boston, where I never experienced antisemitism. As an Orthodox Jew, I walked around every day with a yarmulke on my head, but I never thought twice about it. Even after touring ghettos and concentration camps in Poland during my gap year before college, I felt completely comfortable displaying my Jewish identity in public. I always considered myself to be of the privileged class in America that enjoys freedom from hardship and discrimination. That has changed dramatically since October 7th.

As if dealing with the terror and grief shared among the Jewish people from the events of October 7th itself and the ensuing war thereafter wasn't enough, I got a nasty wakeup call regarding the state of antisemitism in America. Suddenly, the war wasn't only against my friends and family in Israel. It had come to my backyard, 5000 miles away. The illusion of privilege and protection under which I was raised crumbled, revealing a dark, dark world behind it. Just days after October 7th, while still mourning, I felt obligated to attend a counter-demonstration against a massive anti-Israel protest on WashU's campus. We were severely outnumbered, but we stood in silence and watched in horror as protestors with megaphones looked us in the eyes and called us out by name for not supporting Hamas' "resistance." These protests continued throughout the year, and rhetoric constantly crossed into antisemitic territory, often disguised using "Zionists" as a dog whistle for Jews.

The moment I knew we were truly lost was when a Jewish girl started a chant, "When people are occupied, resistance is justified!" Just months earlier, members of her own people, the Jewish people, were raped in their bedrooms by Hamas terrorists. And here she was cheering those same terrorists on for their "resistance." The fact that a Jewish girl has been misled into believing these chants are morally sound shows just how dangerous the disease of antisemitism is. It is most lethal when it is silent. And most effective when it is ignored.

Covertly disguised antisemitic rhetoric has grown into consequence-free public Jew hatred. And that language has led to increasing physical attacks on Jews, whether that's with fists, knives, or guns. All around the world. I now live in a world where my yarmulke isn't a symbol of national pride and religious devotion—it's a target on my head. I leave my friend's apartment in NYC, and their father reminds me to take off my yarmulke before entering the subway. My friends' parents have stopped lighting their menorahs in their windows. I no longer live a life where I feel invincible. I've become brutally aware of how precarious my safety is as a Jew in this country.

This is a country to which my ancestors migrated in the hope of finding a protected and peaceful life. One where they don't have to look over their shoulders when they wear their yarmulke in public. And

this is a country that was founded on the ideals of religious freedom and the protection of vulnerable minorities. Have we strayed from our identity? Should a Jewish person need to stay up until 4AM to write an article for his student newspaper about why calling for the genocide of Jews is wrong? Should a Jewish person need to meet with his university's administration to explain how people dressing up as Hamas terrorists intimidate and harass Jewish students while also preventing them from accessing University buildings?

What America is lacking right now is people in power with the care and courage to stand up for the Jewish people and protect our right to exist in peace, just like any other American citizen. We need strong and clear leadership from those who do not fear backlash from those who are in the wrong, no matter how loud they may be. HB 2061 accomplishes exactly that, taking a strong stance in defining what is antisemitic and what is not. As simple as it sounds, it's so crucial for our safety and ability to exist on college campuses free of discrimination.

At the end of the day, it seems the choice is between individuals who want to be allowed to place tents in a courtyard and people who've been persecuted for 3000 years asking for physical protection in this country known for liberty and life. The ramifications of ignoring the pleas of Jewish people for protection have been experienced far too many times in global history. I strongly believe that America is the country with the potential to resist this pattern. But it will not without you. The Jewish people need you. The question is whether you will allow antisemitism to become lethal in its silence and effective in America's ignorance. Or if you will do your part to stop it in its tracks.

Thank you,
Noam Karger
Senior at WashU



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: PEARL KRAMER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 10:42 AM
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MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: RABBI LINDA K STEIGMAN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 1:41 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

As a rabbi with grandchildren in public schools in Kansas City, I think this bill is very important in protecting them from the rampant antisemitism that surrounds us at this time, and only promises to gert w



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: RABBI ZEV SMASON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 7:58 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Dear Members of the Missouri General Assembly,

I write in strong support of House Bill 2061, which affirms Missouri's longstanding commitment to equal protection and nondiscrimination in our public educational institutions. This bill provides clear guidance to K-12 schools and public colleges and universities by ensuring that antisemitic harassment and discrimination are treated with the same seriousness and accountability as discrimination based on race, consistent with existing civil rights law.

HB 2061 does not create new categories of speech or belief, nor does it suppress lawful expression. Rather, it adopts the widely recognized International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Working Definition of Antisemitism as a practical tool to help educational institutions identify and address conduct that creates intimidation, exclusion, or fear. Importantly, the bill explicitly protects First Amendment rights and makes clear that legitimate criticism of Israel, comparable to criticism of any other nation, is not antisemitic.

At a time when Jewish students and faculty across the country report rising incidents of harassment and exclusion, this legislation provides clarity, consistency, and transparency. By integrating clear standards into institutional codes of conduct and establishing formal reporting and oversight mechanisms under existing Title VI frameworks, HB 2061 strengthens enforcement without expanding bureaucracy or undermining constitutional protections.

Missouri has an opportunity to reaffirm that all students and employees deserve a learning environment free from discrimination, intimidation, and fear. House Bill 2061 does so thoughtfully and responsibly, aligning state policy with federal civil rights law while preserving free expression. I respectfully urge your support for this important legislation.

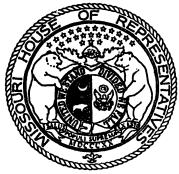
Sincerely,

Rabbi Ze'ev Smason
President, Coalition for Jewish Values – Missouri
Vice President, Coalition for Jewish Values – National



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: RENEE GREENGART		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/10/2026 7:07 PM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: RICHARD L SCHUR		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 7:40 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

It is essential that the State of Missouri take action to protect Jews from antisemitism. Antisemitism has increased markedly over the past two years. Just yesterday a synagogue was burned down in Mississippi. In December, two gunmen attacked a Hanukkah celebration in Australia. The ADL reports that antisemitic activity is increasing in Missouri. It is time for the legislature to act.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: RICK CORNFELD	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 9:13 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

My name is Rick Cornfeld. I am an attorney retired from private practice and doing pro bono legal work on behalf of StandWithUs, an international nonprofit that fights antisemitism. In the local Jewish community, I am a past president of United Hebrew Congregation, one of Missouri's largest synagogues; former co-chair of the St. Louis Council and member of the National Council of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee; member of the local Board of the American Jewish Committee; and member of the Board of the Missouri Alliance Network. I thank the Committee for giving me the opportunity to submit my views on this important legislation.

I support HB 2061 for two reasons, both related to the alarming increase in antisemitism in this country, including Missouri, over the past few years.

First, the provision requiring that public schools and universities publicly report antisemitic incidents and complaints to the Missouri Department of Education will provide needed transparency regarding antisemitism in our schools and better enable parents, students, and other citizens to fight it.

Second, the adoption of the IHRA definition of antisemitism will enable all Missourians to identify antisemitic acts when they are confronted with them. The opposition to this definition is misguided. The definition was adopted by the U.S. State Department under the Obama Administration, and its adoption was reiterated under each successive administration, including the current Trump Administration. It has been adopted by 46 countries (see <https://www.adc.org/adoption-of-the-working-definition>), nearly 40 states and the District of Columbia (35 states as of 2024, <https://www.adc.org/use-of-the-working-definition-in-the-us>, and several more in 2025), nearly 100 local governments, including St. Louis County and Kansas City, MO (id.), and dozens of colleges and universities (see <https://www.adc.org/us-campus-adoption-of-the-working-definition>).

Missouri adopted the definition in 2023 by Governor Parson's proclamation. (See <https://stljewishlight.org/news/news-local/missouri-adopts-ihra-antisemitism-definition/>). In issuing the proclamation, Gov. Parson stated, "We also want to take this opportunity to unequivocally reject antisemitism towards Jewish people and bigotry of any kind." (See <https://www.jns.org/us-news/missouri/23/9/19/320110/>.)

Opponents are wrong that the definition makes criticism of Israel antisemitic. To the contrary, the definition states the opposite, so long as that criticism doesn't hold Israel to a different standard than other countries and doesn't deny the Jewish people their right to self-determination.

For these reasons, I urge the Committee to approve HB 2061.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: RIVKA DUSHOFF-TOBIN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 7:38 PM

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The great majority of hate crimes based on religion is against Jews. There are rallies saying "globalize the intifada, kill all the Jews." This action is necessary to ensure the safety of Jewish citizens in Missouri.



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TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: RIVKA WEINGARDEN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/9/2026 3:40 PM

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To oppose something like this goes against American values of freedom of religion and fuels hate and hate crimes



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TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SAM ZITIN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
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MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SANDRA WEITKAMP		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 6:07 PM

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I fully endorse this amendment. Antisemitism is a growing problem and Jews need to be protected.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SARAH FALKOFF		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
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COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
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WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: SCOTT BIONDO		PHONE NUMBER: 314-442-3883
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: JEWISH FEDERATION OF ST. LOUIS		TITLE:
ADDRESS: 12 MILLSTONE CAMPUS DR		
CITY: ST. LOUIS		STATE: MO ZIP: 63146
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		



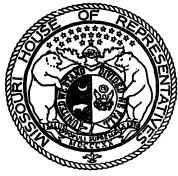
MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SHARON KATZ-WEINTRAUB		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 2:34 PM
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MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: STACEY NEWMAN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
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TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: STACY KRESS	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 10:40 AM

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I am writing in support of House Bill 2061 and to share a personal experience involving my 17-year-old son that has stayed with our family throughout this school year.

Earlier this year, the student body president at my son's public high school posted a message on their Snapchat story that said, in part:

"fk israel and fk anyone who supports their bullst. get the hl off of the land and go back to your own sh***y countries...."

Seeing this message was shocking, painful, and frightening for Jewish students at the school. What made it especially impactful was not just the content, but the source. This was not an anonymous post—it came from a student who was widely respected, elected by peers, and seen as a leader within the school community.

My son and his Jewish classmates suddenly felt exposed and isolated. Students talked about it in hallways and group chats. Some wondered whether their classmates now viewed them differently, or whether it was safe to speak up at all. Even though the message was directed at Israel, the language made it clear that Jews themselves were the target.

I want to be clear that the school handled the situation appropriately. Administrators took the incident seriously, involved the proper authorities, and disciplined the student. We are grateful for that response. Even so, the emotional impact on students did not simply disappear once discipline was administered. Words like these linger, especially when they come from someone in a position of influence.

This experience is why I support House Bill 2061. The bill recognizes antisemitism as a form of discrimination that deserves the same seriousness and clarity as other forms of hate, while still protecting free speech and legitimate political discourse. It sends an important message to students and families that Jewish students are seen, protected, and not expected to quietly absorb rhetoric that tells them they do not belong.

No student should have to question their safety or their place in their own school because of who they are. I urge you to support House Bill 2061 and help ensure that our schools remain places where all students can learn without fear or intimidation.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: STANLEY BIEL, MD		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/10/2026 9:53 PM

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To whom it may concern,
Thank you for taking up Bill HB2061. Both of my parents survived the Holocaust in Poland. I support whatever you can do to fight, antisemitism and hold people accountable in Missouri. Thank you!



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: STUART JAY OZAR		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:16 PM

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Antisemitism is on the rise and all efforts need to be made to counter what is a danger to all of society.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: STUART KLAMEN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 1:35 PM

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Antisemitism is rampant in educational institutions in Missouri



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TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: SURI BOTUCK	PHONE NUMBER: 845-641-0012	
REPRESENTING: AGUDATH ISRAEL OF AMERICA	TITLE:	
ADDRESS: 9433 OLIVE BLVD		
CITY: OLIVETTE	STATE: MO	ZIP: 63132
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
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MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME		
REGISTERED LOBBYIST:		
WITNESS NAME: SURI BOTUCK		PHONE NUMBER: 845-641-0012
REPRESENTING: AGUDATH ISRAEL OF MISSOURI		TITLE: DIRECTOR OF GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS
ADDRESS: 9433 OLIVE BLVD, SUITE 100		
CITY: OLIVETTE		STATE: MO
EMAIL: sbotuck@agudahmo.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 11:18 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Honorable Members of the Committee:

I write to you today on behalf of Agudath Israel of America's Missouri office to express our firm support for HB2061, which proposes the adoption of the widely recognized International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of anti-Semitism within the state of Missouri and establishes safeguards to protect Jewish students in public educational institutions from antisemitic discrimination.

In recent years, we have witnessed an alarming rise in antisemitic incidents, both across the country and within our state, that threaten not only the Jewish communities, but the very fabric of our society. Just this past summer in Clayton, three cars were firebombed and Death to the IDF was painted on the road outside the home of a family with ties to the IDF. FBI data from 2024 revealed that 69% of all anti-religious hate crimes in the country were anti-Jewish despite Jews making up only 2.4% of the population and a study from the ADL released in January 2025 revealed that a staggering 83% of Jewish college students across the country have experienced or witnessed antisemitism first-hand since 10/7/2023.

The IHRA definition provides a comprehensive framework for identifying and understanding antisemitism in all its manifestations, including traditional forms of Jew-hatred as well as newer, more insidious expressions found in modern discourse and online platforms. Establishing IHRA as the working definition of antisemitism, together with the protections that this bill provides our Jewish students, gives state agencies, educational institutions, and law enforcement a consistent and practical tool for identifying antisemitic conduct and responding decisively when it occurs.

By adopting the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism and protecting Jewish students throughout the state, Missouri has the opportunity to send a clear and unequivocal message that such bigotry will not be tolerated within our borders.

Agudath Israel is especially grateful to Representative Hruza for sponsoring the bill, Speaker Patterson for his staunch support, as well as Representatives Butz, Fowler, and Amato for co-sponsoring this critical piece of legislation.

We urge the swift passage of this bill and call upon all committee members to vote yes on HB2061.

We look forward towards a future where all individuals in this great state are treated with dignity, respect, and equality under the law.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: TARAH CASTLEBERRY		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 1:15 PM

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My name is Tarah Castleberry, and I am submitting this statement in support of HB 2061.

As a woman of color - I know what harassment and discrimination feel like and how deeply they can affect a person's sense of safety. When someone is targeted because of who they are, it does not just distract from their education — it changes how they move through the world, especially in places where they should feel secure.

No student should have to endure intimidation or hostility while trying to learn. Jewish students deserve the same protections from harassment and discrimination that exist for other protected groups, and HB 2061 helps ensure those protections are clear and enforceable within educational settings.

I support this bill because it focuses on preventing harm and ensuring accountability, not on suppressing lawful speech. It provides schools with guidance on addressing antisemitic conduct that creates a hostile environment, while still respecting constitutional rights. That balance is important.

This bill is not about giving special treatment — it is about equal protection. It helps ensure that no student is left without support when discrimination interferes with their education or sense of safety.

For these reasons, I respectfully support HB 2061.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: TIM MELLMAN	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 2:39 PM

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My name is Tim Mellman, and I'm a senior at WashU in St. Louis. I'm a Jewish student who has seen first-hand the presence of Jew-hatred on school campuses, and I'm writing in strong support of HB 2061 because it will protect Jewish students across the state without impeding on the constitutional right to free speech.

WashU is, by most measures, a safe place to be a Jew. But since Oct. 7, 2023, antisemitism at WashU has increased along with the rest of the world.

Let me tell you a bit about what I have seen on campus over the past 2.5 years:

- At the attempted encampment at WashU in May 2024, I saw a sign that read, "What Israelis are doing to Palestine is what the Nazis did to them." This is classic Holocaust inversion — antisemitism disguised as criticism of Israel attached to antisemitic tropes of Jews — and the IHRA definition makes sure hatred like this is correctly considered antisemitic.

- I saw a man wearing a green headband associated with Hamas — on a campus where one in every four students is Jewish, that's intimidation bordering on threat of imminent violence.

- I saw people holding signs that read, "Say No to National Zionism, with the "NA" and "ZI" highlighted to read "NAZI" — under the IHRA definition, this is again correctly considered antisemitic Holocaust inversion.

- I was personally targeted. As I watched the protest, one of the lead organizers walked over to me and yelled, "How does it feel to be a racist? You piece of shit, fuck you." I had said nothing to him, but I was wearing a kippah and a Bring Them Home tag — I was verbally attacked because I was visibly Jewish.

Not all criticism of Israel is antisemitic — IHRA explicitly states this. But when criticism evokes antisemitic tropes and threatens violence, a line is crossed. This happens all too often.

I have been harassed online by classmates who have created burner accounts and referenced Hamas acts of terrorism to intimidate me. I have been doxxed and targeted repeatedly by students and once even by a professor.

Now, could each of these be considered protected free speech in a typical public forum? Perhaps you could make that argument. But here's the thing: this conduct is intimidating and threatening to Jewish

students, and it disrupts our ability to learn. If you care about protecting your students, you should vote in favor of this legislation.

I'm grateful that WashU has protected myself and other Jewish students by properly investigating each instance of antisemitism that I've experienced — this bill ensures that public schools across the state must protect their Jewish students similarly. The IHRA definition is vital because it makes sure that all of these acts of antisemitic discrimination and Jew-hatred are correctly considered antisemitic.

Thank you to Reps. Hruza and Mackey for leading this effort to protect me and my fellow Jewish students across the state.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: TOM		PHONE NUMBER: 573-268-7105
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: CHRISTIANS UNITED FOR ISRAEL		TITLE: MINISTRY ENGAGEMENT STATE COORDINATOR
ADDRESS: 104 DENE DR		
CITY: COLUMBIA		STATE: MO ZIP: 65201
EMAIL: tom.ieuther@cufi.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 3:28 PM

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Over the past five years, the United States has experienced a 340% increase in antisemitic incidents. Over the past decade, that increase has reached an alarming 890%. These are not abstract statistics—they represent real acts of hatred, intimidation, and violence against Jewish Americans.

Just recently, a synagogue in Jackson, Mississippi, was set ablaze in an alleged arson attack. This is a stark reminder that antisemitism is not a problem of the past. It is a present and growing threat that demands a clear and effective response.

We cannot defeat what we will not define, and we cannot change what we are unwilling to confront. The IHRA definition of antisemitism provides a clear, internationally recognized framework for identifying antisemitism in its modern forms.

Importantly, adoption of this definition does not criminalize speech. An underlying unlawful act must occur before the definition is even considered, and then only as guidance. It protects free expression while ensuring that antisemitic conduct is properly identified and addressed.

The IHRA definition has been adopted by 35 countries, including Canada, Germany, Israel, the United Kingdom, and the United States. In our nation, it was implemented through Executive Order 13899 in 2019 and has been sustained by subsequent administrations. Additionally, 36 states and the District of Columbia have acknowledged the definition and its examples through various means.

Adopting this definition helps prevent antisemites from hiding behind modernized language and contemporary tropes. It equips leaders, educators, and public servants with the tools they need to recognize antisemitism accurately and respond appropriately—nothing more and nothing less.

I respectfully urge you to support the adoption of this definition as a necessary step in protecting our Jewish citizens and confronting antisemitism with clarity, consistency, and resolve.

Thank you for your time and consideration.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: TOM		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
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"As antisemitism continues to rise in Missouri and across our nation, we must take a firm stand to protect our Jewish citizens. I fully support this bill and the values it represents. Dr. Tom Leuther



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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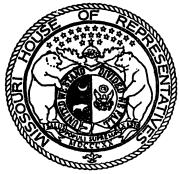
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ZIPORA GUTTMAN	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 2:03 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

My name is Tzipora Guttman and I am a Freshman at Washington University in St. Louis. I am writing to express my strong support for House Bill 2061. Growing up, antisemitism was never an abstract concept to me. My grandparents met after being liberated from the Gunskirchen concentration camp in 1945. Hoping to leave the horrors of the holocaust behind, they rebuilt their lives first in Canada, and then later in New York. My father grew up facing relentless antisemitism, frequently beaten and assaulted simply for being Jewish. This legacy taught me that antisemitism carries real and lasting consequences. However, it was not until October 7th that the issue became impossible to ignore. The harmful rhetoric and normalization of antisemitism reminded me that the same struggles my family endured are still ever present today.

When I came to WashU, I was excited to join a vibrant and supportive Jewish community. I hoped campus would be a place where I could learn and thrive without fear. Over time, though, I began to notice moments that made me feel less secure, not just on campus but in the broader St. Louis community as well. My experience is not unique. Antisemitism is rising on college campuses nationwide, affecting Jewish students' sense of safety and belonging. Addressing this reality begins with acknowledging the problem and ensuring institutions of higher education have the tools they need to protect Jewish students. This is why adopting the IHRA definition of antisemitism is so important. The IHRA definition does not exist to silence free speech, but to serve as an identification tool that helps campus leaders distinguish between criticism and antisemitism. This bill does not aim to limit protected expression. Instead, it empowers institutions to name antisemitism when it occurs and to respond appropriately.

