

**COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM, TERRORISM,  
AND ANTISEMITIC THREATS IN NEW JERSEY**

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**FIELD HEARING**  
BEFORE THE  
**COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY**  
**HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**  
ONE HUNDRED SEVENTEENTH CONGRESS  
SECOND SESSION  
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## COUNTERING VIOLENT EXTREMISM, TERRORISM, AND ANTISEMITIC THREATS IN NEW JERSEY

Monday, October 3, 2022

U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES,  
COMMITTEE ON HOMELAND SECURITY,  
*Teaneck, NJ.*

The committee met, pursuant to notice, at 10:05 a.m., Teaneck Municipal Building, Teaneck, New Jersey, Hon. Richie Torres [Vice Chairman of the committee] presiding.

Present: Representatives Thompson, Langevin, Payne, Green, Gottheimer, Malinowski, and Torres.

Mr. TORRES [presiding]. Good morning. I am Congressman Richie Torres, and I serve as the Vice Chair of the House Homeland Security Committee under the leadership of Chair Bennie Thompson.

I am deeply grateful to Congressman Josh Gottheimer for generously hosting us in his district and for his visible and vocal leadership in combating antisemitism.

Although I am not Jewish myself, I have been a consistent voice against antisemitism from the moment I entered Congress and even well before then. For me, the reason is simple: Combating antisemitism is not and should never be the sole responsibility of the Jewish community. It is a moral obligation that should bind all of us, but especially those of us in the U.S. Congress.

The House Homeland Security Committee has jurisdiction over the Nonprofit Security Grant Program, which has emerged as a vital tool for protecting the Jewish community from violent extremism.

In a properly functioning society, there would be no need for a Nonprofit Security Program. There would be no need for schools and synagogues to be heavily protected by security barriers and security cameras and security guards. There would be no need for students, in the innocence of their youth, or congregants in their place of worship to undergo active-shooter training.

The tragic necessity of the Nonprofit Security Grant Program is a sign of the troubling times we live in and the troubled souls who increasingly live among us. The United States is confronting an unprecedented crisis of antisemitism. Antisemitic violence and vandalism have risen to levels not seen in decades.

About 30 percent of all antisemitic incidents in the United States in 2021 were concentrated in New York and New Jersey. Just last week, Rutgers University's chapter of Alpha Epsilon Pi, a Jewish fraternity, fell victim to vandalism during Rosh Hashanah.

In an age of on-line radicalization, violent extremism commands the largest microphone it has ever known in human history, a platform that history's most vicious and violent demagogues can only dream of.

In May 2021, for example, the Anti-Defamation League, ADL, found the hashtag "Hitler was right" trending on Twitter, with tens of thousands of retweets and with no content moderation in sight.

In the summer of 2017 in Charlottesville, Virginia, during the Unite the White rally, white supremacists were found uttering the words, "the Jews will not replace us" in an odious reference to the great replacement theory.

Most tragically, on October 27, 2018, a white supremacist, motivated by replacement theory, entered the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and opened fire, murdering 11 Jews in the deadliest act of antisemitism in U.S. history.

Although white supremacist extremism has historically been a dominant driver of antisemitism, it is far from the only one. In early April 2022, in New York City, following a wave of terrorism in Israel that left multiple Israelis dead, a set of activists in a rally entitled "Globalize the Intifada" took to the streets of New York and publicly called for Zionists to be purged from college campuses and classrooms. The substitution of the word "Zionist" for "Jew" has become the modus operandi of a new insidious strain of antisemitism that has taken hold in college campuses and on social media platforms.

Antisemitism is too complicated to be reduced to one cause. It can be found everywhere, on the right and on the left, among the secular and among the religious. History tells us that antisemitism is a virus with more than one mutation, with more than a single strain. As a virus, it has spread rapidly and widely on college campuses, on social media, and on the streets of America, where it has grown not only in frequency and severity, but also in far too many places with impunity.

So we are here today to examine in greater detail why antisemitism has risen so suddenly and sharply and what we in Congress can do specifically to aid State and local governments as well as our community-based partners in turning the tide against an ancient hatred that too often thrives on conspiracy theories and too often hardens into violence. When it comes to the fight against antisemitism, failure is not an option.

I thank our witnesses for being here, and I look forward to an informative and productive hearing. So, with that said, if the Chair is present, the Chair recognizes the true Chairman Thompson for opening remarks if he may have any.

If not, without objection, I will recognize the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Gottheimer, for any opening remarks.

[The statement of Vice Chairman Torres follows:]

#### STATEMENT OF VICE CHAIRMAN RITCHIE TORRES

Before we begin, I want to acknowledge the sheer devastation that Hurricane Ian has brought to several States, particularly Florida. The committee is thinking of those affected by the hurricane and will work closely with the Department of Homeland Security to assist those in need.

Good morning, I am Congressman Ritchie Torres and I serve as Vice Chair of the House Homeland Security Committee under the leadership of Chair Bennie Thompson.

I am deeply grateful to Congressman Josh Gottheimer for generously hosting us in his District and for his visible and vocal leadership in combating antisemitism.

Although I am not Jewish, I have been a consistent voice against antisemitism from the moment I entered Congress and even well before then. For me, the reason is simple: Combating antisemitism is not and should never be the sole responsibility of the Jewish community. It is a moral obligation that should bind all of us, but most especially those of us in the U.S. Congress.

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In a properly functioning society, there would be no need for a Nonprofit Security Grant program. There would be no need for schools and synagogues to be heavily protected by security barriers and security cameras and security guards. There would be no need for students, in the innocence of their youth, or congregants, in their place of worship, to undergo active-shooter training.

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The United States is confronting an unprecedented crisis of antisemitism. Antisemitic violence and vandalism have risen to levels not seen in decades; about 30 percent of all antisemitic incidents in the United States in 2021 were concentrated in New York and New Jersey. Just last week, Rutgers University's chapter of Alpha Epsilon Pi, a Jewish fraternity, fell victim to vandalism during Rosh Hashanah.

In an age of on-line radicalization, violent extremism commands the largest microphone it has ever known in human history—a platform that history's most vicious and violent demagogues could only dream of. In May 2021, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) found the hashtag #HitlerWasRight trending on Twitter, with tens of thousands of retweets and with no content moderation in sight.

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And most tragically, on October 27, 2018, a white supremacist, motivated by the Great Replacement Theory, entered the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and opened fire, murdering 11 Jews in the deadliest act of antisemitism in U.S. history.

Although white supremacist extremism has historically been a dominant driver of antisemitism, it is far from the only one.