Education is essential to combating ignorance and discrimination. By taking steps to address antisemitism, institutions can create learning environments free from intimidation and bias. Adopting the IHRA definition will allow institutions to better understand antisemitism and address it without suppressing dialogue. These efforts help ensure colleges remain places of opportunity where every student can feel welcome and supported on campus. For these reasons, I strongly support this bill and urge legislators to vote yes. Thank you for your attention to this matter and for your efforts to address antisemitism on college campuses.



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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: W B TICHENOR		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:28 PM

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I strongly encourage and urge the Committee to vote this critical legislation out of committee as soon as possible, so that it may proceed through the legislative process. It is unfortunate that in our nation such legislation is needed to protect our fellow citizens from the hateful and dangerous acts of various bad actors. Regretfull I was unable to attend the hearing to testify in persons in support of this legislation.



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WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: YONASON (JONATHAN) GOLDSON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 3:34 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Greetings,

My name is Rabbi Yonason Goldson. I have been an active member of the St. Louis Jewish community for 30 years.

As a teacher of Jewish history, I can testify with authority that failure to confront the scourge of antisemitism inevitably results not only in violence against Jews; it also accelerates the wholesale abandonment of universal values, the disintegration of social order, and the unraveling of the moral fabric of society.

In the same way political leaders across the country have taken a firm stand against racism, sexism, and agism, it is only proper to affirm the widely accepted and common sense definition of antisemitism currently under review.

With the alarming rise of antisemitic violence in the US and around the world, it is more urgent than ever that we remember Sir Edmund Burke's warning, that the only thing necessary for evil to flourish is for good people to do nothing.

Thank you.

Yonason Goldson



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061	DATE: 1/12/2026	
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ZACHARYA ABRAHAM	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 11:37 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

My name is Zacharya Abraham, and I am a student at Washington University in St. Louis, where I serve as the President of the Jewish Student Association, the heart of student-run Jewish life on campus. I am writing to express my strong support for HB 2061. Every day, I walk across campus wearing my kippah and tzitzit (fringes) proudly. I do not wear them to make a political statement; I wear them because this is simply who I am. However, since October 7th, being "who I am" has come with a heavy psychological and social cost. While my peers are generally kind, many do not understand the weight of feeling like there is a constant bullseye on my back. I have watched my classmates' moods toward me shift overnight based on international news cycles, and I live with the crushing reality of feeling "in debt" to the heavy police and security presence required just to keep me safe. It is a terrifying burden to know that at any moment, I could be targeted by a stranger or a classmate who decides to make me—an unsuspecting Jewish student in Missouri—pay for the actions of a foreign government thousands of miles away.

The adoption of the IHRA definition of antisemitism and the mandate for Title VI coordinators are essential steps in ensuring that Jewish students are afforded the same protections as any other minority group. This bill provides a clear, objective framework for administrators to identify antisemitism, particularly when it is disguised as political rhetoric but manifests as personal harassment. By codifying these standards, you are giving universities the tools to move from a reactive stance to a proactive one, ensuring that students like me can focus on our education rather than our physical safety. I want to sincerely thank the legislators leading this effort for recognizing that our "patriotic protection" must extend to the campus courtyard. Your leadership shows us that Missouri will not stand for hate. I urge you to pass HB 2061.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: AARON NEIMAN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
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MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ABDUL KHAN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 6:53 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I oppose House Bill 2061 because it censors students and educators and shields Zionism from lawful criticism. Opposition to a political ideology is not hatred toward a people, and the government has no right to decide which political viewpoints are allowed in classrooms. This bill invites discriminatory enforcement and silences Palestinian voices and voices of those who stand against the genocide that is currently occurring in Palestine. We can confront antisemitism without banning speech. Education requires open inquiry, not censorship. I strongly urge the Missouri Legislature to vote no on House Bill 2061.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ABEL RICHARDSON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ADAM COHN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/9/2026 7:34 PM

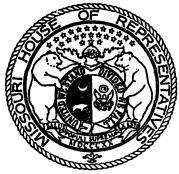
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: AJ ROBINSON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 8:30 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.
It is unamerican to restrict criticism of any government.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061	DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues	
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES	
WITNESS NAME	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:	
WITNESS NAME: AL KHALIL LLC	PHONE NUMBER: 636-517-1017
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: AL KHALIL LLC	TITLE: OWNER
ADDRESS: 2099 BENTLEY PLZ	
CITY: FENTON	STATE: MO
ZIP: 63026	
EMAIL: hebronmarket2@icloud.com	ATTENDANCE: Written
	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 9:50 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

The "free speech amendment" is the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, which prohibits the government from creating laws that restrict freedom of speech or the press. It is a cornerstone of American democracy, guaranteeing individuals the right to express opinions without government interference.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ALANNA SANDERS		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/10/2026 7:10 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Dear Chairman Christ and Members of the Committee,

I am in opposition to HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050, which would all adopt the dangerous International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism into codes of conduct for public universities and secondary schools in Missouri. Attempts to codify the definition into law or to adopt the definition at the institutional level have been opposed by a broad cross-section of American, Palestinian, Jewish, and Israeli human rights organizations for years. This is because the IHRA definition conflates legitimate criticism of Israel with antisemitism, making it a tool to silence Palestinians and shield the Israeli government from accountability for its violations of Palestinian rights. The lead author of the IHRA definition himself has said that the definition is being distorted and used to silence anti-Israel critics, and advocates against its use in policy. Conflating criticism of the Israeli government with real antisemitism like holocaust denial also makes the public less likely to take true antisemitic incidents seriously, endangering Jews.

There are Palestinian-American students and faculty in our state whose families have been victims of Israeli ethnic cleansing and apartheid over the past 77 years, and those whose families have faced or are facing the current ongoing genocide. The Israeli government's vicious, U.S.-backed bombardment of Gaza has killed at least 70,000 people in just over two years, most likely far more. Students and faculty must be allowed to criticize any state committing genocide, ethnic cleansing, forced starvation, and apartheid. House Bills 2061, 2393 and Senate Bill 1051 are an attempt to silence and shut down political conversation and debate and would have devastating impacts on anti-genocide students and faculty across the state. History will not be kind to those who tried to punish and silence anti-genocide students instead of listening to them.

I urge you to vote no on HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050.

Sincerely,
Alanna Sanders



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ALDEN WILLIAMS		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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BILL NUMBER: HB 2061	DATE: 1/12/2026	
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ALEC MARTIREZ	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 2:03 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I believe that adopting the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism will perniciously fuel more hatred on our Missouri school campuses. Conflating anti-Zionism with anti-Semitism would advance the narrative conflating Zionism with Judaism, which is an anti-Semitic trope in of itself.

Not only is this conflation incorrect, but it could also be weaponized as a political tool to suppress speech critical of actions taken by the state of Israel, even from our own Jewish community groups such as Jewish Voice for Peace. We've already seen the University of Missouri lose an injunction that would have barred a Palestinian student group from participating in the homecoming parade due to their views on Israel and Palestine after a federal judge ruled this was in violation of that group's freedom of speech.

I believe integrating the IHRA definition of anti-Semitism in educational institutions' codes of conduct might encourage schools to further attempt violating students' freedom of speech regarding pro-Palestinian expression, just as the University of Missouri tried to, despite the language of the bill stating it should not infringe on any First Amendment rights.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: AMEEN BAJWA		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/10/2026 12:03 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I oppose House Bill 2061 because it restricts free speech and academic freedom by forcing schools to favor one political viewpoint. Criticism of Zionism is a political position, not antisemitism, and suppressing it violates constitutional protections. This bill is vague and will be enforced through viewpoint discrimination, causing educators and students to self censor. We can address antisemitism without banning discussion of Palestine or limiting political expression. I urge the Missouri Legislature to reject House Bill 2061.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: AMIR BACHELANI		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 10:33 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

HB 2061 Threatens Free Speech and Academic Freedom

HB 2061 risks chilling constitutionally protected speech in Missouri classrooms by relying on vague and contested definitions of antisemitism that may conflate legitimate political or historical discussion with hate. Educators should not fear discipline for teaching Middle Eastern history, discussing Zionism, or addressing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in an age-appropriate, academic manner. Missouri schools should encourage critical thinking and open dialogue—not create a climate of fear that suppresses lawful speech and inquiry.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: AMY HAMMERMAN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 10:05 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Thank you to Committee Chair, Representative Christ, and to the entire Emerging Issues Committee for this opportunity to present testimony in opposition to House Bill 2061.

Antisemitism is, without a doubt, on the rise in scary and troubling ways. I am Jewish. My family, including my children, are Jewish and they attend public school in Missouri. I am deeply concerned about the effect this has on my own family, as well as the well-being of our society as a whole.

I want this problem to be addressed in a careful, productive way. While this bill seeks to require accountability for addressing antisemitism in schools, it imposes a definition that was never intended for codification in law and is simultaneously extremely specific in its mandates while being vague in the determination of what constitutes prohibited conduct. Whether speech creates an “atmosphere of fear or intimidation” requires context and nuance which is not contained in this bill. Turning the tide against growing antisemitism will require more difficult discussion about Judaism, the Jewish people, Israel, and Zionism, not less. The practical effect of this bill may well be to chill speech about these topics, as both educators and students fear disciplinary action for discussions that may be difficult and uncomfortable, but ultimately lead to greater understanding and learning.

I would like this body to make concrete efforts toward education to prevent extremism and radicalization, to promote mutual respect among different cultures and peoples, and to cultivate curiosity and acceptance in and among our young people. Please focus on those things, rather this problematic, and possibly fruitless effort to impose a definition of antisemitism and potentially unfairly punish educational institutions.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ANDREA TATKOW	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/10/2026 3:47 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Dear Chairman Christ and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2061. I am a Jewish Missouri resident and lifelong US citizen, in opposition to HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050, which would all adopt the dangerous International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism into codes of conduct for public universities and secondary schools in Missouri. This widely discredited working definition of antisemitism conflates legitimate criticism of the Israeli state with antisemitism — placing first amendment restrictions on free speech about one country alone. This sort of censorship around government criticism does not exist for any other country, including the U.S.

Like all forms of hate, it is critical to oppose and educate students on antisemitism, but use of the definition does nothing to prevent attacks against Jewish people or Judaism. It is also redundant: Existing laws already prohibit antisemitic discrimination and harassment at public schools. Instead, the IHRA definition's focus on branding multiple types of criticism of Israel as antisemitic makes it a tool to silence Palestinians and shield the Israeli government from accountability for its violations of Palestinian rights. Codifying this conflation of criticism of the Israeli government with real antisemitism like Holocaust denial makes the public less likely to take true antisemitic incidents seriously, which actually endangers Jews.

Attempts to codify the definition into law in the U.S., or to adopt the definition at the institutional level have been opposed by a broad cross-section of organizations. These include FIRE; Conservative thinkers from the Cato Institute and the Federalist; Christopher Rufo; Bret Stephens; Batya Ungar Sargon; the editorial boards of the New York Times, Washington Post, LA Times, Tablet Magazine; the ACLU; The Center for Constitutional Rights; Palestine Legal; U.S. Campaign for Palestinian Rights; Adalah; Addameer; Al Mezan Center for Human Rights; Palestinian Centre for Human Rights; Al-Haq; Human Rights Watch; Amnesty International; Jewish groups like the Progressive Israel Network including groups such as J Street, Americans for Peace Now, New Israel Fund, T'ruah; Bend the Arc: Jewish Action; Jewish Voice for Peace; and Israeli groups like Yesh Din; HaMoked; Gisha; B'Tselem; Physicians for Human Rights Israel; Breaking the Silence.

The Israeli government's bombardment and siege of Gaza have killed at least 70,000 people in just over two years, most likely far more, and the International Court of Justice has found that Israel's actions constitute a plausible case of genocide. As this assault has expanded and grown more deadly, so too have attempts to attack and censor the free speech rights of individuals across the U.S. engaging in antiwar protest. House Bills 2061, 2393 and Senate Bill 1051 are another attempt to silence and shut

down political conversation and debate and would have devastating impacts on students and faculty across the state.

I respectfully urge you to vote no on HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050.

Sincerely,
Andrea Tatkow



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ARCH KIMBRIEL		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ASMA RAZA		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 12:38 AM

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This flawed legislation does nothing to protect Missourians from anti-semitism and other forms of Hate. To criticize the actions of a foreign government , like Israel, is protected speech. This IHRA definition of anti semitism is controversial for a reason. This is not an accepted definition, and Missouri's elected officials must not blindly agree to squash free speech and silence opinions on foreign affairs. I live in Dr Hruza's district and I strongly oppose his misguided legislation.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: AYLA ABBASSI		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 10:22 AM

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Threatens free speech. Hruza's priority is not America first!!

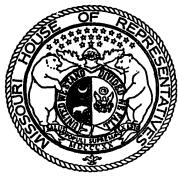


MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: BENJAMIN WEST	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 11:13 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

This bill would enshrine an zealous and broadly discredited definition of antisemitism resulting in the unconstitutional restriction of protected speech by educators. Missouri should not create a speech code solely to benefit the foreign country of Israel, as the definition proposed by intention falsely conflates criticism of the government of Israel with antisemitism.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: CHLOE ALDERMAN	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/10/2026 10:34 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Dear Chairman Christ and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2061. I am in opposition to HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050, which would all adopt the dangerous International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism into codes of conduct for public universities and secondary schools in Missouri. This widely discredited working definition of antisemitism conflates legitimate criticism of the Israeli state with antisemitism — placing first amendment restrictions on free speech about one country alone. This sort of censorship around government criticism does not exist for any other country, including the U.S..

Like all forms of hate, it is critical to oppose and educate students on antisemitism, but use of the definition does nothing to prevent attacks against Jewish people or Judaism. It is also redundant: Existing laws already prohibit antisemitic discrimination and harassment at public schools. Instead, the IHRA definition's focus on branding multiple types of criticism of Israel as antisemitic makes it a tool to silence Palestinians and shield the Israeli government from accountability for its violations of Palestinian rights. Codifying this conflation of criticism of the Israeli government with real antisemitism like holocaust denial makes the public less likely to take true antisemitic incidents seriously, endangering Jews.

Attempts to codify the definition into law in the U.S., or to adopt the definition at the institutional level have been opposed by a broad cross-section of organizations. These include FIRE; Conservative thinkers from the Cato Institute and the Federalist; Christopher Rufo; Bret Stephens; Batya Ungar Sargon; the editorial boards of the New York Times, Washington Post, LA Times, Tablet Magazine; the ACLU; The Center for Constitutional Rights; Palestine Legal; U.S. Campaign for Palestinian Rights; Adalah; Addameer; Al Mezan Center for Human Rights; Palestinian Centre for Human Rights; Al-Haq; Human Rights Watch; Amnesty International; Jewish groups like the Progressive Israel Network including groups such as J Street, Americans for Peace Now, New Israel Fund, T'ruah; Bend the Arc: Jewish Action; Jewish Voice for Peace; and Israeli groups like Yesh Din; HaMoked; Gisha; B'Tselem; Physicians for Human Rights Israel; Breaking the Silence.

The Israeli government's bombardment and siege of Gaza have killed at least 70,000 people in just over two years, most likely far more, and the International Court of Justice has found that Israel's actions constitute a plausible case of genocide. As this assault has expanded and grown more deadly, so too have attempts to attack and censor the free speech rights of individuals across the U.S. engaging in antiwar protest. House Bills 2061, 2393 and Senate Bill 1051 are another attempt to silence and shut

down political conversation and debate and would have devastating impacts on students and faculty across the state.

I respectfully urge you to vote no on HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050.

Sincerely,
Chloe Alderman



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061	DATE: 1/12/2026	
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: CHRIS HENRY	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 9:24 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I oppose this bill for the following reasons:

- The IHRA states that their definition of anti-semitism is but a guideline and should just be used as such.
- Anti-Discrimination laws all ready exist; adding another law is unnecessary especially when conflated to criticism of a country or ideology.
- If passed into law, it can and will be abused in order to silence pro-Palestinian voices.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: DIANA IJAMES		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 5:42 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

The Antisemitism legislation by Hruza is concerning. It would codify a definition of Antisemitism that was crafted by a United Nations group into state law. Some points on it would consider criticism of the State of Israel as antisemitism and therefore prohibited behavior in schools



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: DONALD EVAN MAKI		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: DREW MCCAUSSLAND		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061	DATE: 1/12/2026	
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ELISA S FORGELMAN	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 8:44 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

As a patriotic American citizen, a Missouri resident and a Jew I am imploring you to reject HB 2061, HB 2393 and SB 1051.

The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition, which focussed on calling criticism of the Israeli state and government antisemitic, if adopted, will restrict constitutionally protected free speech in our public universities and secondary schools and it will stifle and censor our students and educators.

We already have laws in place that prohibit anti-antisemitic discrimination and harassment at public schools. These bills do nothing to provide greater protection or safety to Jews and those who practice Judaism, rather they are designed to repress political speech to protect Israel, a foreign nation from criticism. This is something we do not offer any other nation and is non-sensical and should not be happening today or any day.

Please uphold the constitution and our right to free speech. Please reject HB 2061, HB 2393 and SB 1051.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ELIZABETH LINHARES		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 8:53 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I oppose HB2061 as it is an open attack on the God-given right to free speech, in spite of claims to the contrary. The people of Missouri cannot abide being silenced by a foreign nation. We have a right to critique governments and their human rights abuses, particularly in the case of Israel which has been found to be committing genocide by countless NGOs and scholars. Prohibiting teachers from discussing reality in their classrooms, or student protests is a dangerous precedent to set in an era where our individual freedoms are already being eroded and propaganda is dominating the public sphere. Antisemitism is increasingly being used as a Trojan horse to undermine American freedom and these practices manage to undermine real and true antisemitism claims in the process. Hruza continues to waste time and taxpayer money by introducing this absurdity every session and the people of Missouri continue to reject it everytime. Please put this farce to rest once and for all.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061	DATE: 1/12/2026	
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ELYSE SCHAEFFER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:18 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Dear Chairman Christ and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2061. I am a Jewish Missourian who is in opposition to HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050, which would all adopt the dangerous International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism into codes of conduct for public universities and secondary schools in Missouri. This widely discredited working definition of antisemitism conflates legitimate criticism of the Israeli state with antisemitism — placing first amendment restrictions on free speech about one country alone. This sort of censorship around government criticism does not and should not exist for any other country, including the U.S..

Like all forms of hate, it is critical to oppose and educate students on antisemitism, but use of the definition does nothing to prevent attacks against Jewish people or Judaism. It is also redundant: Existing laws already prohibit antisemitic discrimination and harassment at public schools. Instead, the IHRA definition's focus on branding multiple types of criticism of Israel as antisemitic makes it a tool to silence Palestinians and shield the Israeli government from accountability for its genocide of Palestinian people. Codifying this conflation of criticism of the Israeli government with real antisemitism like Holocaust denial makes the public less likely to take true antisemitic incidents seriously, endangering Jews like me.

Attempts to codify the definition into law in the U.S., or to adopt the definition at the institutional level have been opposed by a broad cross-section of organizations. These include FIRE; Conservative thinkers from the Cato Institute and the Federalist; Christopher Rufo; Bret Stephens; Batya Ungar Sargon; the editorial boards of the New York Times, Washington Post, LA Times, Tablet Magazine; the ACLU; The Center for Constitutional Rights; Palestine Legal; U.S. Campaign for Palestinian Rights; Adalah; Addameer; Al Mezan Center for Human Rights; Palestinian Centre for Human Rights; Al-Haq; Human Rights Watch; Amnesty International; Jewish groups like the Progressive Israel Network including groups such as J Street, Americans for Peace Now, New Israel Fund, T'ruah; Bend the Arc: Jewish Action; Jewish Voice for Peace; and Israeli groups like Yesh Din; HaMoked; Gisha; B'Tselem; Physicians for Human Rights Israel; and Breaking the Silence.

The Israeli government's bombardment and siege of Gaza have killed at least 70,000 people in just over two years, most likely far more, and the International Court of Justice has found that Israel's actions constitute genocide. As this assault has expanded and grown more deadly, so too have attempts to attack and censor the free speech rights of individuals across the U.S. engaging in antiwar protest. House Bills 2061, 2393 and Senate Bill 1051 are another attempt to silence and shut down political

conversation and debate and would have devastating impacts on students and faculty across the state.

I respectfully urge you to vote no on HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050.

Sincerely,
Elyse Schaeffer



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061	DATE: 1/12/2026	
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: EMMA MERCEDES YACULA	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/10/2026 6:09 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Dear Chairman Christ and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2061. I am in opposition to HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050, which would all adopt the dangerous International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism into codes of conduct for public universities and secondary schools in Missouri. This widely discredited working definition of antisemitism conflates legitimate criticism of the Israeli state with antisemitism — placing first amendment restrictions on free speech about one country alone. This sort of censorship around government criticism does not exist for any other country, including the U.S..

Like all forms of hate, it is critical to oppose and educate students on antisemitism, but use of the definition does nothing to prevent attacks against Jewish people or Judaism. It is also redundant: Existing laws already prohibit antisemitic discrimination and harassment at public schools. Instead, the IHRA definition's focus on branding multiple types of criticism of Israel as antisemitic makes it a tool to silence Palestinians and shield the Israeli government from accountability for its violations of Palestinian rights. Codifying this conflation of criticism of the Israeli government with real antisemitism like holocaust denial makes the public less likely to take true antisemitic incidents seriously, endangering Jews.

Attempts to codify the definition into law in the U.S., or to adopt the definition at the institutional level have been opposed by a broad cross-section of organizations. These include FIRE; Conservative thinkers from the Cato Institute and the Federalist; Christopher Rufo; Bret Stephens; Batya Ungar Sargon; the editorial boards of the New York Times, Washington Post, LA Times, Tablet Magazine; the ACLU; The Center for Constitutional Rights; Palestine Legal; U.S. Campaign for Palestinian Rights; Adalah; Addameer; Al Mezan Center for Human Rights; Palestinian Centre for Human Rights; Al-Haq; Human Rights Watch; Amnesty International; Jewish groups like the Progressive Israel Network including groups such as J Street, Americans for Peace Now, New Israel Fund, T'ruah; Bend the Arc: Jewish Action; Jewish Voice for Peace; and Israeli groups like Yesh Din; HaMoked; Gisha; B'Tselem; Physicians for Human Rights Israel; Breaking the Silence.

The Israeli government's bombardment and siege of Gaza have killed at least 70,000 people in just over two years, most likely far more, and the International Court of Justice has found that Israel's actions constitute a plausible case of genocide. As this assault has expanded and grown more deadly, so too have attempts to attack and censor the free speech rights of individuals across the U.S. engaging in antiwar protest. House Bills 2061, 2393 and Senate Bill 1051 are another attempt to silence and shut

down political conversation and debate and would have devastating impacts on students and faculty across the state.

I respectfully urge you to vote no on HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050.

**From the River to the Sea,
Emma Mercdes Yacula.**



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ERIK BRAMLETT		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 3:02 PM

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Criminalizing or restricting political speech sets a dangerous precedent.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ETHAN CRAWFORD		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 1:28 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.
I am in opposition of hb2061.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ETHAN MINOR-LUCHT		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/10/2026 10:04 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I am a Jewish k-12 educator and a Missouri resident. I oppose HB2061, which utilizes the highly flawed IHRA definition of antisemitism. This definition of antisemitism cites 11 examples of alleged antisemitic conduct. These examples include genuine descriptions of antisemitism (e.g., denial of the holocaust, and targeted violence against Jews). However, the IHRA definition also includes repeated statements that criticizing the state of Israel is fundamentally antisemitic. Around half of the IHRA's 11 definitions of antisemitism mention the state of Israel. However none refer to specific hate groups or ideologies which have been associated with acts of violence against Jewish Americans. No state, even Israel, is above reproach, and restricting free speech has never made Jews safer.

Adopting the IHRA definition of antisemitism will inhibit free speech in Missouri institutions of learning, without protecting Jewish students and educators from true antisemitism. Anyone who values the academic integrity of Missouri schools should vote to oppose HB 2061.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061	DATE: 1/12/2026	
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: EVAN ALGER-MEYER	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 4:59 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

The definition of antisemitism used by the IHRA, adopted into the language of HB2061, is controversial because it conflates antisemitism with general anti-Israel and anti-Zionist sentiment. Antisemitism represents hatred and discrimination. Jewish people should be able to live and work in places safe from prejudice and bigotry, so the need for protection against antisemitism in academic spaces is important. However, criticism of a country's actions and history, and criticism of a controversial movement, are not inherently discriminatory, and should not be conflated with discrimination. Classifying anti-Israel and anti-Zionist sentiment under a formal definition of antisemitism creates the misconception that all Jews are Zionists, censors criticism of the State of Israel, mutes the voices of those harmed by Israel's actions, disrespects the complex identities of Jews around the world, and harms efforts to address the humanitarian crisis in Gaza.

I am in favor of most of the language in this bill and believe that protection for Jewish people against discrimination in academic setting is important, as it is for other minorities who face violence. However, the definition of antisemitism used by this bill is inadequate and potentially harmful. The provisions that specify distinction between Israel and the Jewish populace are unclear and the examples given by the IRHA open up this definition to exploitation.

A clearer and more complete definition of antisemitism is needed. Jewish-led groups like the Nexus Project have already provided such definitions, and these have been praised for their nuance relative to the IRHA's definition. Alternatively, Missouri could consult local Jewish leaders, writers, and figureheads to determine a definition for antisemitism that will address the needs of Jewish people from all walks of life within the state, while maintaining an open forum for discussion about ongoing political topics related to Israel.

However, until or unless the definition is changed to address these issues, I cannot support this bill.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: FORMER LEGISLATOR JILL SCHUPP (2009-2022)	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 9:56 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

While this bill says it will not chill free speech as provided in the 1st amendment, it does just that by using the IRHA definition. Please vote against this legislation as it will hurt all vulnerable groups while attempting to stand up for one...of which I am a member. If we are going to change the law, please, let's do it correctly!



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: FURQAN WASEEM	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/10/2026 12:11 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Chair Christ and Members of the Committee,

My name is Furqan Waseem, and I am a Missouri resident, parent of 3, physician, educator and a community member from Chesterfield, MO. I am submitting this testimony in opposition to HB 2061 unless it is substantially amended.

Let me be clear at the outset: antisemitism is real, harmful, and must be confronted. Jewish students and staff deserve the same safety, dignity, and equal access to education as everyone else. I strongly support enforcing existing anti-discrimination and anti-harassment rules when any student is targeted because they are Jewish.

However, HB 2061 risks chilling constitutionally protected speech and academic discussion by requiring K-12 schools and public colleges to incorporate the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism “including its contemporary examples” into codes of conduct. This matters because the IHRA framework—especially when paired with “examples”—has been widely debated and can be interpreted in ways that conflate political speech about a nation-state with hatred toward Jews.

The IHRA definition itself describes antisemitism as: “a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews.”

That is a serious and important concept—focused on hostility toward Jews as Jews.

Many Missourians are also speaking about Gaza, Palestinian human rights, and U.S. and Israeli government policy. Saying “Free Palestine,” calling for a ceasefire, or expressing grief at civilian deaths is not the same thing as antisemitism. If schools treat peaceful political expression or classroom discussion as punishable “antisemitic” conduct, students will learn the wrong lesson: that some viewpoints are too risky to express, even respectfully.

Supporters of HB 2061 may point out that the bill states: “Criticism of Israel that is similar to criticism toward any other country shall not be construed to be antisemitic.” The bill also says it should not infringe First Amendment rights.

Those statements are helpful—but they do not remove the practical chilling effect created when a broad, externally developed definition and its examples are mandated into school discipline systems and tied to reporting and investigations.

In real school settings, staff and administrators often make fast judgment calls under pressure. When a

student fears that a statement about Palestine could trigger complaints, investigations, or discipline, the result is predictable: students self-censor, educators avoid topics, and learning suffers—especially in history, civics, global affairs, and current events.

What I'm asking the Committee to do

If the goal is to protect Jewish students from harassment and discrimination (a goal I share), Missouri can do that without policing viewpoints:

1. Amend HB 2061 to focus on conduct, not political ideas—explicitly prohibiting threats, targeted harassment, vandalism, slurs, or discriminatory exclusion (and enforcing existing rules).
2. Add a clear “safe harbor” stating that peaceful advocacy, protest, or discussion related to Israel/Palestine—including slogans and teaching about the region’s history—is protected speech unless it becomes targeted harassment or true threats.
3. Require training and guidance that protects all students, including against antisemitism and Islamophobia, and applies discipline based on behavior and intent, with due process.
4. Avoid mandating an external definition “including its examples” into discipline codes; instead, align with well-established Title VI/anti-discrimination standards already used by schools.

Missouri schools should be places where students learn to confront hatred and learn to debate difficult issues respectfully—without fear that one side of a political discussion will be punished.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to vote NO on HB 2061 unless it is amended to protect students from discrimination without restricting protected speech.

Respectfully submitted,
Furqan Waseem, MD



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061	DATE: 1/12/2026	
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: FURQAN WASEEM	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/10/2026 12:09 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Chair Christ and Members of the Committee,

My name is Furqan Waseem, and I am a Missouri resident, parent of 3, physician, educator and a community member from Chesterfield, MO. I am submitting this testimony in opposition to HB 2061 unless it is substantially amended.

Let me be clear at the outset: antisemitism is real, harmful, and must be confronted. Jewish students and staff deserve the same safety, dignity, and equal access to education as everyone else. I strongly support enforcing existing anti-discrimination and anti-harassment rules when any student is targeted because they are Jewish.

However, HB 2061 risks chilling constitutionally protected speech and academic discussion by requiring K-12 schools and public colleges to incorporate the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism “including its contemporary examples” into codes of conduct. This matters because the IHRA framework—especially when paired with “examples”—has been widely debated and can be interpreted in ways that conflate political speech about a nation-state with hatred toward Jews.

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That is a serious and important concept—focused on hostility toward Jews as Jews.

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Those statements are helpful—but they do not remove the practical chilling effect created when a broad, externally developed definition and its examples are mandated into school discipline systems and tied to reporting and investigations.

In real school settings, staff and administrators often make fast judgment calls under pressure. When a

student fears that a statement about Palestine could trigger complaints, investigations, or discipline, the result is predictable: students self-censor, educators avoid topics, and learning suffers—especially in history, civics, global affairs, and current events.

What I'm asking the Committee to do

If the goal is to protect Jewish students from harassment and discrimination (a goal I share), Missouri can do that without policing viewpoints:

1. Amend HB 2061 to focus on conduct, not political ideas—explicitly prohibiting threats, targeted harassment, vandalism, slurs, or discriminatory exclusion (and enforcing existing rules).
2. Add a clear “safe harbor” stating that peaceful advocacy, protest, or discussion related to Israel/Palestine—including slogans and teaching about the region’s history—is protected speech unless it becomes targeted harassment or true threats.
3. Require training and guidance that protects all students, including against antisemitism and Islamophobia, and applies discipline based on behavior and intent, with due process.
4. Avoid mandating an external definition “including its examples” into discipline codes; instead, align with well-established Title VI/anti-discrimination standards already used by schools.

Missouri schools should be places where students learn to confront hatred and learn to debate difficult issues respectfully—without fear that one side of a political discussion will be punished.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge you to vote NO on HB 2061 unless it is amended to protect students from discrimination without restricting protected speech.

Respectfully submitted,
Furqan Waseem, MD



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: GABBY EISSNER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/9/2026 2:40 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

HB 2061 frightens me for several reasons. First off, it would adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism, which is a controversial and widely discredited working definition of antisemitism. The codification of this definition into law is opposed by civil liberties groups, including the ACLU, FIRE, and the Center for Constitutional Rights. It is also opposed by Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International as well as the editorial boards of The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times, and The Washington Post.

This bill is not about Jewish safety. The real goal is to shield Israel from accurate and constitutionally-protected criticism. Enacting a government speech code is very dangerous and in opposition to the First Amendment of our Constitution. Passage of this bill will create an environment in Missouri schools where students and faculty constantly second guess themselves whenever they speak or write about Israel, wondering if they will be punished and if their words will fall outside of the boundaries put in place by the government.

HB 2061 is a tool for censorship, not safety. Please oppose this dangerous bill which would attack basic free speech rights by enacting a speech code at Missouri public schools.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: GABRIEL KATZ		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 10:25 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I do not see this bill as a protection against antisemitism. I see it as a government overreach to censor what should logically be considered free speech and freedom of expression. This would also prohibit a constitutional right to engage in constructive discussions about geopolitical issues. Particularly at the university level where critical thinking and analysis through structured discourse is extremely important. I am Jewish and I do not support this bill.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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BILL NUMBER: HB 2061	DATE: 1/12/2026	
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
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WITNESS NAME: GEORGE P. SMITH	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 11:52 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I'm an emeritus professor at Mizzou, where I taught in the Division of Biological Sciences for 40 years. For over two decades, now I have been part of a growing number of U.S. citizens who oppose our country's unquestioning support of Zionism, which we regard as a century-long campaign of oppression and dispossession of Palestinian's indigenous Arab people. Anti-Zionism is completely different from antisemitism. The prominence of Jews at the forefront of the anti-Zionist movement is testimony to this fact. Those Jews aren't antisemites of course.

I'm testifying against HB 2061 because by conflating anti-Zionist politics with antisemitic discrimination, it suppresses many citizens' First Amendment right to express our political views.

HB 2061 admirably emphasizes that nothing in the bill should be construed to infringe citizens' First-Amendment right to free speech. But this assurance is undermined by the bill's inappropriate reliance on the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism, including all its examples, to identify antisemitic discrimination in schools and post-secondary campuses.

The IHRA definition explicitly declares that it's a "non-legally binding working definition of antisemitism." It was intended as a tool for recognizing antisemitic speech and acts in the context of research, not of legislation. Indeed, Kenneth Stern, scholar of antisemitism and principal author of the IHRA definition, argued vehemently against using it to police speech on campuses, when he testified before the U.S. House of Representatives Committee on the Judiciary on November 7, 2017. "Although discussions around Israel and Zionism may often be uncomfortable for its supporters and detractors alike," he said, "it is the responsibility of students and educators to foster dialogue and not limit it."

The IHRA definition includes 11 examples of contemporary antisemitism, all of which concern speech not actions. Seven of the examples involve criticisms of Israel, and two of them directly target essential anti-Zionist speech:

"Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor." Anti-Zionists deny that the principle of self-determination grants Israel has right to exist as an exclusively Jewish state with an overwhelming Jewish majority, since that has entailed an ongoing program, from 1947 to today, of permanently expelling millions of indigenous Arab people of Palestine. This argument is motivated by respect for basic human rights, not by hatred of Jews.

"Applying double standards by requiring of it [Israel] a behavior not expected or demanded of any

other democratic nation.” Zionists argue that only anti-Jewish prejudice could explain anti-Zionists’ alleged obsession with Israel, when many other countries are just as bad or much worse. It’s not true in general that anti-Zionists care exclusively about Israel. Furthermore, there are plenty of legitimate reasons why a person might be particularly concerned about Israel. Palestinian Arabs, whether living in historic Palestine (Israel proper plus the Occupied Palestinian Territories) or in the diaspora, might well be particularly opposed to the oppression and dispossession of their people. Anti-Zionist Jews might well be particularly opposed to oppression and dispossession that is being done in their name. Other anti-Zionist U.S. citizens might well be particularly opposed to oppression and dispossession that is supported by our own government.

There is an alternative definition of antisemitism, the Jerusalem Declaration (<https://jerusalemdeclaration.org/>), that is a great improvement over the IHRA definition. It still focuses overwhelmingly on speech rather than discriminatory actions; but at least it tries to distinguish between anti-Zionist rhetoric that can be considered antisemitic and speech that doesn’t reflect antisemitic prejudice. If you are determined to pass this bill, I at least urge you substitute the Jerusalem Declaration for the IHRA definition.



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WITNESS NAME: GEORGE P. SMITH		PHONE NUMBER:
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MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME: GERALD AXELBAUM		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 10:21 PM

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I am writing to oppose House Bill 2061. I am an observant and involved Conservative Jew, a longtime member of the largest Conservative congregation in Missouri. In spite of the strong and sometimes strident voices you may be hearing in support of this bill, they represent a small segment of the Jewish community and not the views of mainstream Jews of all denominations living and working in Missouri. As a Jew and an ardent Zionist who believes in and supports the existence of the State of Israel, this bill will unnecessarily narrow the range of acceptable and important conversations around Israel. This narrowing of acceptable freedom of speech around Israel, ultimately harms Israel, and harms the 1st Amendment right to freedom of speech that protects all individuals and all religious and ethnic groups. I oppose House Bill 2061 and urge you to do the same.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME: GRACE KONRAD		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
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THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I am a Jewish Missourian, grandchild of a Holocaust survivor, who grew up, like my mother and grandmother, immersed in Jewish communities across this state. I am here to testify on behalf of three generations of Jewish constituents urging you to vote oppose this bill.

The IHRA definition of antisemitism has been widely condemned, including by one of its own authors and well over 100 Jewish and international civil society organizations because it confuses criticism of Israel with antisemitism.

Here in Missouri, this bill would target people like my Bubbe, my grandmother, who has taught Middle Eastern, Islamic, and Jewish history for over 50 years in a Missouri University. She could be subjected to investigations of antisemitism for simply teaching histories, scholars, and writings critical of the state of Israel.

It would target your students as well. Palestinian students who have been directly impacted by Israeli violence, whose families were displaced or killed during the establishment of the state of Israel and the continued violence and genocide committed by Israel, will be heavily censored, silenced, and punished for simply speaking out about their own lived experience.

Millions of people in Gaza and the West Bank are facing unimaginable loss. Imagine if in any of your cities, 9 in every 10 homes was destroyed. If in a 50 civilians, 1 had been killed and 2 injured. In the last two weeks, Palestinian families having risked hypothermia and death, taking shelter in freezing tents. This is an ongoing crisis, and people in your home state have lost hundreds of their family members. It is the very least that they be allowed to speak openly, engage in their first amendment rights.

After adopting the IHRA definition, Florida and Cornell began tracking and banning course syllabi that were particularly critical of Israel. At the University of Minnesota, a Holocaust historian's job offer was rescinded over his criticism of Israel. At NYU, Jewish professors were barred from campus for protesting the Israeli government's violence in Gaza. Across UK universities, a study looked at how the IHRA was applied. It found that public resources were used on 40 cases of Israel-specific complaints, including threats of legal action, attempts to block events, and the actual cancellation of dozens of campus events. None of the cases had been substantiated.

My bubbe should be allowed to curate an accurate curriculum that champions free speech. I should be allowed to speak about what I saw when I visited Palestine, about the lessons I learned from my family's history of surviving the Holocaust, about antisemitism in our state,

My mother works for a Jewish foundation in Kansas City that considered this same definition. There was enough pushback in that foundation that they concluded the IHRA alone is too problematic to characterize antisemitism, because it cuts off productive discourse and threatens free speech. She would like to point you to an alternative - the Jerusalem Declaration, which has the support of scores of Jewish scholars and clergy.

My mother works in the same building where people were murdered in an antisemitic hate crime a decade ago. I was a student there at the time. To you, she says: if you want to have the backs of Jewish constituents, educators, and students, you cannot commit to legislation like HR937 that is problematic and distracting.

By opposing this bill, you are not opposing dealing with the important issue of antisemitism. Opposing this bill means you are committed to getting it right.

I urge you to not to adopt the IHRA definition in our state.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: HELAL EKRAMUDDIN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 6:22 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I oppose House Bill 2061 because it restricts free speech and academic freedom by forcing schools to favor one political viewpoint. Criticism of Zionism is a political position, not antisemitism, and suppressing it violates constitutional protections. This bill is vague and will be enforced through viewpoint discrimination, causing educators and students to self censor. We can address antisemitism without banning discussion of Palestine or limiting political expression. I urge the Missouri Legislature to reject House Bill 2061.



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WITNESS NAME		
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WITNESS NAME: IZN H. NAQUI		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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WITNESS NAME: JACK BENNETT GOLDSTEIN	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
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CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 11:22 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Dear Committee Members and Staff,

I'm here today as a concerned Jewish constituent of Kansas City, Missouri to voice my opposition to House Bill 2061, which aims to codify the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's working definition of antisemitism into codes of conduct for educational institutions across Missouri. If adopted, this flawed definition of antisemitism will serve only to limit the free speech of students and teachers across Missouri schools, and will do nothing material to keep Jewish communities safe.

The IHRA definition of antisemitism highly centers the state of Israel. In the definition's examples of antisemitism, of the 11 given examples of antisemitism, 7 mention or apply to Israel. One of these examples places any criticisms of Israel that apply "double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation" on the same level as holocaust denial and making demonizing allegations about the Jewish people. By conflating critiques of Israel with general belittling of the Jewish people, the IHRA definition muddies the waters of what constitutes antisemitism, and creates a prime tool for censorship. Across the country, the IHRA definition has been frequently deployed as justification to shut down and delegitimize student protests, especially Palestinian student protests, against Israel's violent actions in the Middle East.