In early April 2022, in New York City, following a wave of terror in Israel that left multiple Israelis dead, a set of extremists—in a rally entitled "Globalize the Intifada"—took to the streets of New York and publicly called for Zionists students and professors to be purged from college campuses and classrooms. The substitution of the word 'Zionist' for 'Jew' has become the modus operandi of a new insidious strain of antisemitism that has taken hold in college campuses and on social media platforms.

Antisemitism is too complicated to be reduced to one cause. It can be found everywhere—on the right and on the left, among the secular and among the religious. History tells us that antisemitism is a virus with more than one mutation, with more than a single strain.

And as a virus, it spreads rapidly and widely—on college campuses, on social media, and on the streets of America where it has grown not only in frequency and severity but also, in far too many places, with impunity.

We are here to examine in greater detail why antisemitism has risen so suddenly and sharply and what we in Congress can do specifically to aid State and local governments, as well as our community-based partners, in turning the tide against an ancient hatred that too often thrives on conspiracy theories and too often hardens into violence. When it comes to the fight against antisemitism, failure is not an option.

I thank our witnesses for being here and look forward to a productive hearing.

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Good morning. I would like to welcome everyone here on the committee to Teaneck, New Jersey. I want to thank the mayor and the council and leadership here in the town for welcoming us. We are very grateful for your hospitality.

On behalf of the New Jersey's Fifth District, we are honored to be hosting the Homeland Security Committee and my colleagues. Thank you very much for being here.

We are here, as I mentioned, to address the troubling rise in antisemitism and domestic violent extremism in New Jersey and Nation-wide. I want to thank Chairman Thompson, Vice Chair Richie Torres—thank you very much for your excellent leadership—the witnesses today and, of course, my colleagues for recognizing the importance of this issue, for bringing it front and center, and for their leadership in combating hate, antisemitism, and extremism.

Across the country, including right here in our community, there has been a dramatic spike in hate crimes targeting religious and ethnic groups and members of the LGBTQ community as well.

For example, according to the Anti-Defamation League, who we are honored to have joining us today on the panel, the overall number of antisemitic incidents in New Jersey rose by 25 percent just last year, the most ever recorded in New Jersey by the ADL since tracking began.

In fact, in a gruesome antisemitic attack last year here in Teaneck, a man wielding a hammer broke the windows of a pediatrician's office and dry cleaners. The bloody man confronted a mother and daughter, asking if they were Jewish. This is just one of seven reported antisemitic incidents here in Bergen County last year alone, the highest in all of New Jersey.

Just last week, the Jewish fraternity which I belong to as well, Alpha Epsilon Pi at Rutgers University, was once again vandalized, this time during the high holiday of Rosh Hashanah. This is the second time in just one calendar year.

Unfortunately, nationally, the ADL's audit of antisemitic incidents in the United States recorded 2,717 acts of assault, vandalism, and harassment in 2021, an average of more than seven incidents every day.

That is why I am working to ensure we are keeping North Jersey's houses of worship, synagogues, temples and religious schools safe. I am proud to have helped these organizations claw back more than \$8 million in Nonprofit Security Grants to North Jersey while I have been in office, the most out of any district.

We have also experienced a rise in anti-Asian hate crimes since the pandemic, especially here in North Jersey. In fact, the Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism found that anti-Asian hate crime increased by 339 percent last year compared to the year before.

I know the rise of racially-charged attacks against the Asian American and Pacific Islander community has many no longer feeling safe. I hear stories of residents having to carry pepper spray around town and fear of letting their children go out to play.

This shouldn't be the new normal. As we are seeing a rise in extremism and hate crimes across the country, it is critical that we take steps to invest in, not defund law enforcement. We must keep our families and our communities safe as well as our police.

That is why I introduced a new bipartisan, bicameral bill, the Invest to Protect Act, which I am glad to have cosponsors of on this committee, which just passed the House with overwhelming bipar-



tisan support, to ensure that local police departments across our country have what they need to recruit and retain good officers, provide necessary training, and to invest in providing mental health resources for our officers.

I am also introducing today the bipartisan FASTER Act, the Freezing Assets of Suspected Terrorists and Enemy Recruits Act, along with Republican Brian Fitzpatrick, to help law enforcement freeze the assets of ISIS-inspired lone-wolf terrorists or other domestic extremists that are arrested on U.S. soil.

We simply can't run the risk of funds being utilized by an ISIS-inspired terrorist or domestic extremist to carry out another attack, whether that is at Ground Zero, a shooting in Jersey City targeting the Jewish community, in temples, at schools, or on the West Side Highway, where a terror truck took the life of our own community's Jimmy Drake. According to our FBI field office, these terror threats remain their No. 1 concern. Mr. Drake, who lost his life, and his family have been heroic in standing up for their son.

The FASTER Act will also implement a one-of-a-kind, state-of-the-art National home-grown terrorist incident clearinghouse for all levels of law enforcement to collect and share information on incidents of ISIS-inspired home-grown lone-wolf terrorism and violent domestic extremism.

We know there has also been a huge spike of extremist chatter on-line via social media, including attempts to recruit Americans into their small cells. Over the last year, we are also witnessing an alarming spike in activity from domestic extremist groups threatening our communities with violence and hate, in person, on-line, and deep in our communities.

We regularly hear the names of domestic terrorist groups like the Oath Keepers and Proud Boys, because of their involvement in the January 6th attack on the U.S. Capitol. In fact, today the trial is beginning of Oath Keepers Leader Stewart Rhodes and several of his associates for seditious conspiracy for their role in attempting to overthrow the Government on January 6th.

Several of those who attacked law enforcement, the Capitol, and our country on January 6th have been arrested here in New Jersey, including a few miles from here in Sussex County, which is also in my district. The Oath Keepers not only attacked the Capitol but, according to their own members, are also Holocaust deniers. Rioters on January 6th were even seen wearing antisemitic imagery.

This is not a new issue here in New Jersey, where the New Jersey Department of Homeland Security, whose director is here, has been tracking and taking action against these domestic extremist groups for years now, including the Oath Keepers, the Three Percenters, and Proud Boys. They track their antisemitic, anti-Asian, anti-Muslim activity and anti-American sentiment. The Department then works with local law enforcement by sharing this information to combat these threats.

Unfortunately, their extreme actions and radical ideas go beyond January 6th. These domestic terrorists have seeped into our communities, putting our families in danger, pitting our neighbors against one another, and further dividing our great country.