Implementing this definition into codes of conduct will work to create an atmosphere of fear in public schools across the state. Even with the bill's clause that "criticism of Israel that is similar to criticism toward any other country 28 shall not be construed to be antisemitic" and specification that it will not infringe free speech rights, the existence of this bill will cause teachers and students to self censor, avoiding conversations about human rights and foreign policy with regards to Israel out of fear of legal repercussions. As a resident of Kansas City, I've seen similar bills and ordinances passed that enforce this definition of antisemitism in the schools of my Kansas neighbors, and I've spoken with several students and teachers from the state that feel this atmosphere of fear.

One of these neighbors is Michael Rebne, a public school teacher and member of the Roeland Park City Commission, who has spoken out against these laws in the past, stating that have made teachers fearful of teaching the subject of Israel-Palestine at all, even avoiding stating data about the number of people killed. This impacts the students' education, as in his words "it doesn't allow students to really wrestle with geopolitics, and decide for themselves what they see". He adds that it's a shame that students miss out on these conversations as "they're our seeds of our democracy, if we hope to have a multi-racial democracy, that we have to educate." (<https://kansasreflector.com/2025/04/16/new-kansas-antisemitism-definition-raises-concerns-over-ability-to-criticize-israel/>). I should note as well that this

uniquely impacts Palestinian students, who will be discouraged from speaking to their peers about their own experiences living under Israeli occupation. Overall, passing this bill will only serve to diminish the academic integrity of Missouri schools.

The reason the IHRA definition fails to get to the root cause of antisemitism is that it wrongly isolates antisemitism from other forms of bigotry. A primary goal of the IHRA definition is to combat Holocaust denial, yet while Jewish people were the primary and largest group of victims, other minority groups were persecuted as well, such as Romani people, Slavic people, people with disabilities, homosexual people, and more. This is because bigotry often doesn't stop at just one group. Ultimately, this bill should be redundant with other anti-discrimination laws in place, and I would instead like to see other laws put in place to strengthen these anti-discrimination laws, with the aim to protect all of my communities, not just my Jewish communities.

I urge the committee to reject House Bill 2061.

Thank you,

Jack Goldstein



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME: JACK GOLDSTEIN		PHONE NUMBER:
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WITNESS NAME: JACKIE PECK	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
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The First Amendment exists to protect free speech from government restriction. Any legislation that limits expression paves the way for authoritarian control. Free speech isn't negotiable; it's essential.



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WITNESS NAME: JACOB CUPPS	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
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EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 5:29 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Dear Chairman Christ and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2061. I am in opposition to HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1051, which would all adopt the dangerous International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism into codes of conduct for public universities and secondary schools in Missouri. This widely discredited working definition of antisemitism conflates legitimate criticism of the Israeli state with antisemitism — placing first amendment restrictions on free speech about one country alone. This sort of censorship around government criticism does not exist for any other country, including the U.S..

Like all forms of hate, it is critical to oppose and educate students on antisemitism, but use of the definition does nothing to prevent attacks against Jewish people or Judaism. It is also redundant: Existing laws already prohibit antisemitic discrimination and harassment at public schools. Instead, the IHRA definition's focus on branding multiple types of criticism of Israel as antisemitic makes it a tool to silence Palestinians and shield the Israeli government from accountability for its violations of Palestinian rights. Codifying this conflation of criticism of the Israeli government with real antisemitism like holocaust denial makes the public less likely to take true antisemitic incidents seriously, endangering Jews.

Attempts to codify the definition into law in the U.S., or to adopt the definition at the institutional level have been opposed by a broad cross-section of organizations. These include FIRE; Conservative thinkers from the Cato Institute and the Federalist; Christopher Rufo; Bret Stephens; Batya Ungar Sargon; the editorial boards of the New York Times, Washington Post, LA Times, Tablet Magazine; the ACLU; The Center for Constitutional Rights; Palestine Legal; U.S. Campaign for Palestinian Rights; Adalah; Addameer; Al Mezan Center for Human Rights; Palestinian Centre for Human Rights; Al-Haq; Human Rights Watch; Amnesty International; Jewish groups like the Progressive Israel Network including groups such as J Street, Americans for Peace Now, New Israel Fund, T'ruah; Bend the Arc: Jewish Action; Jewish Voice for Peace; and Israeli groups like Yesh Din; HaMoked; Gisha; B'Tselem; Physicians for Human Rights Israel; Breaking the Silence.

The Israeli government's bombardment and siege of Gaza have killed at least 70,000 people in just over two years, most likely far more, and the International Court of Justice has found that Israel's actions constitute a plausible case of genocide. As this assault has expanded and grown more deadly, so too have attempts to attack and censor the free speech rights of individuals across the U.S. engaging in antiwar protest. House Bills 2061, 2393 and Senate Bill 1051 are another attempt to silence and shut

down political conversation and debate and would have devastating impacts on students and faculty across the state.

I respectfully urge you to vote no on HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1051.

Sincerely,

Jacob P. Cupps



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME: JACOB ELIOR BERKOWITZ	PHONE NUMBER:	
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THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Dear Chairman Christ and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2061. I am in opposition to HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1051, which would all adopt the dangerous International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism into codes of conduct for public universities and secondary schools in Missouri. As a jewish person who has lived in Missouri my entire life, I and my family have experienced antisemitism first hand here, I had a swastika drawn on my notebook in elementary school, my grandparents had a cross burned in their lawn. This is actual antisemitism - whereas these bills are nothing more than false conflations of criticism of Israel with antisemitism. That is truly shameful.

I have watched the state of Israel burn Palestinian families alive in tents, shoot Palestinian children hundreds of times, bomb Palestinian hospitals, schools, refugee camps, etc. Israel has created in Gaza the largest child amputee population in the world. Those are objectively wrong, and condemnable offenses - yet these bills would call me, a jewish person, antisemitic for criticizing the state of Israel for these actions. This is not only completely illogical, it is morally reprehensible, and a clear attack on our 1st amendment rights.

If Missouri cares about it's inhabitants it will not pass this legislation. Students do not deserve to be punished for speaking up against injustices. There is no legislation of this kind that punishes people for criticizing the United States, because censorship of that kind is clearly a violation of this countries own constitution. Rights are not rights if there are exceptions.

It is clear to me the only function of this legislation is to punish anyone who attempts to hold the State of Israel to account no matter what they have done. That is wrong, and I urge you not to adopt this unconstitutional legislation.

Vote no on HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1051.



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WITNESS NAME: JACOB MEYER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 8:24 PM

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Dear Chairman Christ and Members of the Committee,

I am in opposition to HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1051. The dangerous International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism does not belong in the codes of conduct for public universities and secondary schools in Missouri because it's definition has very little to do with true antisemitism.

I urge you to vote no on HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1051.

Sincerely,

Jacob Meyer



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME: JAKE JACKSON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 7:37 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I am submitting written opposition to HB2061. I believe this bill shouldn't pass because it enacts a seriously flawed definition of anti-semitism. As per the bill, it would enact the 2016 International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Working Definition of anti-semitism. Firstly, this definition was crafted by a non American, globalist organization. We should not codify a foreign agreement to our State Statutes. Secondly, many of the points in the IHRA definition are wrong, and in my view are not anti-Semitic. For example, their definition says that comparing policies of Israel to that of the Nazi's is anti-Semitic. While this is a claim that is debated, this is a valid viewpoint to hold about the state of Israel, whether you think it is right or wrong. It's not totally objectionable and is not at all a form of Jew hatred. I strongly disagree with the conflation with the State of Israel with Jewish people. This is dangerous and allows anyone that criticizes the State of Israel in any way to be treated as anti-Semitic. Criticism of Israel is not in any way anti-Semitic. It also doesn't permit applying double standards to the State of Israel. This has nothing to do with hatred of Jewish people. It also prohibits stating biblical truth that Jewish people were responsible for killing Jesus. This crosses the line of restricting religious freedom. 1 Thessalonians 2:14-15 says "For you, brothers, became imitators of the churches of God in Christ Jesus that are in Judea. For you suffered the same things from your own countrymen as they did from the Jews, who killed both the Lord Jesus and the prophets, and drove us out, and displease God and oppose all mankind". Now, I do believe it would be wrong to be hostile to all Jews simply because of his biblical truth however it is still a biblical truth. If the truth is forbidden to even say, then God help all of us. I personally believe that this is something simpler that can be defined quite easily. In my view, the bill should simply say that targeting and harassing someone based on their ethnic identity is wrong. This could be a simple one line bill that would do what the bill sponsor is aiming to do. However the bill in its current version allows a foreign, overly broad definition of anti-semitism to be inserted into our legal statutes and into schools. And it also restricts religious freedom and legitimate freedom of speech. This is a total violation of the constitution. I ask that the committee vote down this bill.



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WITNESS NAME		
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WITNESS NAME: JAMES PEPPLER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:55 PM

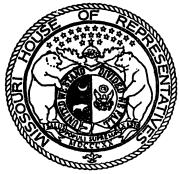
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The misleading language of the HB title and summary obfuscate the conflation of IHRA's definition of antisemitism with antizionism. Antisemitism is an awful thing. Antizionism is noble. Zionism is the reason I've been watching a live streamed genocide for more than two years. Thousands of babies' body parts in bags, mass starvation, etc. The ICC has condemned Israel's genocide — why would we give them an ounce of endorsement? We know the definition of antisemitism and don't need the genocidists new definition forced upon us.



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WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: JEFF STACK		PHONE NUMBER: 573-449-4585
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MID-MISSOURI FELLOWSHIP OF RECONCILIATION		TITLE: COORDINATOR
ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 268		
CITY: COLUMBIA		STATE: MO
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
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WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JENNIFER GATES		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 12:14 PM

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Limiting speech just because it makes us uncomfortable limits the freedom of all of us. Where does it end? Palestine now, in the name of antisemitism (but just speaking of Palestine is not antisemitic) -- and then what's next? Do we go back to the days of "don't say gay" to "protect the children"?

The reality is that we need free flow of information. We need this so that we can make truly informed decisions -- about who we are, who we want to be, and what we want to do with our lives. Restricting words does not make this happen. It does not make us safer. And it does not, ultimately, work.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JOHN BUTHOD		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/10/2026 4:34 PM

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I think this bill is antisemitic and anti-American. It runs counter to the First Amendment of our Constitution by banning protected speech. It relies on the controversial International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism, which conflates legitimate criticism of Israel with antisemitism. Many Jewish individuals and groups have opposed codifying this definition of antisemitism into law, including the Progressive Israel Network, Jewish Voice for Peace, Bend the Arc: Jewish Action, and even the IHRA definition's lead author, Kenneth Stern.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061	DATE: 1/12/2026	
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JORDAN GRAVES	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 10:05 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Dear Chairman Christ and Members of the Committee,

Please allow me to share with you all a REAL life example of how this bill WILL tangibly hurt Kansas City.

I am a licensed therapist and I am a co-chair of Kansas City's NeuroArts Coalition, an expansive coalition of professionals in healthcare, wellness, and the arts formed under the advisement of Johns Hopkins and the Aspen Institute. We are doing big and important work to improving the health and wellness of the greater Kansas City area with members from BCBS, KU med, UMKC, Nelson Atkins Museum of Art, University Health, ArtsKC, and many many more. Today I speak as an individual, not on behalf of any organization.

I am a specialized provider and community resource. And this bill would mean that any work that I do in support of Missouri educational institutions would open the school up to legal action.

Let me explain.

I was in Israel October-November 2024, assisting Palestinian farmers tend to their olive fields that their families have owned for hundreds of years. My very first day assisting them, we were in a village in the West Bank, in area B, and we leisurely made our way to the first tree and began harvesting. Before I could even touch an olive, an Israeli settler at the top of the hill began shooting at us with a sniper.

I looked around, confused. I'm not super familiar with weapons but I know a gun shot when I hear a gun shot. But I did not see anyone around me react. I asked "what are they shooting?". "Live", someone said. Live ammunition. The shots continued. "It's not up in the air. It's at us", another Palestinian said. The Palestinians continued to work. I realized that this is their normal.

The Israeli military arrived shortly after. I thought they were there to stop the Israeli settler from shooting at us. Instead, they threatened us with hand grenades to make us leave. They tear gassed us twice. I severely tore a ligament in my ankle while trying to flee the gas.

None of us were killed that day, thank God. But another Palestinian woman was killed that day, sniped in her back, in a nearby olive grove as her and her family were peacefully harvesting in their fields. This became normal. Just weeks before, an American girl from Seattle, just freshly graduated college, was sniped in the head, murdered by the Israeli military. Just days after that, one of my friends, American

citizen, was bludgeoned over the head with a metal pipe by an Israeli settler for doing the same thing I was doing that day. About a week before that another American man was shot in the leg. A few days before that, my friend, another Kansas City MO resident, was attacked with bats and rocks by Israeli settlers.

When I returned home, when I was ready and mentally well enough to open up about it, I shared what I witnessed in Israel on social media. Nothing against Jewish people. Never. I am very close with many Jewish people. I am sitting next to one of my Jewish friends right now who just submitted her testimony against this bill. I certainly had criticism of Israel. Unlike any criticism I have ever had about any other country. Because I have never experienced anything like what I experienced in any other country.

After awhile, my story got out widely and was picked up by Israeli social media accounts and a doxxing campaign was formed against me. Within less than 48 hours, my CEO, our board of directors, my licensing board, and many others, received over 20,000 emails that were reporting me for antisemitism and citing videos I posted on social media as "proof". I have never posted anything about Jews or Judaism. Only about Israel.

My employer was able to get our IT department to block the emails. They were getting so many that they were unable to work. Their computers were crashing. So I have no idea how many ended up coming in in total.

I never faced any threat to my job or license. I am a good therapist. I am a good neighbor. I am kind and loving and generous. My community knows that. I am anything but antisemitic.

Under HB2061 and IHRA's definition of antisemitic... I would have lost my license... my career. More importantly, my community would have lost so much by my being ripped from my roles. And that is what staff from Missouri educational institutions will face. That is what the state of Missouri will face. Do you have an excess of teachers?

Adopting the IHRA's definition of antisemitism for Missouri public school district is opening the district up to a magnitude of legal threats that you are simply not prepared for. Whether the cases will be won or not, the time, money, resources, and staff lost over the legal action which will result from this are not what anyone on this committee wants. Trust me. I've experienced the campaigns against my career for speaking out about Israel.

To be clear, I am in opposition to HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050, which would all adopt the dangerous International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism into codes of conduct for public universities and secondary schools in Missouri. I respectfully urge you to vote no on HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050.

Sincerely,
Jordan Graves, LCPC, LMAC



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: JOSEPH B PERELES		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 9:50 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

HB 2061 states that it will not chill free speech as protected by the First Amendment of the United States Constitution. By using the IRHA definition, HB 2061 does chill free speech. I urge you to vote against this legislation as it will injure all vulnerable groups while attempting to stand up for one group, of which I am a member. Please don't take a shortcut to change the law without doing it correctly and precluding unintended consequences.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: KAITLYN KILLGO		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 5:05 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

This bill is misleading and false.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: KAREN BRICKEY		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 7:20 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I oppose any legislation, such as HB2061, that would stifle free speech. Bill 2061 claims to "protect" a group from participating in open dialogue. Makes no sense. Dialogue is what keeps us good neighbors and citizens of this free country. Free speech has been what sets the United States apart from authoritarian regimes in the world. I've lived nowhere but MO for almost 70 years and DO NOT want to live in a country where I can't express my views to others and have discussions. Please vote no on HB2061. Thank you



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: KEITH SADLER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/10/2026 3:09 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

The IHRA Definition of Antisemitism undermines academic freedom because its non-binding “examples” blur the line between antisemitism and legitimate scholarly critique of Israel and Zionism. In academic settings, this ambiguity can encourage self-censorship, deter research or teaching on Israel–Palestine, and invite political pressure on universities to discipline faculty or students for protected speech. By lacking clear, rigorous standards and being applied inconsistently, the definition risks chilling debate and inquiry—core functions of academia—while existing laws and university policies already provide tools to address genuine antisemitism without restricting open scholarship.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: KEVIN HERTEL		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061	DATE: 1/12/2026	
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: KIMBERLY B. DILL	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 10:55 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Hello, distinguished committee folk. I am writing in opposition to this bill. This bill is dangerous. Curbing speech, especially criticism of a government, risks our first amendment rights — one of the very things that makes our nation great.

This bill isn't really about anti-semitism; it's an attempt to silence criticism of the Israeli government and its actions. It's a blatant, partisan effort to stop people from expressing their concerns, and quite frankly, it's a shameful waste of our money, time, and energy. Laws already exist to prohibit and punish hate speech. Singling out speech regarding Israel makes no sense, especially when we have no such laws prohibiting speech regarding our own government. Further, criticizing the Israeli government is no more anti-Semitic than giving feedback on dinner is anti-Mom.

Numerous organizations across the nation have come out against bills like this one, recognizing that bills like this don't end anti-semitism. Stifling speech is not the way to a safer society. Only dialogue and understanding will do that.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: KYLE O'CONNOR		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 6:41 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I oppose this bill and urge the representatives to vote against it because the IHRA definition of antisemitism falsely conflates antizionism and antisemitism and would amount to an infringement on the 1st amendment right to freedom of speech.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: LINDA REZNY	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:27 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I oppose Antisemitism, but object to the use of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Definition. A better Definition is needed.

The bill does not write out the Definitions or Examples but they can be found at holocaustremembrance.com/resources/working-definition-antisemitism

There are at two parts of the IHRA Examples that are especially problematic as they apply to criticisms of the State of Israel, not the Jews as a people.
1) After IHRA stating at the start that " criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic." the IHRA gives this as an Example of prohibited behavior: "Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis"
This is self contradictory. If other Nations policy can be compared, rightly or wrongly, to the Nazis, then so can the Israeli policy.

2) Another Example is "Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the

existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor."

As late as 2021 the Israeli Supreme Court was arguing if declaring for themselves a "Basic Law: Israel as the Nation-State of the Jewish People" was at odds with their "Basic Law: Human Dignity and Liberty"

If this was an issue hard to resolve for their own Supreme Court, how can discussion about these issues be censored?

#1 and 2 illustrated the danger of the Legislature taking sides in POLITICAL discussions when they are trying to combat antisemitism.

Antisemitism should be censored, but the IHRA Definition and Examples go beyond defining antisemitism and would prescribe political discussions about the State of Israel.

Get a better definition of antisemitism or let this poorly written bill quietly die.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: LISA HEISHMAN ALPERT	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 5:11 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Dear Chairman Christ and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2061. I am in opposition to HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1051, which would all adopt the dangerous International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism into codes of conduct for public universities and secondary schools in Missouri. This widely discredited working definition of antisemitism conflates legitimate criticism of the Israeli state with antisemitism — placing first amendment restrictions on free speech about one country alone. This sort of censorship around government criticism does not exist for any other country, including the U.S..

Existing laws already prohibit antisemitic discrimination and harassment at public schools. Instead, the IHRA definition's focus on branding multiple types of criticism of Israel as antisemitic makes it a tool to silence Palestinians and shield the Israeli government from accountability for its violations of Palestinian rights. Codifying this conflation of criticism of the Israeli government with real antisemitism like holocaust denial makes the public less likely to take true antisemitic incidents seriously, endangering Jews.

The Israeli government's bombardment and siege of Gaza have killed at least 70,000 people in just over two years, most likely far more, and the International Court of Justice has found that Israel's actions constitute a plausible case of genocide. As this assault has expanded and grown more deadly, so too have attempts to attack and censor the free speech rights of individuals across the U.S. engaging in antiwar protest. House Bills 2061, 2393 and Senate Bill 1051 are another attempt to silence and shut down political conversation and debate and would have devastating impacts on students and faculty across the state.

I respectfully urge you to vote no on HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1051.

Sincerely,

Lisa Alpert



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061	DATE: 1/12/2026	
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: LIV WEINSTEIN	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:31 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Dear Chairman Christ and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2061. As a Jewish Missourian, I am in opposition to HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050, which would all adopt the dangerous International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism into codes of conduct for public universities and secondary schools in Missouri. This widely discredited working definition of antisemitism conflates legitimate criticism of the Israeli state with antisemitism — placing first amendment restrictions on free speech about one country alone. This sort of censorship around government criticism does not exist for any other country, including the U.S..

Like all forms of hate, it is critical to oppose and educate students on antisemitism, but use of the definition does nothing to prevent attacks against Jewish people or Judaism. It is also redundant: Existing laws already prohibit antisemitic discrimination and harassment at public schools. Instead, the IHRA definition's focus on branding multiple types of criticism of Israel as antisemitic makes it a tool to silence Palestinians and shield the Israeli government from accountability for its violations of Palestinian rights. Codifying this conflation of criticism of the Israeli government with real antisemitism like holocaust denial makes the public less likely to take true antisemitic incidents seriously, endangering Jews like myself.

Attempts to codify the definition into law in the U.S., or to adopt the definition at the institutional level have been opposed by a broad cross-section of organizations. These include FIRE; Conservative thinkers from the Cato Institute and the Federalist; Christopher Rufo; Bret Stephens; Batya Ungar Sargon; the editorial boards of the New York Times, Washington Post, LA Times, Tablet Magazine; the ACLU; The Center for Constitutional Rights; Palestine Legal; U.S. Campaign for Palestinian Rights; Adalah; Addameer; Al Mezan Center for Human Rights; Palestinian Centre for Human Rights; Al-Haq; Human Rights Watch; Amnesty International; Jewish groups like the Progressive Israel Network including groups such as J Street, Americans for Peace Now, New Israel Fund, T'ruah; Bend the Arc: Jewish Action; Jewish Voice for Peace; and Israeli groups like Yesh Din; HaMoked; Gisha; B'Tselem; Physicians for Human Rights Israel; Breaking the Silence.

The Israeli government's bombardment and siege of Gaza have killed at least 70,000 people in just over two years, most likely far more, and the International Court of Justice has found that Israel's actions constitute a plausible case of genocide. As this assault has expanded and grown more deadly, so too have attempts to attack and censor the free speech rights of individuals across the U.S. engaging in antiwar protest. House Bills 2061, 2393 and Senate Bill 1051 are another attempt to silence and shut

down political conversation and debate and would have devastating impacts on students and faculty across the state.

I respectfully urge you to vote no on HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050.

Sincerely,
Liv Weinstein



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MAFAZA KHAN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 10:40 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I oppose House Bill 2061 because it censors students and educators and shields Zionism from lawful criticism. Opposition to a political ideology is not hatred toward a people, and the government cannot decide which viewpoints are allowed in classrooms. This bill invites discriminatory enforcement and silences Palestinian voices. We can confront antisemitism without banning speech. Education requires open inquiry, not censorship. I urge the Missouri Legislature to vote no on House Bill 2061. Furthermore, conflating Jewish identity with a genocidal state, is in itself anti-Semitic.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MAISA NAZZAL		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/9/2026 7:33 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Antisemitic in USA is far away from what it actually means since they use it here for criticizing a criminal apartheid state of israel, which has nothing to do with semitism

Palestinians are semite , israeli zionists are not semite are European , so criticizing Israel has nothing to do with antisemitism ... you guys should educate your students the truth and not what pro Israeli politicians want you to do .



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MALIK LENDELL		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/10/2026 6:25 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Attempts to restrict criticism of foreign nations is anti-freedom. It's very telling that so much work is going into restricting speech on criticism of a country rather than actual instances of discrimination against all people.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MARGARET TYLER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		



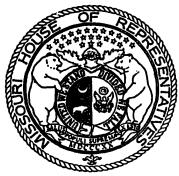
MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MARK HAIM		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MAXIMUS GLAMOUR		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
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MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061	DATE: 1/12/2026	
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MAXINE GILL	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 2:36 PM

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Dear Chairman Christ and Members of the Committee,

Thank you in advance for your time and consideration of this testimony. My name is Maxine, and I am a Jewish Missouri resident against the adoption of the IHRA definition of antisemitism as proposed in HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1051. I do not oppose this because I am unconcerned with antisemitism. I have always been and will always be concerned with prejudice against my own identity. I oppose this legislation because I think it directly conflicts with the first amendment, is being wielded to silence justified criticism of a foreign government, and will ultimately only serve to worsen antisemitism in the state.

I have been fighting antisemitism since I was about 14 years old, and faced antisemitic bullying incidents in high school. Never in my life have I seen such bipartisan concern about addressing antisemitism as I do right now. It would be naive to divorce this sudden rise in concern about antisemitism with the political moment we find ourselves in. For the past several years, the U.S. has been sending billions of dollars worth of unconditioned military aid to a small country in the middle east that has been credibly accused of perpetrating crimes against humanity using those very weapons. Just like in other wars throughout US history, there is a sizable protest movement here in the U.S. and around the world. Protesters are calling not only for an end to Israeli aggression in Gaza, but a regime change that would bring an end to military occupation, endless siege, and a discriminatory legal system. This is also not unprecedented in history– the anti-apartheid movement in South Africa similarly called for a fundamental regime change and won a system of legal equality for Black South Africans. This bipartisan consensus on addressing antisemitism distinctly from all other forms of prejudice is being used as a cudgel to silence legitimate grievances against Israel and to provide Israel with cover to continue killing, attacking, occupying, and displacing Palestinians with impunity– not to make Jews any safer.

The very first amendment in the Constitution of the United States is written as follows: "Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances." This amendment was placed first because it is the most fundamental principle that led the founding fathers to create this Country. Although many across the ideological spectrum disagree about the ins and outs and interpretations of other amendments, this is one that is highly valued across political divides. We as citizens should always be able to freely criticize our own government, and certainly foreign governments, without fear of legal retribution. In direct contradiction to this amendment, this bill seeks to label criticism of Israel as

antisemitic, and thus subject to punishment as if it were hate speech against Jews, not the actions of a foreign country. These sort of anti-freedom, anti-first amendment restrictions on speech don't exist for any other country in the world, including our own.

This bill is a tool primarily to silence dissent against Israel's war crimes and violations of international law, but as a byproduct it will also worsen antisemitism. By conflating legitimate criticism of Israel with real acts of antisemitism that we've seen recently—such as vandalizing synagogues with swastikas, attacking visibly Jewish people in the street, and shooting Jews gathered to celebrate holidays—this bill will delegitimize true claims of antisemitism. If the state is able to categorize calling Israel an apartheid regime (a statement that countless Jewish and Israeli organizations agree with) as just as antisemitic as a synagogue shooting, then the public will be far less likely to take those true antisemitic incidents seriously. In 2024 testimony, Kenneth Stern, the lead author of the IHRA definition of antisemitism put it this way: "Using IHRA in this way also encourages the ubiquitous use of the terms 'antisemite' and 'antisemitism,' when they are words that should be sparingly used, so they don't lose their sting." When hearing a Jewish person talk about antisemitism, the gut reaction will become doubt and skepticism as opposed to concern, because the term antisemitism will be so liberally applied to non-antisemitic incidents. We are already seeing this dynamic play out around the country and the world, where false allegations of antisemitism are only emboldening true anti-semites.

To return to Kenneth Stern, it is notable that the architects of this definition are among those most vehemently opposed to its use in legislation. Stern said that he created the IHRA working definition to fill a gap he saw in identifying antisemitism when Israel assassinated a Hamas leader, and a Montreal Jewish Day school was firebombed in response. At the time, the European Monitoring Centre on Racism and Xenophobia's (EUMC) framework for antisemitism failed to register incidents like those as antisemitic. This was not a failure of prejudice on the part of the EUMC, it was a messy gap when it came to understanding how anti-Israel sentiment can sometimes be antisemantically displaced onto Jewish groups as a whole. In his 2024 testimony to the Senate Judiciary, Stern condemned "the current attempt to use IHRA to legislate," saying that codifying the notion "that anti-Zionism is antisemitism" fundamentally "harms democracy and Jews and others, and is inappropriate for legislation." Attempts to codify this definition into law do the opposite of the goal Stern was trying to achieve, which was to say that it is antisemitic to conflate all Jews with the state of Israel, and misplace blame for the actions of the Israeli state onto all Jews. Instead, by labelling criticism of Israel and Zionism as antisemitic, this bill is in essence inextricably linking the two, which is not only inaccurate, but counterproductive and dangerous.

Personally, I oppose Israel and all of its crimes, and do not want to have hate against Jews be put in the same category with criticism of Israel. I certainly do not want Palestinians to be killed, oppressed, and silenced when they protest all in the name of "stopping antisemitism." A rapidly growing, sizable minority of Jews in the US and around the world are also opposed to Zionism, and vehemently oppose the actions of the State of Israel. It is nonsensical to call a huge group of Jewish people antisemitic for our coherent, non-discriminatory political beliefs. Antisemitism, like all forms of discrimination, is a serious matter and should be addressed accordingly, not used as a political tool to silence dissent against a foreign government. For this reason, I respectfully urge you to vote against HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1051.

Sincerely,
Maxine Gill



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MEAMUNA PARACHA		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/9/2026 11:23 PM

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I oppose House Bill 2061 because it censors students and educators and shields Zionism from lawful criticism. Opposition to a political ideology is not hatred toward a people, and the government cannot decide which viewpoints are allowed in classrooms. This bill invites discriminatory enforcement and silences Palestinian voices. We can confront antisemitism without banning speech. Education requires open inquiry, not censorship. I urge the Missouri Legislature to vote no on House Bill 2061.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MICHAEL BERG		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
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MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061	DATE: 1/12/2026	
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MICHAEL BERG	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 10:34 AM

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Chair Christ and Members of the Missouri House Emerging Issues Committee,

I am writing to urge you to oppose House Bill 2061.

House Bill 2061 would adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism, including its contemporary examples, into codes of conduct for public universities and elementary and secondary schools in Missouri. This controversial and widely discredited working definition of antisemitism conflates criticism of the Israeli state with antisemitism - placing restrictions on speech about Israel that is applied to no other country, including our own. Bill supporters talk about Jewish safety, but their real goal is to shield the foreign State of Israel from accurate and constitutionally protected criticism.

Under this bill, discussion of Palestinians' experiences, accurate historical research, academic findings critical of Israel's government or even quotes from Israelis that condemn their nation's actions could all be considered "prohibited conduct as it relates specifically to antisemitism". If any of these things are reported by other students or faculty or anyone else at an educational facility, they could lead to student suspensions and loss of scholarships, faculty denial of tenure or firing, loss of research funding or defunding of student organizations — all while doing nothing to make Jewish communities safer. The bill is discriminatory against Palestinians and those who support the Palestinian desire for freedom.

The main problem with the IHRA definition of antisemitism is not the base of the definition itself, but the contemporary examples, which, if HB 2061 passes, would be enshrined as part of the definition. The lead author of this definition of antisemitism, Kenneth Stern, has himself said that it should never be codified into any laws. In addition, codification of this definition of antisemitism into laws is opposed by civil liberties groups such as the ACLU, FIRE, and the Center for Constitutional Rights; Palestinian and Israeli groups such as Adalah, Addameer, Al Mezan Center for Human Rights, the Palestinian Centre for Human Rights, Al-Haq, Breaking the Silence, B'Tselem, Gisha, Physicians for Human Rights-Israel, Yesh Din, HaMoked; international human rights organizations such as Human Rights Watch and Amnesty International, US-based social justice, Jewish, and Palestinian groups such as Palestine Legal, Jewish Voice for Peace, US Campaign for Palestinian Rights, Bend the Arc: Jewish Action, the Progressive Israel Network which includes organizations such as J Street, Americans for Peace Now, New Israel Fund, and T'ruah, and the editorial boards of The New York Times, The Los Angeles Times, and The Washington Post. Conservative thinkers from the Cato Institute and the Federalist, as well as Christopher Rufo, Bret Stephens and Batya Ungar Sargon have spoken out against these types of bills.

The IHRA definition is so controversial and widely opposed that over 200 prominent scholars in Jewish, Holocaust, Palestine/Israel, and Middle East studies launched an alternative definition called the Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism, specifically developed as a corrective to IHRA's problematic conflation of criticism of Israel with antisemitism and its attacks on free speech and Palestinian rights.

As part of the IHRA definition's "contemporary examples" of antisemitism, among other things, the bill would label as antisemitic calling the State of Israel a "racist endeavor", applying a double standard to Israel's behavior and comparing any actions of the State of Israel to Nazi Germany. Let's look at how these three "contemporary examples" will label as "antisemitic" the expression of true statements that are objectively not hateful or prejudiced towards Jewish people or the Jewish religion.

- "Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor" - The State of Israel is a racist endeavor. Amnesty International has said this, Human Rights Watch has said this, Israeli human right organization B'Tselem has said this. They have all correctly called Israel an apartheid state, based on an enormous amount of research and analysis. Israel claims to be the state of the Jewish people even though slightly more than half of the people it controls are not Jewish, and most of those non-Jewish people have no voting rights in the Israeli government. Ample historical documents show that Zionist settlers from the 1800s until the formation of Israel in 1948 described their project as a "colonizing enterprise" – seeing themselves as having superior rights to the land than people that were often described as lesser. The colonization of Palestine to create the Jewish State of Israel was a racist endeavor. Will students and faculty face discipline, expulsion or other sanctions for quoting Amnesty International or Israeli human rights organizations? Will teachers and professors be punished for teaching accurate history? Can people not debate the wisdom of ethno-nationalism on campuses?
- "Applying double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation." - This assumes that we all agree that Israel is a democratic nation. I would maintain that a state that does not grant voting rights to nearly half of the people it controls cannot be democratic – other people can have other opinions. Who decides what is and is not a democratic nation? If it is democratic now, will it be in the future? Who decides what is and is not a double standard? Does this mean that you have to criticize every comparable human rights abuse by every other country in the world in order to be allowed to criticize Israel's human rights abuses? What reason is there to enshrine into law what can and cannot be said about these issues except for the protection of a foreign state from criticism?
- "Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis." - In a 2025 article in Haaretz, one of Israel's most respected newspapers, an Israeli soldier said this about his experience in Gaza: 'I felt like, like, like a Nazi ... it looked exactly like we were actually the Nazis and they were the Jews.' Under the IHRA definition of antisemitism, would quoting that soldier be considered antisemitic? The Israeli military has been committing terrible atrocities against Palestinian people, including massacring at least 15 unarmed EMS workers in Gaza, some of them murdered while already handcuffed, lying about their actions and then burying their corpses and their vehicles in sand. How can it be codified that a country's behavior intrinsically will never be like Nazis?

These particular standards are applied to no other country. If you want to, you can call the existence of the People's Republic of China or Canada or Iran or even the United States a "racist endeavor." You can compare these countries' behavior to Nazis, you can utilize double standards while talking about them. With the passage of House Bill 2061, only doing so with Israel would legally brand you as bigoted against an ethnicity.

During House third read debate in 2025 bill sponsor Representative George Hruza definitively said that claiming that Israel is presently committing a genocide against Palestinians in Gaza would be considered antisemitic speech. He seemed to also say that under the bill it would be antisemitic to say that South Africa has said that Israel is committing genocide.

It is the consensus the worldwide view that Israel is committing genocide. It is the view of the world's two most respected rights organizations Amnesty International and Human Rights Watch, as well as the International Association of Genocide Scholars, al-Haq, B'Tselem, the UN Independent International Commission of Inquiry on the Occupied Palestinian Territory, and many other academic organizations and individuals. Israel is "plausibly" committing genocide according to a pending case in the

International Court of Justice. According to this bill's sponsor, this bill makes it so that agreeing with Amnesty International, Human Rights Watch, Jewish genocide scholars and the International Court of Justice would legally be considered antisemitic.

The bill sponsor and some bill supporters both stated last year that this is not about prohibiting speech, but that is not accurate. If this were the case, if it had no real enforcement power, then why would they go through the trouble of codifying this specific definition of antisemitism into law? As recently written by the chief author of the IHRA definition of antisemitism, "Adopting the IHRA definition makes assaults on academic freedom not only more likely to occur, but likely to succeed." Here are some pertinent sections of what the bill says on the matter:

"Each educational institution shall integrate the definition of antisemitism in this section into such educational institution's student, faculty, and employee codes of conduct and shall prohibit such conduct at or by such educational institution if such conduct at or by such educational institution if such conduct creates an atmosphere or circumstance in which individuals working at, visiting, or attending the educational institution are impeded from their normal course of work, study, or access to the educational institution and the educational institution's services and facilities either by physically impeding such activity or by creating an atmosphere of fear or intimidation." (160.014 - Part 3, Subsection 1, Pages 1-2, lines 13-20).

And

"Each educational institution shall treat harassment or discrimination against students or employees or resulting from institutional policies or programs on such educational institution's campuses that is motivated by or including antisemitic intent in an identical manner to discrimination motivated by race." (173.001 - Part Two, Page 5, lines 12-16)

So, let's look at some things that could happen, given the definition of antisemitism in this bill.

Let's say a student is participating in a class on current events, and they talk about what is happening in Gaza and the teacher references the genocide case in the International Court of Justice or else mentions that human rights groups say that that is happening. Maybe someone openly quoted the Israeli soldier who compared his own action to those of Nazis. This makes a supporter of Israel in class uncomfortable. There was no violence, no threats of violence, but the supporter of Israel felt uncomfortable. Maybe there is an argument, maybe there is not, but the supporter of Israel could decide that the class was "an atmosphere of fear or intimidation" or that this teaching of actual current events was "motivated by" and "including antisemitic intent".

The student (who may or may not be Jewish) then reports what happened to the administration. The administration would then have to determine whether or not the student's claim is justified.

According to the definition of antisemitism presented by the bill sponsor, the teacher could very well face sanction for accurately teaching current events. A lot will be up to interpretation by administrators, which means a lot will be up to pressure put on administrators. There are groups that actively monitoring speech on campuses that is hostile towards Israel – such as Mothers Against Antisemitism on Campus and Betar US. These groups organize people to punish students and faculty at campuses for speech they don't like about Israel. They may pressure administrators.

The house bill sponsor during third read debate also said that saying "From the River to the Sea" would be legally considered antisemitic according to this bill. This is a reference to the popular protest chant "From the River to the Sea, Palestine will be Free". In my opinion, this chant is a call for freedom. There is nothing in these words that is intrinsically discriminatory toward Jews. Right now, Palestinians either live in exile, as second-class citizens in Israel, or else as occupied people in the West Bank or Gaza.

Calling for freedom for Palestinians in all of historic Palestine does not imply harm done to any Jew, just as calling for an end to Apartheid in South Africa did not imply harm done to white South Africans or calls for an end to Jim Crow in the South of the United States implied any harm done to white Southerners. There are different ways of interpreting anything, but the vast majority of those who chant this slogan will tell you they would like to see a Palestine where everybody within it, regardless of race or ethnicity, has full and equal rights to live, travel and work, without walls and bombs and segregation — from the Jordan River to the Mediterranean Sea.

If there is a march or a gathering of students who are saying this chant on a campus, and only this chant, and a supporter of Israel reports this to administration and claims that having to hear the chant created "an atmosphere of fear and intimidation" or was "motivated by antisemitic intent", or caused an impediment to the student or teacher's "normal course of work or study" then all the students who were chanting could be punished for exercising basic free speech rights. This scenario is highly plausible with passage of this bill and it is not compatible with the claim that the bill would not infringe on free speech rights, regardless of your own interpretation of the particular chant. Note that if there was a peaceful rally for a football or basketball team that made it less convenient for people to get to classes or the library it is highly unlikely that any of the people participating would face any sanction.

If a professor released a syllabus that included accurate information about the founding of Israel, and a student claimed that the syllabus created "an atmosphere of fear and intimidation", the professor could face discipline for "antisemitism". A reasonable argument could be made for many countries on earth that they were founded as a "racist endeavor", but if this passes Israel will be unique in that it will be the only country on earth (including our own) for which you can be punished for being a racist for teaching the racist aspects of the country's founding.

Passage of the bill will create an environment in Missouri schools where students and faculty constantly second guess themselves whenever they speak or write about Israel, wondering if they will be punished and if their words will fall outside of the boundaries put in place by the government. That is the point of the bill. It is the enactment of a speech code. Enacting a government speech code is very dangerous and in opposition to the First Amendment of our Constitution.

It is also in complete contradiction to Senate Bill 909 that is designed to expand freedom of association and expression of deeply held beliefs on university campuses, even if others on campus are deeply offended by these deeply held beliefs. This bill would contract freedom on university campuses and at all Missouri schools.

The Israeli government's bombardment and siege of Gaza have killed at a verified 70,365 people in just over a year, with probably at least three times as many people have actually been killed, utilizing American weapons and diplomatic support. As this assault has expanded and grown more deadly, so too have attempts by the State of Israel and its supporters to attack and censor the free speech rights of individuals across the U.S. who are engaging in peaceful antiwar protest and open discussions at their education institutions. A recent Pew poll shows that the majority of Americans have an unfavorable view of Israel – this bill is an attempt to stifle the majority opinion of Americans from being allowed free expression at Missouri schools.