Community partners, law enforcement, and experts are vital to addressing and understanding these threats, which is why I am so thankful for our witnesses for joining us today. I look forward to hearing from them about how we can work together to combat violent extremism, global and domestic terrorism, and antisemitic threats. We must combat all forms of hate wherever it exists and ensure our communities and law enforcement have the resources they need to stay safe and secure.

Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

[The statement of Hon. Gottheimer follows:]

STATEMENT OF HONORABLE JOSH GOTTHEIMER

OCTOBER 3, 2022

Good morning.

It is great to be here at the Teaneck Council Chambers, hosting my committee on Homeland Security colleagues in my Congressional district.

We are here to discuss the troubling rise in antisemitism and domestic violent extremism here in New Jersey and Nation-wide.

I thank Chairman Thompson, Vice Chair Torres, and today's witnesses for recognizing the importance of this issue and for their leadership.

Serving on the Committee on Homeland Security, as Co-Chair of the bipartisan Problem Solvers Caucus, and as proud representative to more than 50,000 Jewish residents in my district, I am committed to combating antisemitic violence and violent extremist attacks in New Jersey and the country.

I helped lead a bipartisan resolution to condemn rising antisemitism and recognize the many contributions Jewish Americans have made to our great Nation. And on May 18, 2022, the resolution passed the House of Representatives with sweeping bipartisan support in a 420-to-1 vote.

The rise in violence, hate, and bigotry in our country is completely unacceptable and has no place anywhere in our communities. I know my colleagues agree.

I have said before that we must combat antisemitism wherever it exists. Those who allow these ideas to fester and go unchecked only enable them to spread further.

Sadly, antisemitic incidents in New Jersey increased by 25 percent last year—the most ever recorded in New Jersey according to the Anti-Defamation League's (ADL) annual audit.<sup>1</sup> This number is likely higher as many incidents go unreported.

In one incident, a man was arrested here in Teaneck for smashing the windows of a pediatric office and a local cleaner's office with a hammer asking those inside, "are you Jewish?"<sup>2</sup>

This is just 1 of the 70 reported incidents in Bergen County in 2021—the highest in all of New Jersey.

Unfortunately, New Jersey follows the disturbing national trend of rising incidents of hate. The ADL's Audit of Antisemitic Incidents in the United States recorded 2,717 acts of assault, vandalism, and harassment in 2021—an average of more than 7 incidents per day.

Combatting antisemitism and violent extremism will take a concerted effort at every level of government.

The Department of Homeland Security (DHS) designated domestic violent extremism a "national priority area" for grant programs. It also awarded \$180 million to through the Nonprofit Security Grant Program,<sup>3</sup> which our committee helps oversee, to nonprofit organizations at high risk of terrorist attack.

North Jersey houses of worship, synagogues, temples, and schools have been awarded more than \$8 million from the nonprofit security grant program to help bolster their security.

<sup>1</sup>*Audit of Antisemitic Incidents: Year in Review 2021*, ADL, <https://nynj.adl.org/news/2021-audit-nj/> (accessed Sep. 20, 2022).

<sup>2</sup>*NJ Man Nabbed in Hammer Window-Smashing Rampage at Pediatric Office, Cleaners*, NBC NEW YORK, Sept. 13, 2021, <https://www.nbcnewyork.com/news/local/nj-man-nabbed-in-hammer-window-smashing-rampage-at-pediatric-office-cleaners/3269199/>.

<sup>3</sup>*Secretary Alejandro Mayorkas, Remarks by Secretary Mayorkas at the Eradicate Hate Global Summit*, October 19, 2021, <https://www.dhs.gov/news/2021/10/19/secretary-mayorkas-delivers-remarks-eradicate-hate-global-summit>.

Additionally, the Problem Solvers Caucus, which I co-chair, endorsed and helped pass the bipartisan Never Again Education Act. The Act creates a new grant program within the U.S. Department of Education to provide teachers across the country the resources, tools, and training to teach about the Holocaust and the repercussions hate and intolerance have on our society.

I am also proud the House recently passed my bipartisan, bicameral bill, the Invest to Protect Act, to make critical, targeted investments in local police departments which will allow them to help combat these threats.

Community partners are also vital in addressing these threats. That is why I have hosted town halls with thousands of members of the Jewish community to further the dialog about how we can fight to combat antisemitic threats and hate.

I will continue to connect with local leaders and constituents to address the rise in antisemitic and extremist threats.

Today, I look forward to hearing from our witnesses about the challenges facing our communities and how we can work together to counter violent extremism, terrorism, and antisemitic threats.

I thank the committee for coming to my Congressional district for this important hearing.

Mr. TORRES. Other Members of the committee are reminded that under the committee rules, opening statements may be submitted for the record.

[The statement of Chairman Thompson follows:]

STATEMENT OF CHAIRMAN BENNIE G. THOMPSON

OCTOBER 3, 2022

Good morning.

Let me begin by saying that my thoughts are with all of those affected by Hurricane Ian.

Millions of Americans are grappling with the storm's devastating effects and we are certainly thinking of and praying for them.

Today, the Committee on Homeland Security is examining the increase in violent extremism and antisemitic incidents across the country and here in New Jersey, with the aim of finding how best to counter such threats.

This hearing is an opportunity to focus on the factors driving the recent rise in domestic terrorism, including antisemitic violence, the State and local response, and how the Federal Government is supporting that response.

I would like to thank Congressman Gottheimer for his leadership on this critical issue and for bringing the committee to his district for today's hearing.

In the 21 years since 9/11, the threat environment has changed immensely. While terrorist actors backed by violent Islamist ideologies continue to pose a serious threat, the greatest terrorism threat to the homeland today is from domestic violent extremists, particularly those who promote a violent white supremacy ideology.

In June, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), Federal Bureau of Investigation, and National Counterterrorism Center released a report assessing that threats from domestic violent extremists driven by a belief in the superiority of the white race will persist.

These agencies also assess that there is an enduring threat posed by domestic violent extremists to Jewish communities.

Local, State, and Federal resources must be focused on addressing the needs of the American Jewish community, which is why the committee is in New Jersey—a State that has seen a historic rise in antisemitic incidents.

This committee has closely examined the pervasive domestic terrorism threat in over a dozen hearings on the issue in recent years, including several specifically focused on antisemitism.

Congressional Democrats have also more than doubled funding for the Nonprofit Security Grant Program from \$90 million in fiscal year 2020, to \$180 million in fiscal year 2021, and \$250.15 million in fiscal year 2022.