Please stop House Bill 2061, a dangerous bill which would attack basic free speech rights by enacting a speech code at Missouri public schools.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061	DATE: 1/12/2026	
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MICHAEL WOLFE	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 2:12 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Dear Chairman Christ and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2061. I am in opposition to HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050, which would all adopt the dangerous International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism into codes of conduct for public universities and secondary schools in Missouri.

Based on my personal experience as a Jewish person in Missouri, I strongly believe that the IHRA definition and attempts to codify it like in the bills mentioned actually further antisemitism for Jews.

At a recent community even in Kansas City where I live, I encountered people who were reluctant to talk to me because they believed all Jews hate Palestinians. This is antisemitic and not true. The widely discredited IHRA working definition of antisemitism conflates legitimate criticism of the Israeli state with antisemitism — placing first amendment restrictions on free speech about one country alone - and it only furthers this false, antisemitic perception. This sort of censorship around government criticism does not exist for any other country, including the U.S..

Like all forms of hate, it is critical to oppose and educate students on antisemitism, but use of the definition does nothing to prevent attacks against Jewish people or Judaism. It is also redundant: Existing laws already prohibit antisemitic discrimination and harassment at public schools. Instead, the IHRA definition's focus on branding multiple types of criticism of Israel as antisemitic makes it a tool to silence Palestinians and shield the Israeli government from accountability for its violations of Palestinian rights. Codifying this conflation of criticism of the Israeli government with real antisemitism like holocaust denial makes the public less likely to take true antisemitic incidents seriously, endangering Jews.

The Israeli government's bombardment and siege of Gaza have killed at least 70,000 people in just over two years, most likely far more, and the International Court of Justice has found that Israel's actions constitute a plausible case of genocide. As this assault has expanded and grown more deadly, so too have attempts to attack and censor the free speech rights of individuals across the U.S. engaging in antiwar protest. House Bills 2061, 2393 and Senate Bill 1051 are another attempt to silence and shut down political conversation and debate and would have devastating impacts on students and faculty across the state.

I urge you to vote no on HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050.

Sincerely,
Michael Wolfe



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MINDY BERKOWITZ		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 2:27 PM

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Dear Chairman Christ and Members of the Committee,

Thank you very much for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2061. As a retired educator, I am in opposition to HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050, which would all adopt the dangerous International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism into codes of conduct for public universities and secondary schools in Missouri.

I believe this is a widely discredited working definition of antisemitism conflates legitimate criticism of the Israeli state with antisemitism.

Like all forms of hate, it is critical to oppose and educate students on antisemitism, but use of the definition does nothing to prevent attacks against Jewish people or Judaism.

Please note that attempts to codify the IHRA definition into law in the U.S., or to adopt the definition at the institutional level have been opposed by a broad cross-section of organizations.

House Bills 2061, 2393 and Senate Bill 1051 are another attempt to silence and shut down political conversation and debate and would have devastating impacts on students and faculty across the state.

I respectfully urge you to vote no on HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050.

Sincerely,

Mindy Berkowitz



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061	DATE: 1/12/2026	
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MIRANDA KLINCK	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:04 PM

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Dear Chairman Christ and Members of the Committee,

I am writing as a concerned Jewish Missourian in opposition to HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050, which would all adopt the dangerous International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism into codes of conduct for public universities and secondary schools. This widely discredited working definition of antisemitism conflates legitimate criticism of the Israeli state with antisemitism.

Restricting criticism of any state is a severe violation of our First Amendment rights. In this case, the IHRA definition becomes a tool to silence Palestinians and shield the Israeli government from accountability for its violations of Palestinian rights. It also foments a “boy who cried wolf” effect in which the public is less likely to take true antisemitic incidents seriously. HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050 would thus endanger Jews as well as Palestinians, their allies, and other anti-war protesters.

Please vote NO on HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050.

Sincerely,
Miranda Klinck



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MUATH SALAMEH		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 6:46 AM

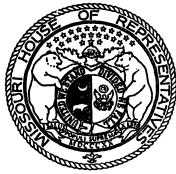
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I unequivocally oppose antisemitism in all its forms. However, I respectfully oppose HB 2061 on constitutional grounds.

The First Amendment protects freedom of speech, including political expression and criticism of governments or ideologies. HB 2061 relies on broad and vague definitions that risk conflating protected speech with unlawful conduct, creating a chilling effect on lawful expression and inviting arbitrary enforcement. Laws that are overbroad or unclear violate core First Amendment and due process principles.

Missouri already has laws that prohibit discrimination, harassment, and violence based on religion or ethnicity. Combating antisemitism should focus on enforcing those laws and promoting education—not restricting constitutionally protected speech.

For these reasons, while condemning antisemitism without reservation, I urge lawmakers to oppose HB 2061 and uphold the constitutional guarantees of free expression and due process.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061	DATE: 1/12/2026	
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: MUSHTAQ SHAHAB	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 11:35 AM

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HB 2061 risks chilling constitutionally protected speech in Missouri classrooms by relying on vague and contested definitions of antisemitism that may conflate legitimate political or historical discussion with hate. Educators should not fear discipline for teaching Middle Eastern history, discussing Zionism, or addressing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in an age-appropriate, academic manner. Missouri schools should encourage critical thinking and open dialogue—not create a climate of fear that suppresses lawful speech and inquiry. In addition, appears to disproportionately restrict discussions related to Palestine, colonialism, and systemic injustice, effectively erasing Palestinian and other marginalized voices from the classroom. Protecting one community should not come at the expense of others—especially at a time when Islamophobia and anti-Arab hate are also on the rise. True educational equity requires inclusive approaches that address all forms of discrimination without weaponizing one against another.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: NEEKA CAMPBELL		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 10:07 AM

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Antisemitism is incredibly dangerous to society. It is important to maintain an accurate definition of antisemitism in order to adequately combat it. This bill proposes redefining antisemitism in an attempt to stifle free speech and impede our first amendment rights. Criticism of Israel is NOT antisemitism! The definition used in HB 2061 has been widely rejected by countless reputable sources nationwide. Adoption of this definition is sure to result in a rise of antisemitism that coincides with the fall of freedom of speech and expression. Please, I urge you to vote no on HB 2061 and 2393, as well as SB 1051, for the sake of protecting your constituents and their first amendment rights.

Signed,
A proud lifelong Missourian



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061	DATE: 1/12/2026	
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: NICHOLAS TATUM	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 11:21 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

My name is Nicholas Tatum and my testimony is in opposition to HB 2061.

According to a recent Supreme court case which took place in 2024, Murthy vs Missouri, it was found that government involvement in influencing moderation choices of private social media companies violated the 1st Amendment.

The government lost this case because it was determined that federal agencies and officials coerced and significantly encouraged companies to censor user content. User content refers to any text, output, or document uploaded to or created within a given environment. In this way, user content has been understood to be speech by all interested parties in this case. It's strikingly obvious that now and in the past when Freedom of Speech cases arrive before the court, especially those having to do with free speech in schools, that the Supreme Court of the United States takes those matters seriously, even when the loss of such a case may incur heavy costs imposed on Missouri taxpayers. The furtherance of this legislative body's attempts to bog down the taxpayers of Missouri with one more thing to pay for is absurd, especially during a time when so much political chaos is taking place; it would seem the right thing to do would be to remain in the eye of the storm. Bills like, HB 2061 -- PROHIBITING ANTISEMITISM IN EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS, create needless chaos within our judicial system, especially during a time when Missouri's track record of winning these cases is abysmal. The language of this bill could very well prevent a student from learning why antisemitism is wrong. Isolating other forms of hate speech from antisemitism forces those participating in education to view only one type of person as untouchable, only one type of religion as free from critique. Why instead weren't considerations made for all Missourians regardless of race or religion, especially since the tools for handling antisemitism were already present within our schools when DEI measures were still in place. It's unclear why time would be wasted to alter free speech rights for some and not those same rights for all, unless it is a veiled attempt to elevate one particular set of people above all others. Legislators should in no way compel private parties, educators or students, to take a particular course of action which inherently restricts upon their First Amendment rights, thus harming the actions of those seeking only to educate and become educated as if the government had carried out the harm themselves. Cases such as Tinker v. Des Moines and Healy v. James affirm the rights of students seeking to exercise freedom of speech through protest, and it could be said that HB 2061 would prevent students from protesting, which is an unspoken reason for this insidious piece of legislation, however, elements of the IHRA definition, have indicators that will prevent accurate critique of the Israeli occupation of Palestine in educational courses dealing with Government and Economics. How then would students or educators arrive at any position in a class of that sort that would allow students to learn about every side of the conflict as neutrally as possible? Wherein the educational needs of a simple class on Geography boil down to understanding how shifts in military tensions occur, how will it be possible to teach information about conflicts between Iran and Israel, conflicts between Israel and

Syria, without revealing past and present data accurately? Passing an anti-free speech bill pathetically disguised as an antisemitism prevention bill will receive push-back from lawyers and their plaintiffs when they arrive at the same conclusion, that HB 2061 lacks the ability to prevent harm to other citizens of Missouri by censoring information that is relevant to the educational needs of its students and educators. When history is taught in the Show Me State, educators should be allowed to show every piece of it, and not only what is comfortable for an elevated few to consume.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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BILL NUMBER: HB 2061	DATE: 1/12/2026	
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: NICOLE FIELDS	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 1:28 PM

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HB 2061 aims to suppress Missourians' right to free speech and would serve as a dangerous precedent for further state-sponsored censorship. It also inappropriately conflates the actions of the Israeli government with all Jewish Americans. Students and faculty in Missouri have the right to honest, open, and productive discourse concerning Palestine and Israel without fear of punishment.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061	DATE: 1/12/2026	
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: NIDAA EKRAM	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 3:54 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Dear Chairman Christ and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2061. I am in opposition to HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050, which would all adopt the dangerous International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism into codes of conduct for public universities and secondary schools in Missouri. This widely discredited working definition of antisemitism conflates legitimate criticism of the Israeli state with antisemitism — placing first amendment restrictions on free speech about one country alone. This sort of censorship around government criticism does not exist for any other country, including the U.S..

Like all forms of hate, it is critical to oppose and educate students on antisemitism, but use of the definition does nothing to prevent attacks against Jewish people or Judaism. It is also redundant: Existing laws already prohibit antisemitic discrimination and harassment at public schools. Instead, the IHRA definition's focus on branding multiple types of criticism of Israel as antisemitic makes it a tool to silence Palestinians and shield the Israeli government from accountability for its violations of Palestinian rights. Codifying this conflation of criticism of the Israeli government with real antisemitism like holocaust denial makes the public less likely to take true antisemitic incidents seriously, endangering Jews.

Attempts to codify the definition into law in the U.S., or to adopt the definition at the institutional level have been opposed by a broad cross-section of organizations. These include FIRE; Conservative thinkers from the Cato Institute and the Federalist; Christopher Rufo; Bret Stephens; Batya Ungar Sargon; the editorial boards of the New York Times, Washington Post, LA Times, Tablet Magazine; the ACLU; The Center for Constitutional Rights; Palestine Legal; U.S. Campaign for Palestinian Rights; Adalah; Addameer; Al Mezan Center for Human Rights; Palestinian Centre for Human Rights; Al-Haq; Human Rights Watch; Amnesty International; Jewish groups like the Progressive Israel Network including groups such as J Street, Americans for Peace Now, New Israel Fund, T'ruah; Bend the Arc: Jewish Action; Jewish Voice for Peace; and Israeli groups like Yesh Din; HaMoked; Gisha; B'Tselem; Physicians for Human Rights Israel; Breaking the Silence.

The Israeli government's bombardment and siege of Gaza have killed at least 70,000 people in just over two years, most likely far more, and the International Court of Justice has found that Israel's actions constitute a plausible case of genocide. As this assault has expanded and grown more deadly, so too have attempts to attack and censor the free speech rights of individuals across the U.S. engaging in antiwar protest. House Bills 2061, 2393 and Senate Bill 1051 are another attempt to silence and shut

down political conversation and debate and would have devastating impacts on students and faculty across the state.

I respectfully urge you to vote no on HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050.

Sincerely,
Nidaa Ekram



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061	DATE: 1/12/2026	
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: NOAH PELLETTIERI	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 3:21 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Dear Chairman Christ and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2061. I am writing today in opposition to this bill, which would wrongfully adopt a definition of “antisemitism” that encompasses legitimate and deserved criticism of the Israeli state. As a Jewish resident of Missouri, I would like to make it known to this Committee that this definition does nothing to make me feel safer or less likely to encounter/witness actual antisemitism. Instead, the main impact of the bill that I can perceive would be to silence critics of Israel at a time when international condemnation over the genocide in Gaza is urgently needed.

Like so many Jews, I am painfully aware of the consequences that real antisemitism can bring to bear. My grandmother, who saw uncles and aunts killed in the Holocaust, would light candles before Shabbat in honor of relatives that had passed and urge my mother to “never forget” the horrors to which her family had been subjected. However my personal relationship to my faith has evolved over the course of my life, my grandmother’s powerful words have never been far from my mind when the concept of antisemitism is raised.

To say that criticism of the state of Israel is equal to the horrors with which Jews like my grandmother were forced to live would be laughable if the consequences were not so enormous. With the support and acquiescence of the U.S. federal government, the state of Israel has spent more than two years now obliterating the Gazan landscape, killing tens of thousands of innocent civilians and bystanders. I feel confident that future generations will regard both Israel’s actions – not to mention the complicity of this country’s federal government – as perhaps the greatest outrage of our time. Israel’s deplorable conduct in Gaza can and should be condemned, and I am angered at legislation like this that would chill the ability of students to do so.

I am sure that there are some writing in support of this legislation that have also referenced the Holocaust in their testimony, suggesting that a broadened definition of antisemitism makes horrors like that one less likely to take place today. Quite the opposite is true. Calling legitimate criticism of the State of Israel antisemitic only muddies our ability to address true antisemitism. As someone whose relatives were also killed in an antisemitic genocide, I urge you to think twice before passing legislation that would deliberately have us look past an atrocity happening under our noses today in the name of preventing one tomorrow. As a Jewish resident of Missouri, please do not pass this bill in my name.

Thank you for your consideration.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: PAUL LEHMANN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: PETER BURNHAM		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 11:35 AM

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The IHRA definition of antisemitism that this bill wishes to adopt is one that demands rejection of verified realities related to Israel and Israeli policy and acts as a threat to the kinds of speech in our academic institutions that can lead to productive talks and formation of solutions to decades-long issues related to Israel.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: RABBI DANIEL BOGARD	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 11:24 PM

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Members of the Committee,

I am a rabbi serving one of the largest congregations in the state. Antisemitism is real and rising. I oppose this bill because it will not make Missouri's Jews safer.

The IHRA definition was designed as an educational tool, not a legal standard. Even its original drafter has warned against codifying it into law, arguing it can be weaponized to chill speech. When the author says it shouldn't be used this way, we should listen.

This is not a fringe position. The Reform Movement—the largest Jewish denomination in America—shares these concerns.

If Missouri wants to protect its Jewish residents, there are better paths: security grants for synagogues, hate crime training for law enforcement, improved incident reporting. These are concrete measures that address real threats.

HB 937 offers symbolism when we need substance. I urge you to vote no.

Rabbi Daniel Bogard

Central Reform Congregation

St. Louis, Missouri



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: RACHEL BROWN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:26 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Dear Chairman Christ and Members of the Committee,

I write in staunch opposition to HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050, which would all adopt the dangerous International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism into codes of conduct for public universities and secondary schools in Missouri. As a Jew, a parent, and an educator in the field of Jewish Studies, I find the bill dangerous, authoritarian, disingenuous, and an affront to free expression. It stifles political expression, disingenuously using Jews and our safety as a false pretense for furthering sponsors' political goals. A plurality of Jews in the U.S. oppose the inhumane actions of the Israeli state and its flagrant violation of international law. This bill does not intend to fight real anti-Semitism, but to punish the descendants of the Nazi genocide who stand with Palestinians in their struggle for self-determination. The bill is anti-Semitic because it uses and abuses our name to further the sponsors' political goals. Criticism of a state committing genocide is not.

Sincerely,
Rachel Brown



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: RAY MOHSEN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/10/2026 10:43 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I oppose House Bill 2061 because it censors students and educators and shields Zionism from lawful criticism. Opposition to a political ideology is not hatred toward a people, and the government cannot decide which viewpoints are allowed in classrooms. This bill invites discriminatory enforcement and silences Palestinian voices. We can confront antisemitism without banning speech. Education requires open inquiry, not censorship. I urge the Missouri Legislature to vote no on House Bill 2061.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061	DATE: 1/12/2026	
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: REBECCA MURDOCK	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 2:27 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I am a resident of Kansas City and a Jewish stay at home mom. I am speaking on my own behalf and not for any organization I might be a part of. I speak in opposition to HB 2061. The definition of antisemitism that this bill promotes is seriously flawed. The IHRA's definition asserts, wrongly, that it is antisemitic to claim "that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor," and draw "comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis."

I believe Israel is an apartheid state, and that it is denying the Palestinian people the right to self-determination. It would be un-American to try to ban speech about Israel's racist practices and policies, or ban speech that asserts the state of Israel as it exists today is a racist endeavor.

Before the Nazi government created concentration and death camps, it enacted policies to allow mass arrests of political opponents and control the public lives and movements of Jews and non-Aryans. Whether you agree or not that Israel's policies toward Palestinians are similar, we should be free to raise the comparison and debate it.

I believe that bills like this are not genuine efforts to make our country safer for Jews. They are attempts to outlaw criticism of Israel, which is committing grave human rights violations, atrocities and war crimes against Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank.

It is not antisemitic to speak out against the actions of a government, nor is it antisemitic to criticize and question Zionism, which is not the same as Judaism. While Judaism is a religion, Zionism is a political movement. We must never seek to silence speech that is critical of political movements, government policies and administrations.

People are criticizing Israel's actions because they are worthy of criticism.

There is real antisemitism rising in this country, but this bill does nothing to address that and it does not make Jews safer. Jewish people, and this country, have far more to fear from unleashed white supremacy than we do people living in tents on college campuses protesting the destruction of their people.

Thank you for your consideration.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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BILL NUMBER: HB 2061	DATE: 1/12/2026	
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: REBECCA WAXMAN	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:36 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Dear Chairman Christ and Members of the Committee,

As a Jewish constituent, I thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2061. I strongly oppose HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050, which would all adopt the dangerous International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism into codes of conduct for public universities and secondary schools in Missouri. This definition of antisemitism wrongfully conflates legitimate criticism of Israel with anti-Jewish hate, and should not be adopted in Missouri, or anywhere in the US!

When I was in college, I remember when all of the Jewish students' mezuzahs on my dorm floor (including mine) were torn down late one night, and the unknown actor colored with black sharpie on all the doorposts where the mezuzahs once were. I share this because I know antisemitism is real. I also know that we already have laws that prohibit this anti-Jewish hate.

Adopting the IHRA definition will not help combat antisemitism. It will not stop what happened to me from happening to other Jewish college students. What it will do is silence and shut down political conversation and debate and would have devastating impacts on students and faculty across the state. Political discourse is not only a Jewish but an American value that must not be stifled. Doing so will only allow the Israeli government to stand un-checked as it continues its genocide of Gazan families.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Waxman



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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BILL NUMBER: HB 2061	DATE: 1/12/2026	
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: REBECCA WHITING	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 6:55 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Dear Chairman Christ and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2061. I am in opposition to HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050, which would all adopt the dangerous International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism into codes of conduct for public universities and secondary schools in Missouri. Our public schools taught us what a holocaust was, the definition is functional as it is currently. There is no reason to change the definition, especially if there is political motive behind it to criminalize free speech in our country.

Antisemitism is an obnoxious form of hatred that should be stopped and prevented at every moment in our country. My Jewish brothers and sisters deserve to feel safe EVERYWHERE in our country. Criminalizing free speech that criticizes Israel, an occupying army that is genociding the native people, is not going to prevent antisemitism. Existing laws already prohibit antisemitic discrimination and harassment at public schools. Instead, the IHRA definition's focus on branding multiple types of criticism of Israel as antisemitic makes it a tool to silence Palestinians and shield the Israeli government from accountability for its violations of Palestinian rights. Codifying this conflation of criticism of the Israeli government with real antisemitism like holocaust denial makes the public less likely to take true antisemitic incidents seriously, endangering Jews.

As Israel's genocide in Gaza continues, and their war in the region expands to the West Bank, Lebanon, Jordan, Syria, and Iran, the attempts to attack and censor the free speech rights of individuals across the U.S. engaging in antiwar protest. House Bills 2061, 2393 and Senate Bill 1051 are another attempt to silence and shut down political conversation and debate and would have devastating impacts on students and faculty across the state. Criminalizing this type of speech will only make it more powerful. In the UK, they criminalized Palestine Action and there is more membership than ever before.