Additionally, the Biden-Harris administration has increased efforts to address the larger domestic terrorism threat. DHS, in particular, has:

- Issued several National Terrorism Advisory System bulletins on the heightened threat from domestic terrorists;
- Established a new domestic terrorism branch within the Office of Intelligence and Analysis;
- Designated domestic violent extremism as a “National Priority Area” within the Homeland Security Grant Program, making \$77 million available to grant ap-

plicants to prevent, prepare for, protect against, and respond to domestic terrorism threats;

- and enhanced collaboration with public and private-sector partners to better guard against domestic violent extremist attacks on critical infrastructure.

I commend the administration for releasing a long-overdue DHS and Department of Justice report on data concerning acts of terrorism, including domestic terrorism, and the Federal Government's response.

Although the Federal Government is committing more resources to combat the grave threat of domestic terrorism and antisemitic violence, more work remains.

For example, we are still awaiting the release of the second iteration of the DHS-DOJ report on domestic terrorism data, which is necessary to respond appropriately to the threat.

Additionally, it is critical that the Federal Government work with State and local partners and community organizations to use all available tools to combat antisemitism and domestic violent extremism.

I look forward to our witnesses' recommendations for additional action to ensure we can combat extremist incidents here in New Jersey and throughout the country. Thank you.

Mr. TORRES. Members are also reminded that the committee will operate according to the guidelines laid out by the Chairman and Ranking Member in their February 3, 2021, colloquy regarding remote procedures.

I will now welcome our witnesses. Ms. Laurie Doran was appointed as the director of the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness on February 14, 2022. In her role, she serves as the Federally-designated Homeland Security Adviser to the Governor and as the Cabinet-level executive responsible for coordinating and leading New Jersey's counterterrorism, cybersecurity, and emergency preparedness efforts. Ms. Doran previously served as the director of the Intelligence and Operations Division after retiring from the Central Intelligence Agency after 32 years of service.

Mr. Scott Richman is director for ADL's largest regional office covering New York and New Jersey, I would say the two greatest States, although I love Texas. He oversees the work of the region, which includes incident response, anti-bias education, legislative initiatives, and fundraising and leadership development, all designed to fight antisemitism and combat hate in all its forms.

Ms. Susan Corke is the director of the Southern Poverty Law Center Intelligence Project. At the SPLC, Ms. Corke leads a team of investigators, analysts, and writers who track and expose the activities of hate groups and other extremists, including neo-Nazi groups.

Mr. Ken Stern is the director of the Bard Center for the Study of Hate. Mr. Stern is an award-winning author, an attorney, and was most recently executive director of the Justus & Karin Rosenberg Foundation. Before that, he was the director of the Division on Antisemitism and Extremism at the American Jewish Committee, where he worked for 25 years.

Rabbi Esther Reed is the interim executive director of the Rutgers Hillel. Rabbi Reed has served as the director there for the last 21 years. The Rutgers Hillel is the gateway to Jewish life at Rutgers University, providing every Jewish student at Rutgers University a sense of people, place, and pride.

Finally, Ms. Holly Huffnagle serves as the U.S. director for combating antisemitism for the American Jewish Committee. In this role, she is responsible for leading AJC's response to antisemitism

in the United States and its efforts to better protect the Jewish community. Ms. Huffnagle has also overseen AJC's international relations in all projects and programs related to monitoring and combating antisemitism.

Without objection, the witnesses' full statements will be included in the record.

The Chair recognizes Ms. Doran to summarize her statement for 5 minutes.

**STATEMENT OF LAURIE R. DORAN, DIRECTOR, OFFICE OF HOMELAND SECURITY AND PREPAREDNESS, STATE OF NEW JERSEY**

Ms. DORAN. Chairman Thompson and Ranking Member Katko, thank you for the opportunity to testify today. The New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness leads and coordinates the State's counterterrorism, cybersecurity, and resiliency efforts.

While an evolving threat landscape has presented New Jersey with a diverse set of security challenges, we work in coordination with law enforcement partners to address our shared domestic security.

We have seen a recent uptick in domestic violent extremist activity around the country. OHSP's analytical capabilities have concentrated on domestic extremism and the threat it presents. Our 2022 threat assessment designated home-grown violent extremists and white racially-motivated extremists as high-level threats and forecasted that foreign terrorist organizations will continue to seek opportunities to inspire extremists to conduct attacks.

Domestic extremists employ similar attack methods, recruitment strategies, and propaganda distribution. These elements, coupled with the availability of social media, create unique security challenges.

Racially-motivated extremists remain committed to spreading antisemitic rhetoric on-line, with a focus on alternative social media and encrypted messaging platforms. Nation-wide, supporters of the white racially-motivated extremist ideology demonstrated their willingness to capability to coordinate and network globally as well as to direct and inspire sympathizers on-line.

In New Jersey, white racially-motivated extremists primarily use propaganda distribution for conversion and recruitment purposes. Additionally, they may attempt to establish stronger ties in the State while stockpiling weapons and tactical equipment.

Black racially-motivated extremists may engage in low-level criminal activities, demonize law enforcement, and spread antisemitic conspiracies, while lone offenders may conduct isolated attacks.

In 2019, two individuals espousing antisemitic and anti-law enforcement views with fringe affiliations to Black racially-motivated extremist ideology shot and killed a total of four people in two separate incidents in Jersey City, New Jersey, to include Detective Joseph Seals and victims inside a Kosher grocery store. Although the investigation is on-going, this past April a lone offender was charged with attempting to kill and cause injuries to three after allegedly targeting the Orthodox Jewish community during several violent attacks in and around Lakewood, New Jersey. Both occur-

rences are examples of individuals, driven by hate and bias, singling out and terrorizing a community.

While we cannot stop every attack, we can mitigate the risks. We can build resiliency, educate the public, promote information sharing among our partners and identify and forewarn of potential threats to the best of our ability.

With the support of our State's administration and leadership, we proudly embrace a whole-of-community approach to security. Our Interfaith Advisory Council continues to be a national model for faith-based community engagement, with members regularly updated on best practices and security resources to assist them in identifying security gaps.

OHSP serves as a State administrative agency to nonprofits that are seeking grant funding and can demonstrate a high-risk for terrorist attacks. To address these vulnerabilities, over the past year we have provided these organizations with \$32 million from the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and \$6.9 million since 2019 from the New Jersey Nonprofit Security Grant Program, a previous pilot that Governor Phil Murphy made permanent just this past January.

As the public continues to be our first line of defense in the fight against terrorism, OHSP has partnered with DHS to counter violent extremism by amplifying the If You See Something, Say Something campaign messaging and by participating alongside selected security partner agency personnel in the National Threat Evaluation and Reporting Master Trainer Program. This program certifies Homeland Security professionals and behavioral threat assessment techniques to assist in identifying, investigating, assessing, and managing potential threats of targeted violence, regardless of motive.