I urge you to vote no on HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050.

Sincerely,
Rebecca Whiting



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: REESE HOLCOMB		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: REV. ABBY THACKER	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 9:31 PM

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The adoption of the IHRA definition of antisemitism would be chilling to free speech, and would mean that traditional Christian doctrine could not be preached in Missouri without being categorized as antisemitic hate speech.

Further, the definition characterizes the criticism of a foreign nation as antisemitic, while that country criticizes our country constantly for not catering to their every whim. America first. Will you just say it, or practice it?

Rev. Abby Thacker
Pastor, St. Brigid's Orthodox Mission, St. Louis.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: RITA M. YENCARELLI		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.		



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: RIZWAN MAHMOOD		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 4:00 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I oppose House Bill 2061 because it restricts free speech and academic freedom by forcing schools to favor one political viewpoint. Criticism of Zionism is a political position, not antisemitism, and suppressing it violates constitutional protections. This bill is vague and will be enforced through viewpoint discrimination, causing educators and students to self censor. We can address antisemitism without banning discussion of Palestine or limiting political expression. I urge the Missouri Legislature to reject House Bill 2061.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061	DATE: 1/12/2026	
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: ROBERT LINSEY	PHONE NUMBER: 314-256-9574	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: AMNESTY MISSOURI; AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL USA	TITLE: SECRETARY	
ADDRESS: 4540 LINDELL BLVD., APT. 304		
CITY: SAINT LOUIS	STATE: MO	ZIP: 63108
EMAIL: info@AmnestyMissouri.org	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 1/10/2026 5:30 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

My name is Robert Linsey, and I serve as Secretary of Amnesty Missouri, the statewide affiliate of Amnesty International USA. I am here today to speak in firm opposition to House Bill 2061.

This bill purports to combat antisemitic speech and conduct by restricting discussion in educational settings. In reality, it does precisely the opposite: it suppresses legitimate, necessary debate about the conduct of the State of Israel—a debate that students should be permitted to engage in.

The definition of antisemitism relied upon in this bill, issued by the IHRA, has been widely criticized for conflating criticism of Israeli state policies toward Palestinians with antisemitism itself. This approach has been soundly repudiated by more than 370 scholars who came together in 2020 as signatories to the Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism. They concluded unequivocally that supporting Palestinian demands for justice and for the full realization of their political, national, civil, and human rights is not antisemitic. Nor is it antisemitic to criticize or oppose Zionism, to argue for alternative political arrangements for Jews and Palestinians in the territory between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea. Neither is it antisemitic to advocate for full equality for all inhabitants.

At a moment when atrocities are being documented in real time, it is precisely this kind of rigorous, open dialogue that educational institutions exist to foster. The censorship proposed by this bill runs directly counter to one of the most fundamental principles we claim to uphold as a nation: the right to free speech.

I also take profound personal offense—as a descendant of Jews who fled Eastern and Central Europe in the late nineteenth century—at any suggestion that I, or anyone else, must remain silent when it comes to the actions of the State of Israel. On the contrary, as a Jew who understands the depth of persecution my forebears endured, I believe I carry a heightened moral obligation to speak out against injustice and atrocity wherever they occur.

In the year prior to the Hamas terrorist attack—Amnesty International issued a detailed report concluding that “Israel has created and maintains an institutionalized regime of systematic oppression and domination over Palestinians.” In a subsequent report, Amnesty concluded that “there is sufficient evidence to believe that Israel’s conduct in Gaza following 7 October 2023 amounts to genocide.”

For the State of Missouri to attempt to muzzle discussion of these findings would represent an act of profound immorality. I, therefore, urge you to reject House Bill 2061.

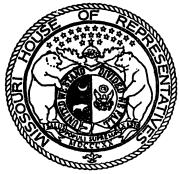


MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: RONI S SHER		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 4:07 PM

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I am in total opposition to this bill. This boils down to another way to silence people that want to support Palestine. And to silence Palestine support and let the genocide continue.
What an embarrassing bill to happen right here in St Louis and written by people I know and used to respect. Please oppose this bill and let freedom of speech continue



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: ROSE-LYNN SOKOL		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 11:44 PM

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This legislation, because of the use of the IRHA definition creates conflicts in what is allowed as our first amendment right to free speech, and what will be disallowed when one or a group chooses to stand against policies, or with regard to Israel. This will create uncertainty and confusion for students and educators, chilling free speech- critical to democracy.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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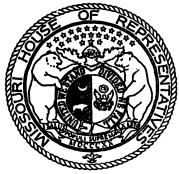
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SAEED AKBANI		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 10:27 AM

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HB 2061 threatens Free Speech and Academic Freedom

HB 2061 risks chilling constitutionally protected speech in Missouri classrooms by relying on vague and contested definitions of antisemitism that may conflate legitimate political or historical discussion with hate. Educators should not fear discipline for teaching Middle Eastern history, discussing Zionism, or addressing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in an age-appropriate, academic manner.

Missouri schools should encourage critical thinking and open dialogue—not create a climate of fear that suppresses lawful speech and inquiry. This bill has nothing to do with protecting Jews in this country, its sole purpose is to serve the interest of a foreign government of Israel. Our legislators should be working in the interest of the US and Missouri, not serving the interests of foreign governments.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME		
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WITNESS NAME: SAGI RUDNICK		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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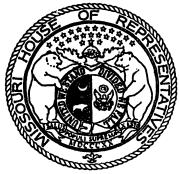
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Chair, Committee, Thank you for taking the time to review HB 2061. As an Israeli-American Jewish Missourian, I have a personal stake in this issue. I was born in Jerusalem, and my family moved to the Kansas City Metro when I was 5 years old. I attended Jewish day school from then through senior year of high school. I am proud of my roots, and antisemitism is a real concern of mine. As such, I don't want to see its definition cheapened and used to defend genocidal ethnonationalism. While I trust this bill is well intentioned, I urge the committee to consider the potential harm this bill will cause. Freedom of speech and open discourse are fundamental American as well as Jewish values. They are critical in order to maintain functioning democracies. But this bill, if passed, will violate the First Amendment, because it adheres to the IHRA definition, a flawed definition of antisemitism. I would recommend the committee look at the Jerusalem Declaration on Antisemitism instead as a definition that honors the fight against antisemitism while recognizing that antizionism is not inherently antisemitism. As an Israeli-American, I am compelled to speak out against the United States backed genocide against Palestinians that the State of Israel is engaged in. This does not make me or folks like me antisemitic. Don't pit antisemitism against other forms of discrimination. This bill, if enacted, would be a step backward in the fight for mutual liberation of Palestinians and Israelis alike. Please vote no on HB 2061. Thank you.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME: SAHAR BHUTTO		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE:	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 12:00 AM
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INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SALMAN MAHMOOD		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 10:51 PM

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HB 2061 Threatens Free Speech and Academic Freedom HB 2061 risks chilling constitutionally protected speech in Missouri classrooms by relying on vague and contested definitions of antisemitism that may conflate legitimate political or historical discussion with hate. Educators should not fear discipline for teaching Middle Eastern history, discussing Zionism, or addressing the Israeli-Palestinian conflict in an age-appropriate, academic manner. Missouri schools should encourage critical thinking and open dialogue-not create a climate of fear that suppresses lawful speech and inquiry.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
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WITNESS NAME		
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WITNESS NAME: SAMUEL BRIAN	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 1/9/2026 4:58 PM

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Members of the Committee,

I am a Jewish resident of Kansas City and the son of a UMKC Professor.

I am compelled to speak up against HB 2061 out of both a deep sense of commitment to my community and to the Palestinian community of Kansas City who I consider to be my friends, colleagues, and neighbors.

Before I begin, I want to be clear: Antisemitism is a real and active force in American life and politics today. We live in a world where some of the most powerful people in America regularly pedal antisemitic conspiracy theories for profit and political gain. However, HB 2061 is very much a step in the wrong direction.

HB 2061 would public schools and universities across Missouri to add specific guidelines to their code of conduct around antisemitism, where antisemitism is defined according to the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's Working definition of Antisemitism and its Contemporary Examples. This is both unnecessary and will have disastrous consequences for the freedom of speech of Palestinians, Jews, and their allies on campuses across the state.

The IHRA Definition is widely considered a bad definition. To the point where even its authors, Kenneth Stern, has spoken out opposing its adoption in both legal and educational contexts (Citations: <https://knightcolumbia.org/content/a-bad-deal-why-using-the-ihra-definition-of-antisemitism-on-campus-is-incompatible-with-academic-freedom-and-students-right-to-open-inquiry>). Its contemporary examples dangerously conflate criticism of the State of Israel with antisemitism.

Of its 11 contemporary examples, 7 of them make reference to Israel. I want to be clear, the Jewish population of Kansas does not live in Israel. We live here. Our home is here. Any attempt to define the struggles we face with antisemitism should be rooted in what we face here.

The IHRA definition conflates criticism of Israel with antisemitism in ways that are wildly disconnected from the issues that American Jews face.

As an example:

Under the IHRA definition, Elon Musk's nazi salute last year could be argued to not qualify as an act of

antisemitism. Despite him having a history of pedaling antisemitic conspiracies.

By contrast, under this definition, a Jewish student who says that “Israel is a racist state” (a statement which can be corroborated by numerous human rights groups and is a sentiment held by a not insignificant number of Jews) would be engaging in antisemitism.

As ridiculous as these examples seem, these are not edge cases. These are the obvious and glaring problems with the IHRA definition.

When the weight of law is put behind it, the IHRA definition morphs from being simply a mediocre tool into a weapon with incredibly dangerous implications for free speech. One that is often wielded against Palestinians and their allies. This bill heavily incentivizes school administrators to crack down on ANY speech or educational material which is critical of Israel because even mild criticism could open them up to legal risk.

This is deeply corrosive to academic freedom and freedom of speech on campuses.

Beyond the above functional issues with the bill, this bill is flatly unnecessary. Discrimination against my community is already covered under existing anti-discrimination laws in this state. We are protected from discrimination on the basis of religion. Full stop.

Creating carve outs specifically for antisemitism (and with such a flawed understanding at that) only serves to separate our struggle from that of other marginalized communities.

Our safety cannot be increased by silencing the voices of Palestinians and their allies in service to a nation half a globe away. Safety for Jews is won by creating a more equitable society, one that is free of bigotries like racism, sexism, homophobia, and ableism.

HB 2061 does not get us closer to that world.

And it is for these reasons that I urge you to oppose this bill.

Thank you,

Sam Brian



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME: SAMUEL BRIAN		PHONE NUMBER:
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WITNESS NAME: SANA MAHMOOD		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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I oppose House Bill 2061 because it censors students and educators and shields Zionism from lawful criticism. Opposition to a political ideology is not hatred toward a people, and the government cannot decide which viewpoints are allowed in classrooms. This bill invites discriminatory enforcement and silences Palestinian voices. We can confront antisemitism without banning speech. Education requires open inquiry, not censorship. I urge the Missouri Legislature to vote no on House Bill 2061.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME		
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WITNESS NAME: SANDRA TAMARI		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 8:27 AM

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If Jews feel they are being discriminated against, harassed, badly treated in any way because they are Jews, they have the same recourse to anti discrimination law as every other person in this country who has that experience, and I don't see why they need more than that. This legislation seeks to limit free speech on Israel. That is not good for Missouri or America.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME: SANDRA TATKOW		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/10/2026 4:48 PM

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I am absolutely opposed to this as it is an infringement on our free speech. I am a constitutionalist, and I will remain loyal to the constitution of the United States of America.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SARAH ROSE	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 11:34 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Dear Chairman Christ and Members of the Committee,

Thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony on HB 2061. I am in opposition to HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1051, which would all adopt the dangerous International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism into codes of conduct for public universities and secondary schools in Missouri. As a Jewish person who lives in the state of Missouri, I am deeply offended by this attempt to speak in my name and categorize all criticisms of a government, of military action, of oppressive apartheid states, and significantly implode our right to free speech and expression. Even that sentence above, informed by my Jewish beliefs, torah study, and heritage would become illegal. No where else does a country enjoy absolute law mandated support. I can critique the American government's failure to accept many Jewish refugees during the Holocaust but I can't critique Israel's failure to allow aid into Palestine creating a famine?

Here is a incredibly broad list of organizations who oppose this legislation: FIRE; Conservative thinkers from the Cato Institute and the Federalist; Christopher Rufo; Bret Stephens; Batya Ungar Sargon; the editorial boards of the New York Times, Washington Post, LA Times, Tablet Magazine; the ACLU; The Center for Constitutional Rights; Palestine Legal; U.S. Campaign for Palestinian Rights; Adalah; Addameer; Al Mezan Center for Human Rights; Palestinian Centre for Human Rights; Al-Haq; Human Rights Watch; Amnesty International; Jewish groups like the Progressive Israel Network including groups such as J Street, Americans for Peace Now, New Israel Fund, T'ruah; Bend the Arc: Jewish Action; Jewish Voice for Peace; and Israeli groups like Yesh Din; HaMoked; Gisha; B'Tselem; Physicians for Human Rights Israel; Breaking the Silence. And me. Your direct constituent whom you represent. Who you were elected to govern, support, and protect. I will not be supported by this legislation nor will this legislation do anything to protect me, a Jewish person.

I am not Israel. I have no family in Israel. I don't know anyone in Israel. The conflation of me, a Jewish person, with a military is in itself antisemitic just as conflating a Christian person with the actions of Christian states or a muslim person with the actions of any muslim state, whether they have any relationship with it or not. Using this definition does nothing to prevent attacks against Jewish people or Judaism. It is also redundant: Existing laws already prohibit antisemitic discrimination and harassment at public schools. Instead, the IHRA definition's focus on branding multiple types of criticism of Israel as antisemitic makes it a tool to silence Palestinians and shield the Israeli government from accountability for its violations of Palestinian rights. Codifying this conflation of criticism of the Israeli government with real antisemitism like holocaust denial makes the public less likely to take true antisemitic incidents seriously, endangering Jews.

The Israeli government's bombardment and siege of Gaza have killed at least 70,000 people in just over two years, most likely far more, and the International Court of Justice has found that Israel's actions constitute a plausible case of genocide. As this assault has expanded and grown more deadly, so too have attempts to attack and censor the free speech rights of individuals across the U.S. engaging in antiwar protest. House Bills 2061, 2393 and Senate Bill 1051 are another attempt to silence and shut down political conversation and debate and would have devastating impacts on students and faculty across the state.

I respectfully urge you to vote no on HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1051.

Sincerely,
Sarah Rose



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SHANNON YOUNG	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 11:29 AM

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Chairman Christ and Members of the Committee,

I am INCREDIBLY disappointed in you all, I'm submitting my testimony on HB 2061 because you've continually failed your constituents. I am in opposition to HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050, which would all adopt the dangerous International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism into codes of conduct for public universities and secondary schools in Missouri. This widely discredited working definition of antisemitism conflates legitimate criticism of the Israeli state with antisemitism — placing first amendment restrictions on free speech about one country alone. This sort of censorship around government criticism does not exist for any other country, including the U.S..

Like all forms of hate, it is critical to oppose and educate students on antisemitism, but use of the definition does nothing to prevent attacks against Jewish people or Judaism. It is also redundant: Existing laws already prohibit antisemitic discrimination and harassment at public schools. Instead, the IHRA definition's focus on branding multiple types of criticism of Israel as antisemitic makes it a tool to silence Palestinians and shield the Israeli government from accountability for its violations of Palestinian rights. Codifying this conflation of criticism of the Israeli government with real antisemitism like holocaust denial makes the public less likely to take true antisemitic incidents seriously, endangering Jews.

Attempts to codify the definition into law in the U.S., or to adopt the definition at the institutional level have been opposed by a broad cross-section of organizations. These include FIRE; Conservative thinkers from the Cato Institute and the Federalist; Christopher Rufo; Bret Stephens; Batya Ungar Sargon; the editorial boards of the New York Times, Washington Post, LA Times, Tablet Magazine; the ACLU; The Center for Constitutional Rights; Palestine Legal; U.S. Campaign for Palestinian Rights; Adalah; Addameer; Al Mezan Center for Human Rights; Palestinian Centre for Human Rights; Al-Haq; Human Rights Watch; Amnesty International; Jewish groups like the Progressive Israel Network including groups such as J Street, Americans for Peace Now, New Israel Fund, T'rueah; Bend the Arc: Jewish Action; Jewish Voice for Peace; and Israeli groups like Yesh Din; HaMoked; Gisha; B'Tselem; Physicians for Human Rights Israel; Breaking the Silence.

The Israeli government's bombardment and siege of Gaza have killed at least 70,000 people in just over two years, most likely far more, and the International Court of Justice has found that Israel's actions constitute a plausible case of genocide. As this assault has expanded and grown more deadly, so too have attempts to attack and censor the free speech rights of individuals across the U.S. engaging in

antiwar protest. House Bills 2061, 2393 and Senate Bill 1051 are another attempt to silence and shut down political conversation and debate and would have devastating impacts on students and faculty across the state.

I demand you to vote NO on HB 2061, HB 2393, and SB 1050.

Disrespectfully,

Shannon Young



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

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WITNESS NAME		
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WITNESS NAME: SHERINE SALAMEH		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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As a mother raising children in Missouri, I teach my kids to reject hate and treat everyone with respect. Antisemitism is wrong, and it must never be tolerated. However, I am concerned that HB 2061 goes too far in the wrong way.

This bill uses broad language that could limit free speech and open discussion, including in schools and communities. As parents, we should be encouraging education, understanding, and critical thinking—not laws that make people afraid to speak or ask questions.

Missouri already has laws to protect people from discrimination and violence. Instead of adding vague restrictions, we should focus on teaching our children kindness, history, and respect while protecting the constitutional freedoms that allow families like mine to raise thoughtful, informed citizens.

For these reasons, I respectfully oppose HB 2061.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME		
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WITNESS NAME: SHIRLEY RESNICK CRENSHAW		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 2:44 PM

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I am Jewish, and criticizing Israel is not anti- Semitism. I'm afraid this law is not only a violation of free speech, but will only increase real antisemitism.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME: SOLOMON ALPERT		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: SOLOMON ALPERT	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
ADDRESS:		
CITY:	STATE:	ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 3:31 PM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

Members of the Committee,

My name is Solomon Alpert. I'm here today as a concerned Jewish constituent of Kansas City, Missouri to voice my opposition to House Bill 2061, which aims to codify the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's working definition of antisemitism into codes of conduct for educational institutions across Missouri. If adopted, this flawed definition of antisemitism will serve only to limit the free speech of students and teachers across Missouri schools, and will do nothing material to keep Jewish communities safe.

The IHRA definition of antisemitism highly centers the state of Israel. In the definition's examples of antisemitism, of the 11 given examples of antisemitism, 7 mention or apply to Israel. One of these examples places any criticisms of Israel that apply "double standards by requiring of it a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation" on the same level as holocaust denial and making demonizing allegations about the Jewish people. By conflating critiques of Israel with general belittling of the Jewish people, the IHRA definition muddies the waters of what constitutes antisemitism, and creates a prime tool for censorship. Across the country, the IHRA definition has been frequently deployed as justification to shut down and delegitimize student protests, especially Palestinian student protests, against Israel's violent actions in the Middle East.

Implementing this definition into codes of conduct will work to create an atmosphere of fear in public schools across the state. Even with the bill's clause that "criticism of Israel that is similar to criticism toward any other country 28 shall not be construed to be antisemitic" and specification that it will not infringe free speech rights, the existence of this bill will cause teachers and students to self censor, avoiding conversations about human rights and foreign policy with regards to Israel out of fear of legal repercussions. As a resident of Kansas City, I've seen similar bills and ordinances passed that enforce this definition of antisemitism in the schools of my Kansas neighbors, and I've spoken with several students and teachers from the state that feel this atmosphere of fear.

One of these neighbors is Michael Rebne, a public school teacher and member of the Roeland Park City Commission, who has spoken out against these laws in the past, stating that have made teachers fearful of teaching the subject of Israel-Palestine at all, even avoiding stating data about the number of people killed. This impacts the students' education, as in his words "it doesn't allow students to really wrestle with geopolitics, and decide for themselves what they see". He adds that it's a shame that students miss out on these conversations as "they're our seeds of our democracy, if we hope to have a multi-racial democracy, that we have to educate"[1]. I should note as well that this uniquely impacts Palestinian students, who will be discouraged from speaking to their peers about their own experiences living under Israeli occupation. Overall, passing this bill will only serve to diminish the academic integrity of Missouri schools.