OHSP is also collaborating with our partners on a Behavioral Threat Assessment Management Team to deter violent extremists from radicalizing, inspiring, or recruiting individuals and to stop the mobilization toward violence.

Furthermore, OHSP works closely with the State's Division of Criminal Justice as well as county and local partners to review bias incident reports, which are assessed to determine if they meet the threshold for submission to the State's Suspicious Activity Reporting System.

Conversely, OHSP shares all suspicious activity information and a weekly report outlining suspicious activity that may have a potential bias motivation with the State's Office of the Attorney General and DCJ. This ensures that the proper authorities thoroughly review, vet, and investigate all incidents.

OHSP aims to utilize these different initiatives to better understand and combat the evolving threat landscape. The nation as a whole has witnessed substantial changes in recent years, and the threats that come from violent extremism and terrorism are no exception. These threats emphasize a continued need to for resiliency and OHSP's important mission as we continue to meet these security challenges in collaboration with our partners.

Chairman Thompson, Ranking Member Katko, and distinguished Members of the committee, I thank you again for the opportunity

to testify. I look forward to your questions and yield back to the Chairman.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Doran follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF LAURIE R. DORAN

MONDAY, OCTOBER 3, 2022

Chairman Thompson and Ranking Member Katko, thank you for the opportunity to testify before you and the House Committee on Homeland Security. My remarks today will largely center around New Jersey's efforts to help ensure the security of our residents, communities, visitors, and institutions, especially our work to counter violent extremism, terrorism, and bias-motivated crimes. The New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness leads and coordinates the State's counterterrorism, cybersecurity, and resiliency efforts. While an evolving threat landscape has presented New Jersey with a diverse set of security challenges, we work in coordination with Federal, State, and local law enforcement partners to address our shared domestic security. We recognize the nature of the work requires constant improvement, the on-going development of strategies, and continued expansion of current capabilities to help prevent, thwart, and mitigate threats at all levels.

It is no secret that we have seen a recent uptick in domestic violent extremist activity around the country. New Jersey's analytical capabilities have concentrated on domestic extremism and the threat it presents. In 2020, we were one of the first States in the Nation to sharpen its focus on extreme ideologies that incite individuals to take violent action. Our most recent threat assessment designated home-grown violent extremists and white racially-motivated extremists as high-level threats and forecasted that foreign terrorist organizations will continue to seek opportunities to inspire extremists to conduct attacks in the homeland and abroad.

Over the last decade, certain extremists have adopted the belief systems of multiple domestic extremists and foreign terrorist organizations and tailored those belief systems to develop and ultimately form unique, radical worldviews that advance their own violent goals. These extremists use this ideological convergence for guidance or to justify violence against shared targets. They also employ common tactics, such as attack methods, recruitment strategies, and propaganda distribution. Their aversion for institutions and beliefs are often in close alignment, with Western government democracies consistently among their shared common enemies. These elements combined, coupled with the availability of various social media platforms, create unique security challenges for law enforcement.

Racially-motivated extremists remain committed to spreading antisemitic rhetoric on-line, with a focus on alternative social media and encrypted messaging platforms. Nation-wide, supporters of the white racially-motivated extremist ideology have demonstrated their willingness and capability to coordinate and network globally, as well as to direct and inspire sympathizers on-line. In New Jersey, to spread their ideology and recruit new members, white racially-motivated extremists' primary tactic is mostly through the distribution of propaganda. Additionally, white racially-motivated extremists may attempt to establish stronger ties in the State, while stockpiling weapons and tactical equipment. Black racially-motivated extremists may engage in low-level criminal activities, demonize law enforcement, and spread antisemitic conspiracies, while lone offenders may conduct isolated attacks. Violent lone offenders with various motivations have targeted law enforcement in opportunistic or ambush incidents, leading to several fatal attacks around the Nation, including here in New Jersey.

In December 2019, two shooters killed a total of four people and injured three others in two separate incidents in Jersey City, New Jersey, when they targeted a kosher grocery store, shortly after killing Jersey City Police Detective Joseph Seals at a nearby cemetery. The shooters, who had a fringe affiliation with Black racially-motivated extremist ideology, espoused antisemitic and anti-law enforcement views prior to the attack, according to authorities. Law enforcement responded and both assailants were neutralized following a stand-off at the grocery store. This past April, an incident unfolded in and around Lakewood, New Jersey, when a lone offender conducted several violent attacks on members of the Orthodox Jewish community. Authorities charged the perpetrator with willfully causing bodily injury to four victims and of those, attempting to kill and cause injuries with dangerous weapons to three. While the incident in Lakewood is still an on-going investigation, the attacker allegedly targeted these individuals solely on the basis of their culture and religion. Both occurrences are examples of individuals, driven by hate and bias, singling out and terrorizing a community.

Although we know we cannot stop every attack, there are steps we can take to mitigate the risks. We can build resiliency, we can educate the public, we can promote information sharing among our partners and we can identify and forewarn of potential threats to the best of our ability. With the support of our State's administration and leadership, we are proud of our work and continue to embrace a whole-of-community approach to security. OHSP's Interfaith Advisory Council continues to be a national model for faith-based community engagement. With a 4,000-person membership base, the IAC has been able to successfully foster open dialog and promote honest conversations, charting a collaborative and all-inclusive approach to security. Members are regularly updated on best practices, grant opportunities, and free training programs, along with resources and information that will assist them in identifying vulnerabilities and closing any security gaps. OHSP works with homeland security and law enforcement partners by sharing information, facilitating their connection with faith-based community leaders and taking all the necessary actions against any form of targeted violence and terrorism.

Through our Grants Bureau, OHSP serves as the State Administrative Agency to eligible nonprofit organizations seeking homeland security funding provided by both the U.S. Department of Homeland Security and the State of New Jersey. Over the past 2 years, our agency has administered more than \$32 million in Federal Non-profit Security Grant Program funding to those organizations demonstrating a high risk for a terrorist attack. Additionally, in January, Governor Phil Murphy signed legislation establishing the New Jersey Nonprofit Security Grant Program. Introduced as a pilot program, this funding has proven to be an important State resource to supplement available Federal security grants. Since 2019, OHSP has administered \$6.9 million through this competitive and successful program.

As the public continues to be our first line of defense in the fight against terrorism, OHSP has partnered with the U.S. Department of Homeland Security on the "If You See Something, Say Something®" campaign, amplifying its message throughout New Jersey. Furthermore, OHSP works closely with the New Jersey Division of Criminal Justice, as well as county and local partners, to review bias incident reports, which are assessed to determine if they meet the threshold for submission to the State's Suspicious Activity Reporting System. Conversely, OHSP shares all suspicious activity information and a weekly report outlining suspicious activity that may have a potential bias motivation with the New Jersey Office of the Attorney General and Division of Criminal Justice. This ensures that the proper authorities thoroughly review, vet, and investigate all incidents.

Two new security initiatives will also contribute to the State's efforts to counter violent extremism. This year, OHSP and selected partner agency personnel participated in the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's 4-day training, the "National Threat Evaluation and Reporting Master Trainer Program." The training certifies homeland security professionals in behavioral threat assessment techniques and best practices. This will enable our Master Trainers to empower communities to identify, investigate, assess, and manage potential threats of targeted violence regardless of motive. Additionally, OHSP, along with our partners, is collaborating on a Behavioral Threat Assessment Management Team. The goal of this multidisciplinary, multiagency initiative is to deter violent extremists from radicalizing, inspiring, or recruiting individuals and to stop the mobilization toward violence. The New Jersey team consists of the FBI, OHSP, New Jersey's Department of Education, State Police, Office of the Attorney General, Division of Mental Health, Department of Human Services, and the Urban Areas Security Initiative. A portion of OHSP's role in this initiative is utilizing our Suspicious Activity Reporting System to help identify individuals that may be exhibiting certain risk factors.

OHSP aims to utilize these different initiatives to better understand and combat the evolving threat landscape. Our State, and the Nation as a whole, has witnessed substantial change in recent years, and the threats that come from violent extremism and terrorism are no exception. This emphasizes the continued need for resiliency, and OHSP's mission has never been more important as we continue to meet these security challenges in the areas of counterterrorism, cybersecurity, and preparedness. To counter these evolving threats, OHSP and its staff have dedicated themselves to responding in kind with evolving strategies, such as robust intelligence and information sharing, preparedness initiatives, amplified public awareness campaigns, and joint investigative operations through interagency partnerships. This last component in particular, further stresses that our mission is not a solo effort, as continued collaboration with our partners at the local, county, State, and Federal levels has been vital to meeting these security challenges, and we would be remiss if we did not acknowledge that we are stronger working together than alone.



Chairman Thompson, Ranking Member Katko, and distinguished Members of the committee, I thank you again for the opportunity to testify today.

I look forward to your questions and yield back to the Chairman.

Mr. TORRES. The Chair recognizes Mr. Richman to summarize his statement for 5 minutes.

**STATEMENT OF SCOTT RICHMAN, REGIONAL DIRECTOR FOR  
NEW YORK AND NEW JERSEY, ADL**

Mr. RICHMAN. Vice Chairman Torres, Members of the committee, it is an honor to appear before you today to address the threat that antisemitism, hate, and extremism pose to New Jersey and the Nation.

For more than a century, ADL has worked to stop the defamation of the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment to all. Our experts track and respond to hate and extremism from across the ideological spectrum, and we work with community partners, law enforcement, and policy makers to address these threats head-on.

ADL sees this moment as an inflection point. Hate and extremism are metastasizing, threatening our communities and democratic institutions. Amidst this rising hate, the Jewish community continues to be a primary target.

ADL's audit of antisemitic incidents reached its highest recorded number ever in 2021, with 2,717 antisemitic incidents in the United States. Known extremist groups or individuals motivated by extremist ideology were responsible for one out of every five of those incidents.

Locally, New York led the Nation, with 416 antisemitic incidents in 2021. New Jersey came in a close second, with 370, the highest number ever recorded in the State. Of the 21 counties in New Jersey, Bergen County, where we are today, had the highest number.

These troubling trends have continued this year, from harassment to violence to hateful content on-line. In April, my office worked closely with the Lakewood community and the county prosecutor following a series of violent attacks that culminated in the stabbing of an Orthodox Jewish man.

Antisemitism lurks across the political spectrum. Radical anti-Israel and anti-Zionist sentiment drive incidents across this country. I want to be clear. Criticism of Israel is not by itself antisemitic. However, efforts to delegitimize and demonize the Jewish state often rise to that level. Last year in New Jersey, ADL recorded 27 antisemitic incidents motivated by anti-Israel sentiment, a 35 percent jump from the year before.

The uptick in antisemitism goes hand-in-hand with rising extremism across the country, as ADL research has shown. Recently, the Goyim Defense League distributed its hate-filled content in New Jersey, blaming Jews for spreading COVID, having too much power, and threatening the "white race".

White supremacist groups cloak themselves in feigned legitimacy with innocuous-sounding names, like the New Jersey European Heritage Association, which was responsible for one-third of the white supremacist propaganda in New Jersey last year, while on-line platforms enable and amplify their reach.

Such hate yields deadly results, most recently in Buffalo, where a gunman espousing white supremacist and antisemitic conspiracy theories killed ten people. I was among the first on the scene, supporting our local partners, including the National Urban League and law enforcement, and continued by working with State leadership to combat domestic extremism. Together, we can and must do more to prevent future tragedies.

ADL has repeatedly called for a whole-of-Government, whole-of-society approach to curb the rising tide of hate. We call on Congress to adopt ADL's strategies, the COMBAT Plan to fight antisemitism, the PROTECT Plan to mitigate extremism, and the REPAIR Plan to curtail on-line hate.

I would like to highlight seven key recommendations: No. 1, prioritize and promote efforts to counter violent extremism as well as oversight and transparency for those efforts; No. 2, establish an interagency task force to combat antisemitism; No. 3, adopt the IHRA working definition of antisemitism as a guideline for understanding antisemitism and identifying its modern-day manifestations; No. 4, legislate to end the complicity of social media companies; No. 5, create an independent clearinghouse to identify extremist content; No. 6, continue to fund and grow programs that protect marginalized communities, like the Nonprofit Security Grant Program; and finally, No. 7, ensure that the measures announced at the White House Summit United We Stand, which ADL supported, are implemented in full.

Last week, I helped at Rosh Hashanah services at my synagogue. As part of my duties, I was designated to wear a panic button around my neck to alert law enforcement in an emergency. Like so many worshippers, I spent the service distracted by the fear that our synagogue could be next, the next Colleyville, the next Jersey City, the next Tree of Life.