The reason the IHRA definition fails to get to the root cause of antisemitism is that it wrongly isolates

antisemitism from other forms of bigotry. A primary goal of the IHRA definition is to combat Holocaust denial, yet while Jewish people were the primary and largest group of victims, other minority groups were persecuted as well, such as Romani people, Slavic people, people with disabilities, homosexual people, and more. This is because bigotry often doesn't stop at just one group. Ultimately, this bill should be redundant with other anti-discrimination laws in place, and I would instead like to see other laws put in place to strengthen these anti-discrimination laws, with the aim to protect all of my communities, not just my Jewish communities.

I urge the committee to reject House Bill 2061.

Thank you for your time.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061	DATE: 1/12/2026	
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
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WITNESS NAME: SPENCER TODER	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
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EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 9:57 PM

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I am Jewish. I find that the use of the IHRA definition of antisemitism in laws across the country misses the entire point. The goal of legislation like this is supposed to keep people safe—but what have you done? You've included an unnecessary clause that pits people against each other.

Most Jews do not agree with the actions of Netanyahu or the current Israeli government. Many people in Israel are criticizing Israel's leadership and Netanyahu himself. Does that make them antisemitic? No.

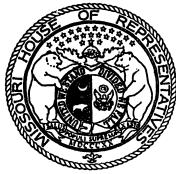
But I'm watching bills like this tie Jewish identity to the State of Israel, and it sickens me. Jews existed long before the geographical boundaries of Israel were drawn, and it is disrespectful to the religion itself to assume that all actions of an imperfect government are associated with Judaism.

In fact, it is this falsehood that is fueling antisemitism. It is impossible to be against peace, love, charity, family, tradition, sacrifice, and perseverance—the values the Torah teaches are essential to being Jewish—but it is easy to be against the actions of an imperfect government run by imperfect people.

It is essential to recognize that you can criticize a government without criticizing an entire people. I've watched nearly every person in our government criticize Biden or Trump in the past two years, but I've never thought of it as an attack on them for their religion. Why is this different?

Do not tie criticism or judgment of the actions of a government to a religion. It is not helpful, and it is creating unnecessary division and anger. It undermines what it means to be Jewish, reducing it to the actions of a country and the decisions of its leaders.

Judaism is more than that. Please respect it as such and vote against this bill.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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WITNESS NAME: STEVEN C KELLOGG	PHONE NUMBER:	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:	TITLE:	
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EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: In-Person	SUBMIT DATE: 1/9/2026 4:40 PM

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I am Steve Kellogg of 1820 S Ann Ct; Independence, Mo, 64057 ph: 816-796-4407.

I am a retired Community of Christ Bishop, and retired Naval reservist with 7 years of active duty in submarines and 23 years in the Naval Reserve.

I oppose the inclusion of the ambiguities in the IHRA working definition of Antisemitism references to criticism of the State of Israel in this bill. Specifically there are no guidelines on what constitutes acceptable criticism of the state of Israel when criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against any other country is not regarded as antisemitic, but claiming that the existence of the state of Israel is a racist endeavor (as was South Africa or America until the Civil Rights movement), or drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy with that of the Nazis (who were the government of Germany) is considered antisemitic.

The definition attempts to differentiate Israel's responsibility for its actions from the responsibility of the Jewish people, as every government should be differentiated from its citizens, but then curtails the accountability of Israel to be assessed for its actions and their effects in the areas called antisemitic in these examples.

These ambiguities are clarified in the Jerusalem Declaration of Anti-Semitism available at jerusalemdeclaration.org which also specifically makes clear antisemitism does not include advocating for full Palestinian rights under international law, and criticizing Zionism as a form of nationalism, among other clarifications. If the IHRA definition cannot be replaced in the bill, the Jerusalem Declaration clarifications must be added to provide adequate guidance for interpreting it.

While a fundamental aspiration of Judaism has been a homeland in Palestine, Israel is not Judaism, nor is America Christianity, nor was Germany Protestantism. Governments take on a life of their own influenced by but not fully reflective of the faith of their citizens. As a democracy we need to preserve the freedom to call governments to account for their actions in response to our faith, not as the standards of our faith.

I oppose the adoption of HB 2061 without these changes.



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WITNESS NAME: SUSAN GIBSON		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 6:48 PM

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I oppose singling out only one demographic to protect from discrimination. Diversity, equity, and inclusion should be the rule. And support for the Jewish people that disrespects their views on abortion and their support for the transgender population is empty, insincere, fraudulent, opportunistic.



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WITNESS NAME: TARIQUE AHMAD		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 5:48 PM

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I oppose House Bill 2061 because it restricts free speech and academic freedom by forcing schools to favor one political viewpoint. Criticism of Zionism is a political position, not antisemitism, and suppressing it violates constitutional protections. This bill is vague and will be enforced through viewpoint discrimination, causing educators and students to self censor. We can address antisemitism without banning discussion of Palestine or limiting political expression. I urge the Missouri Legislature to reject House Bill 2061.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: TRACY R WELBORN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 10:49 AM

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I strongly oppose HB 2061. While combating discrimination and harassment in educational institutions is important, this bill goes too far by mandating the adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Working Definition of Antisemitism into school and university codes of conduct. This risks violating First Amendment rights, chilling free speech, and indoctrinating students by imposing a rigid framework that could stifle critical thinking and independent idea formation. The IHRA definition, as adopted in the bill, 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 individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities." Its contemporary examples include legitimate concerns like calls for violence against Jews or Holocaust denial. However, several examples blur the line between hate and protected political speech, such as:

Denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination, e.g., by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel is a racist endeavor.

Applying double standards by requiring of [Israel] a behavior not expected or demanded of any other democratic nation.

Drawing comparisons of contemporary Israeli policy to that of the Nazis.

These could be weaponized to label criticism of Israeli government policies—such as opposition to settlements, military actions, or human rights concerns—as antisemitic, even if similar critiques are leveled against other nations (e.g., U.S. foreign policy or Russia's actions in Ukraine). The bill's disclaimer that "criticism of Israel that is similar to criticism toward any other country shall not be construed to be antisemitic" is insufficient; it leaves room for subjective interpretation by administrators, potentially leading to self-censorship among students and faculty fearful of penalties. By requiring educational institutions to integrate this definition into codes of conduct and report "antisemitic" incidents to Title VI coordinators (who could escalate to federal authorities), HB 2061 creates a chilling effect on free expression. Students should be encouraged to explore complex global issues, form their own opinions, and engage in robust debate—not fear punishment for questioning narratives. This bill effectively indoctrinates by embedding a politically charged definition into school doctrine, limiting exposure to diverse viewpoints and hindering intellectual growth.

Existing federal laws like Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 already prohibit discrimination based on race, ethnicity, and national origin (including protections for Jewish students). Missouri doesn't need this redundant, overly prescriptive legislation that could conflict with constitutional protections. The bill's own acknowledgments—that it shall not infringe on First Amendment rights or conflict with discrimination laws—ring hollow when its mechanisms invite overreach.

I urge the House to reject HB 2061 to preserve Missouri's commitment to free speech, academic freedom, and the right of our children to think independently.



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WITNESS NAME: TRAVIS HEINS		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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There is already legislation in place that protects against discrimination for race, religion, ethnicity, and all otherwise immutable characteristics. This bill does nothing to improve upon those protections already in place, but actually by identifying a specific group of people for this legislation it runs the risk of violating the first amendment rights to free speech and free association for All Americans. Im sure this is well intended, but I ask that you oppose this legislation.



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WITNESS NAME		
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: TYLER COWARD		PHONE NUMBER: 215-717-3473
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: FOUNDATION FOR INDIVIDUAL RIGHTS AND EXPRESSION (FIRE)		TITLE: LEAD COUNSEL, GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS
ADDRESS: P.O. BOX 40128		
CITY: PHILADELPHIA		STATE: PA ZIP: 19106
EMAIL: tyler@fire.org	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 2:54 PM

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January 12, 2026

House Committee on Emerging Issues
201 West Capitol Ave, Room 7
Jefferson City, MO 65101

Re: FIRE's significant free speech concerns with HB 2061

Executive Summary

Dear Chair Christ, Vice-Chair Peters, Ranking Minority Member Fuchs, and members of the House Committee on Emerging Issues:

The Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression (FIRE) writes to express serious concerns regarding HB 2061, which would require state agencies to incorporate the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism into anti-discrimination enforcement.

FIRE is a nonpartisan, nonprofit organization that has defended free speech and academic freedom for more than 25 years. We agree that antisemitism — like all forms of bigotry — is a serious problem that the state should address. However, the approach taken by HB 2061 risks undermining both constitutional free speech protections and the effectiveness of anti-discrimination law.

Schools have many tools to address actionable antisemitic discrimination. State and federal anti-discrimination laws already prohibit antisemitic discrimination. Although Title VI of the Civil Rights Act does not prohibit religious discrimination, it has been interpreted by presidential administrations of both parties for over 20 years to protect Jewish students from discrimination based on shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics. State universities therefore have authority to investigate and remedy antisemitic discrimination without adopting the constitutionally-suspect IHRA definition.

The IHRA definition is not a legal standard and is dangerously vague. The IHRA definition was developed as a non-binding educational and data-collection tool—not for use

in enforcement. It defines antisemitism as “a certain perception of Jews,” a formulation so indeterminate that speakers and institutions cannot reasonably know what expression is prohibited.

The IHRA examples sweep in protected political speech

The bill would require agencies to consult IHRA’s accompanying examples, several of which directly implicate constitutionally protected political expression, including the application of so-called “double standards” to Israel and making controversial historical comparisons. Political speech does not lose constitutional protection because it is offensive, provocative, or sharply critical.

Courts are increasingly skeptical of IHRA’s constitutionality when used for anti-discrimination purposes

When vague, speech-focused definitions are embedded into enforcement regimes, institutions predictably over-censor to avoid investigations, penalties, or loss of funding. Courts are increasingly recognizing that using IHRA in this manner risks unconstitutional viewpoint discrimination.

There is a lawful alternative

Missouri can explicitly add religion as a protected class in higher education. Paired with adopting the United States Supreme Court’s speech-protective definition of what constitutes actionable student-on-student harassment, Missouri’s institutions of higher education would have all the tools they need to combat unlawful antisemitic actions.

For these reasons, FIRE urges you to oppose HB 2061 or amend it to remove any requirement that the IHRA definition be used in binding antidiscrimination enforcement.

Detailed Legal and Policy Analysis

Federal and state antidiscrimination law already provides meaningful tools to address antisemitic discrimination. Although Title VI of the Civil Rights Act does not prohibit religious discrimination, it has long been interpreted to protect Jewish individuals from discrimination based on shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics. Where antisemitic conduct targets individuals because they are Jewish as an ethnic or ancestral group, existing law already authorizes enforcement.

In addition, many states independently prohibit religious discrimination in educational settings under state law. Where such protections exist, they provide an additional, constitutionally sound basis for addressing antisemitic discrimination without importing vague or speech-laden definitions into enforcement regimes. To the extent that religion is not a protected class under state law, states can close that gap by adopting legislation to include it.

Against this legal backdrop, the IHRA definition is not only unnecessary but ill-suited for use in enforcement. The definition — which was never intended to function as a legal standard — defines antisemitism as “a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews.” This formulation offers no clear guidance as to what speech or conduct is prohibited. 100 people could interpret that definition 100 different ways, showing why the definition, when used for anti-discrimination enforcement purposes, fails a basic vagueness test. And when consequences for schools include investigations, sanctions, or loss of funding under Title VI or state law, institutions will inevitably err on the side of suppressing protected expression. Unfortunately, it’s cheaper for colleges to settle First Amendment lawsuits than risk losing federal or state funding.

These constitutional concerns are compounded by the bill’s requirement that agencies consult IHRA’s accompanying examples of antisemitism. Several of those examples directly implicate core political expression, including criticism of Israel. Speech does not lose constitutional protection because it applies “double standards,” draws historical analogies, or expresses unpopular political views. The First Amendment protects political expression regardless of whether it is persuasive, fair, or widely condemned.

Established anti-discrimination precedent further underscores why this approach is flawed. Courts have long held that expression may be punished as harassment only when it is so severe, pervasive, and objectively offensive that it effectively denies equal access to educational or employment opportunities. Embedding a viewpoint-discriminatory definition into enforcement policy risks collapsing the essential distinction between protected expression and unlawful discriminatory conduct.

The risks posed by this approach are no longer theoretical. In *Students for Justice in Palestine* at the University of Houston v. Abbott, a federal district court considered a First Amendment challenge to a Texas executive order directing public universities to use the IHRA definition “to guide” determinations of antisemitic speech. The court found that incorporation of the IHRA definition plausibly constituted unconstitutional viewpoint discrimination. The court emphasized that the IHRA examples single out particular political viewpoints — especially criticism of Israel — as indicative of antisemitism, thereby burdening one side of a contentious public debate. Because the government may not favor or disfavor speech based on viewpoint, the court held that the plaintiffs had stated a viable First Amendment claim.

This case illustrates the serious constitutional risks that arise when the IHRA definition is used as an enforcement guide rather than as a voluntary educational tool. Even when framed as nonbinding “guidance,” incorporation of the definition predictably pressures institutions to suppress protected political expression and exposes the state to significant legal liability.

Savings clauses or disclaimers stating that HB 2061 does not infringe upon rights protected by the First Amendment do not resolve these problems. No disclaimer can cure the vagueness and overbreadth of a definition that singles out certain political viewpoints as evidence of discriminatory intent. In practice, institutions still over-enforce to avoid investigations, penalties, or political scrutiny.

These concerns are shared even by the IHRA definition’s primary author, Kenneth Stern, who has repeatedly warned against its use as a speech-regulating or enforcement tool. He has explained that the definition was created for data collection and monitoring—not to be weaponized to suppress campus or political speech. As Stern has cautioned, asking the state to define which political positions constitute evidence of antisemitism opens the door to abuse and fundamentally politicizes antidiscrimination law.

There is a constitutionally sound alternative. The state can effectively combat antisemitism by enforcing existing anti-discrimination laws against concrete discriminatory conduct, by adding religion as a protected class in higher education under state law, by clearly distinguishing protected expression from actionable discriminatory harassment consistent with the First Amendment, and by focusing enforcement on exclusion, retaliation, threats, or targeted harassment that meets established legal thresholds.

As written, HB 2061 poses a serious risk to free expression on campus, and we respectfully oppose the bill. We are open to meeting with committee members and bill sponsors to work on a constitutionally sound alternative.

Respectfully submitted,

Tyler Coward
Lead Counsel, Government Affairs
Foundation for Individual Rights and Expression



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WITNESS NAME: WALID KHALIL		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/11/2026 9:43 PM

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Free speech doesn't hurt no one , that's our amendment any way and that's against our rights and amendment



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WITNESS NAME: WENDY SARNO		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
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Dear Chairperson, I am deeply opposed to HB 2061 - Hruza - PROHIBITING ANTISEMITIC ACTIONS. This is a dangerous attack on Free Speech and a blatant support of Israel's genocide of the Palestinian people. This language about antisemitism will not keep Jews safe and will only obscure the real and vile acts of antisemitism in our society.

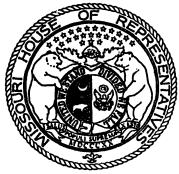


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I oppose House Bill 2061 because it restricts free speech and academic freedom by forcing schools to favor one political viewpoint. Criticism of Zionism is a political position, not antisemitism, and suppressing it violates constitutional protections. This bill is vague and will be enforced through viewpoint discrimination, causing educators and students to self censor. We can address antisemitism without banning discussion of Palestine or limiting political expression. I urge the Missouri Legislature to reject House Bill 2061.



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WITNESS NAME: ZOE MARINOVICH	PHONE NUMBER:	
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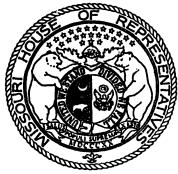
I oppose this bill because it improperly conflates Jewish identity with the actions of a foreign government.

Judaism is a religion and an ethnic identity; Israel is a nation-state. Many Jewish people themselves criticize Israeli government policy or oppose Zionism. Defining such speech as “antisemitic” would silence Jewish voices as well as non-Jewish ones.

The First Amendment protects political speech, including criticism of any government. A law that penalizes or restricts speech about Israel or Zionism based on viewpoint is unconstitutional and sets a dangerous precedent for limiting public debate.

We can fight antisemitism without eroding free speech or collapsing a diverse people into a single political position. I urge you to reject this bill.

— Zoe Marinovich, Kansas City, Missouri



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BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION:		
WITNESS NAME: DAVA-LEIGH BRUSH	PHONE NUMBER: 314-600-6018	
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME: MISSOURI EQUITY EDUCATION PARTNERSHIP	TITLE:	
ADDRESS: PO BOX 1352		
CITY: ST. CHARLES	STATE: MO	ZIP: 63302
EMAIL: dlb@missouriequity.com	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 8:33 PM

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The Missouri Equity Education Partnership believes every Missourian should be protected from discrimination and the harms caused by it. Everyone deserves to feel safe. For this reason, we historically have supported bills that protect marginalized communities from discrimination and harm, including antisemitism. We support the theory of such bills but oppose some of the wording/specifcs. We hope some of the concerns broached during the hearing can be addressed: definition, implementation, practical guidelines for school administrators and educators, and how to address all the nuances and subjectivity lying within this bill. We also wonder how education around recognition of antisemitism can be raised if we are eliminating DEI education. We really do want public schools at all levels to be safe places of learning for everyone.



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WITNESS NAME: JULIANNA JONES	PHONE NUMBER:	
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EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 7:19 AM

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Good morning, congressman. I have particular concerns regarding the language of your bill. I foresee that the lack of specificity in the statement “Criticism of Israel that is similar to criticism of any other country shall not be construed as antisemitic” will be weaponized by both Jewish people who support Israel’s present actions and antisemites to falsely persecute others’ conduct and get away with hateful conduct, respectively. Because this line is so vague, you have essentially left discretion up to individual Title VI coordinators with nothing to refer to but a single working definition of antisemitism. This will likely make it easy for people to blur the line. For example, a Nazi could mention Israel disingenuously while hatefully attacking Jewish students in an attempt to pass it off as criticism of Israel. Likewise, those criticizing the state of Israel, either its existence as a state (not as a people) or its government’s actions, could easily be unfairly persecuted if Jewish or non-Jewish students who support Israel make a complaint and the title VI coordinators determine that the criticism is unlike that of another country. Each of these instances could further obscure the other.

There are, of course, a whole lot of very different countries, about which a whole lot of very different people have a whole lot of very different things to say. I urge you to be more specific in your definitions to prevent any miscarriage of justice that would occur due to the language of this bill if it were to become law.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: LEAH BORDEN		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 3:47 PM

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I support the general idea of this bill and the idea of people in the state government that are solely responsible for antisemitism complaints. I am worried about IHRA being the official definition of antisemitism for the state of Missouri. The Columbia Institute for Israel and Jewish Studies had a helpful zoom with Dina Porat (former Yad Vashem chief historian IIRC) the recording of which is still on their website on the specific examples of IHRA which are clearly antisemitic but the body of IHRA defines antisemitism as "a certain perception of Jews" and leaves the content to the examples. IHRA was also not meant to be an official definition by the people who proposed it and the individuals/organizations who are interested in it being so believe that thoughtless left-wing anti-Zionist discourse is more important to stop than malicious right-wing white supremacist discourse. The suspect in the Mississippi synagogue arson is clearly of the latter type.



MISSOURI HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
WITNESS APPEARANCE FORM

BILL NUMBER: HB 2061		DATE: 1/12/2026
COMMITTEE: Emerging Issues		
TESTIFYING: <input type="checkbox"/> IN SUPPORT OF <input type="checkbox"/> IN OPPOSITION TO <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> FOR INFORMATIONAL PURPOSES		
WITNESS NAME		
INDIVIDUAL:		
WITNESS NAME: Victoria W Singer		PHONE NUMBER:
BUSINESS/ORGANIZATION NAME:		TITLE:
ADDRESS:		
CITY:		STATE: ZIP:
EMAIL:	ATTENDANCE: Written	SUBMIT DATE: 1/12/2026 6:54 AM

THE INFORMATION ON THIS FORM IS PUBLIC RECORD UNDER CHAPTER 610, RSMo.

I have deep concerns about HB2061 to address the safety of Jewish students from antisemitism. What is needed to ensure the safety of Jewish students and all children is 1) Increased funding of non-profit security grants without a political litmus test; 2) Increased training of educators in empathy and conflict resolution and 3) Strict laws to keep guns away from all educational buildings and campuses. Thank you.