As Yom Kippur begins tomorrow, I urge you to remember the way that these threats tear at the fabric of our communities, our democracy, and our country. Now, now is the time for action. Thank you for your attention to this critical issue, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Richman follows:]

#### PREPARED STATEMENT OF SCOTT RICHMAN

OCTOBER 3, 2022

#### INTRODUCTION TO ADL

Since 1913, the mission of ADL (the Anti-Defamation League) has been to "stop the defamation of the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment to all." For decades, one of the most important ways in which ADL has fought against bigotry and antisemitism has been by investigating extremist threats across the ideological spectrum, including from white supremacists and other far-right violent extremists, producing research to inform the public of the scope of the threat, and working with law enforcement, educators, the tech industry and elected leaders to promote best practices that can effectively address and counter these threats.

Domestic violent extremism has been on the rise in recent years. The Jewish community continues to be a primary target of extremists, regardless of ideology.

Without a doubt, right-wing extremist violence is currently the greatest domestic terrorism threat to everyone in this country. From Charleston to Charlottesville to Pittsburgh, to Poway and El Paso and Buffalo, we have seen the deadly consequences of white supremacist extremism play out all over this country. Moreover, at ADL we are tracking the mainstreaming, normalizing, and localizing of the hate,

disinformation and toxic conspiracy theories that animate this extremism. We cannot afford to minimize this threat. We need a bipartisan “whole-of-Government approach”—indeed, a “whole-of-society” approach—to counter it, and the work must start today.

#### CURRENT TRENDS

##### *Antisemitic Violence*

Antisemitism is an on-going threat to the American Jewish community, other marginalized groups, and our democracy itself. According to the FBI’s annual data on hate crimes, defined as criminal offenses which are motivated by bias, crimes targeting the Jewish community consistently constitute over half of all religion-based crimes. The number of hate crimes against Jews has ranged between 600 and 1,200 each year since the FBI began collecting data in the 1990’s. There were 683 hate crimes against Jews in 2020, 963 in 2019 and 847 in 2018. The FBI’s data is based on voluntary reporting by local law enforcement and appropriate characterization of crimes as also being hate crimes. For a variety of reasons, dozens of large cities either underreport or do not report hate crime data at all. For that reason, experts, including at ADL, know that the real figure for crimes targeting Jews, as well as other marginalized communities, is even higher than the FBI reporting indicates.

A violent attack against the Jewish community occurred earlier this year on January 15, when a gunman entered Congregation Beth Israel in Colleyville, Texas, during services, taking three congregants and the rabbi as hostages. Though the standoff ended with all hostages freed and physically unharmed, the violent act reinforced the need to forcefully address the threat of antisemitic violence—experienced by the Colleyville community and far too many others. The fact that the Colleyville attacker traveled from the United Kingdom underscores that there can be foreign influences on domestic terrorism, either through incitement, coordination, or direct participation.

##### *Rising Antisemitism*

ADL has recorded a 37 percent increase in antisemitic incidents over the past 5 years. While antisemitism has commonalities with racism, anti-Muslim bias, xenophobia, homophobia, transphobia, misogyny, and other forms of hate and discrimination, it also has certain unique characteristics as a specific set of ideologies about Jews that have migrated across discourses—and across centuries. In almost every part of our society, this hatred has been conjured and adjusted to suit the values, beliefs and fears of specific demographics and contexts. The underlying conspiracy theories employing Jew-hatred morph to fit the anxieties and upheavals of the time—for example, that Jews were responsible for the Black Death in medieval times and for “inventing,” spreading, or profiting from COVID in the 21st Century; or that Jews exercise extraordinary power over governments, media, and finance—from the charges of a conspiracy to achieve world domination set forth in the Protocols of the Elders of Zion and used by the Nazis, to thinly-veiled antisemitism blaming “globalism” and “cosmopolitan elites” for all the ills of the world and for planning a “new world order.”

Each year, ADL’s Center on Extremism (COE) tracks incidents of antisemitic harassment, vandalism, and assault in the United States. Since 1979, we have published this information in an annual Audit of Antisemitic Incidents. ADL’s 2021 Audit of Antisemitic Incidents in the United States recorded 2,717 acts of assault, vandalism, and harassment in 2021 alone, an average of more than seven incidents per day. This represents a 34 percent increase from 2020 and the highest year of incidents on record since ADL began tracking antisemitic incidents in 1979.

Known extremist groups or individuals inspired by extremist ideology were responsible for 484 incidents in 2021, up from 332 incidents in 2020. This represents 18 percent of the total number of incidents in 2021.

ADL’s 2021 audit also revealed that antisemitic incidents in the United States more than doubled during the May 2021 military conflict between Israel and Hamas and its immediate aftermath compared to the same time period in 2020. For the entire month of May, 387 antisemitic incidents were tabulated by ADL. The lion’s share of 297 occurred between May 10—the official start of military action—and the end of the month, an increase of 141 percent over the same period in 2020 (123). The perpetrators of many of these incidents explicitly referred to the conflict between Israel and Hamas. After peaking during that period, incident levels gradually returned to a baseline level.

### *Murder and Extremism: By the Numbers*

The alarming uptick in antisemitic incidents is representative of the rising hate and extremist violence threatening minority and marginalized communities across the country.

In 2021, based on ADL's research, domestic extremists killed at least 29 people in the United States, in 19 separate incidents. This represents a modest increase from the 23 extremist-related murders documented in 2020 but is far lower than the number of murders committed in any of the 5 years prior (which ranged from 45 to 78). While this could be cause for optimism, more likely it is the result of COVID lockdowns reducing mass gatherings and the increased attention of law enforcement following the January 6, 2021 insurrection.

Most of the murders (26 of 29) were committed by right-wing extremists, who have been responsible for roughly 3 in 4 domestic extremist murders over the last decade.

### *White Supremacist Propaganda*

ADL's Center on Extremism (COE) tracked a near-doubling of white supremacist propaganda efforts in 2020, which included the distribution of racist, antisemitic and anti-LGBTQ+ fliers, stickers, banners and posters. The 2021 data shows a slight 5 percent drop in incidents from the previous year, with a total of 4,851 cases reported to ADL, compared to 5,125 in 2020. Despite the drop in overall incidents, 2021 saw a 27 percent increase in antisemitic propaganda distributions, rising from 277 incidents in 2020 to 352 incidents in 2021.

Propaganda gives white supremacists the ability to maximize media and on-line attention, while limiting the risk of individual exposure, negative media coverage, arrests, and public backlash that often accompanies more public events. The barrage of propaganda, which overwhelmingly features veiled white supremacist language with a "patriotic" slant, is an effort to normalize white supremacists' message and bolster recruitment efforts while targeting marginalized communities including Jews, Black people, Muslims, non-white immigrants, and LGBTQ+ people.

### *Modern White Supremacy*

Extremist white supremacist ideology is more than a collection of prejudices: it is a complete ideology or worldview that can be as deeply seated as strongly-held religious beliefs.

Different variations and versions of extremist white supremacist ideology have evolved and expanded over time to include an emphasis on antisemitism and nativism. These extremists themselves typically no longer use the term "white supremacist," as they once proudly did, but instead tend to prefer various euphemisms, ranging from "white nationalist" to "white separatist" to "race realist" or "identitarian." Even in the face of these complexities, it is still possible to arrive at a useful working definition of the concept of extremist white supremacy.

Through the Civil Rights era, white supremacist ideology focused on the perceived need to maintain the dominance of the white race in the United States. After the Civil Rights era, extremist white supremacists realized that their views had become increasingly unpopular in society and their ideology adapted to this new reality.

Today, white supremacist ideology, no matter what version or variation, tends to focus on the notion that the white race itself is now threatened with imminent extinction, doomed—unless white people take imminent action—due to a rising tide of people of color who are being controlled and manipulated by Jews. Extremist white supremacists promote the concept of on-going or future "white genocide" in their efforts to wake white people up to their supposedly dire racial future.

The popular white supremacist slogan known as the "Fourteen Words" reflects these beliefs and holds center stage: "We must secure the existence of our people and a future for white children"—secure a future, as white supremacists see it, in the face of their enemies' efforts to destroy it.

This twisted and conspiratorial ideology was on display in 2017 in Charlottesville as white supremacists marched with tiki torches chanting "Jews will not replace us," a rally that ended in the death of counter-protester Heather Heyer. It was on display in 2019 during the horrific mass shooting in El Paso. When a white supremacist opened fire in a shopping center, killing 23 people, he was motivated by what he called "the Hispanic invasion of Texas." And when the mass shooter at the Pittsburgh Tree of Life synagogue massacred 11 Jews on the Jewish Sabbath, he shouted not only "All Jews Must Die!" but claimed to be murdering Jews because they were helping to transport members of the large groups of undocumented immigrants making their way north toward the United States from Latin America, which is perceived by white supremacists as a Jewish effort to replace the "rightful" white population of the United States.

The world watched in horror as this rhetoric took violent form yet again in May 2022, when a gunman killed 10 people and injured 3 more inside a Tops supermarket in Buffalo, New York, after espousing violent white supremacist and antisemitic views on-line. This shooter was the latest in a long line of violent domestic terrorists who embraced the virulently racist and antisemitic “Great Replacement” conspiracy theory, which argues that Jews are responsible for non-white immigration into the United States, and that non-white immigrants will eventually replace (and lead to the extinction of) the white race.

*Anti-Zionist and anti-Israel Antisemitism*

While the preponderance of antisemitism and violent threats to the Jewish community emanate from the right, a steady stream of antisemitism on the left persists, often related to Israel. Of course, some criticism of Israel is part of a healthy political ecosystem. However, a segment of the left sometimes espouses ideas that go beyond legitimate critique and into antisemitic tropes or the vilification and ostracization of Jews. Often, anti-Israel activists will claim they are only targeting “Zionists,” but this encompasses the vast majority of Jews who feel a connection to or affinity with Israel as part of their Jewish identities. The bottom line is that the Jewish community suffers.

The vilification of Zionism and ostracization of Zionists is increasingly emerging as a common phenomenon within some left-wing spaces. Zionism, broadly defined as the movement for Jewish self-determination and statehood in the Jewish people’s historic homeland in the Land of Israel, is increasingly seen by left-wing activists as unjustifiable or illegitimate. This has absolutely no basis in reality. To be clear: Zionism is not in opposition to the Palestinians and affords the Palestinians the exact same rights to self-determination and statehood as the Jewish people. Yet anti-Zionist activists on the left often invoke the words “Zionism” and “Zionist” in a pejorative manner to demean, disparage, and attempt to ostracize Jews. Some claim one cannot be a feminist and a Zionist or that Zionism and Zionists are inherently linked to white supremacy. This has real-world consequences:

- About a year ago, we saw the DC chapter of environmental justice group Sunrise Movement attempt to exclude Jewish groups from their coalition due to their “Zionism.” The DC chapter apologized and reversed course—but not without significant organizing by the Jewish community—and pushback from many anti-Zionist activists.
- In at least two cases just this year, student groups expelled members due to their “Zionism.” In February 2022, a student testified that she was harassed on campus and dismissed from her a cappella group for being a Zionist [UConn]. Also in February 2022, two members of a campus support group for sexual assault survivors [at SUNY New Paltz] were forced to resign from the group due to their self-identification as Zionist.

Segments of the left are increasingly holding American Jews or “Zionists” responsible for alleged human rights abuses committed by the State of Israel against the Palestinians, which can lead to not only ostracization but harassment:

- In June 2021, someone in a vehicle passing Hillel at Princeton University yelled “Free Palestine” at a group of Jewish students and faculty who were preparing to begin religious services on the lawn.
- In Lakewood in March 2021, an individual yelled at a visibly Jewish person, “Free the Palestine” and “F\*\*\* the Jews.”
- In Brooklyn in September 2021, a visibly Jewish boy with a group of other Jewish children was approached by a man on a subway platform. The man shook the child’s arm and yelled at him, asking why they were “killing kids in Gaza.”

On campus, we have also seen the vandalizing of Hillel property, calls for Hillel to be cut off from the broader campus community and anti-Israel protests outside of Hillel. Off campus, we have seen protestors outside of synagogues. Protesting outside a synagogue, Hillel or any Jewish institution may be considered tantamount to holding the Jewish community responsible for the alleged actions of the Israeli State.

The espousal of antisemitic tropes by some anti-Zionist and left-wing activists is also an issue. “Zionists,” or mainstream American Jewish institutions, have been accused of having outsized and nefarious influence in government, control over the media, or of having excessive financial greed. For instance, Roger Waters, who is often invited to speak by anti-Zionist groups, has claimed that a nefarious “Israel lobby” prevented the election of Jeremy Corbyn in the United Kingdom. He has also referred to Zionists with the antisemitic canard “cabal.” On campus, just this April, in an email to much of the student body, NYU Law’s SJP (Students for Justice in Palestine) group alleged that “the Zionist grip on the media is omnipresent.”

These tropes are becoming more and more normalized in mainstream progressive spaces. Today, unfortunately, Jews on campus who so much as publicly express affinity with Israel's existence are ever more likely to have a difficult time being accepted. Some Jews may feel forced to hide their connection to Israel in order to be included. The net effect is that much of the Jewish community feels a sense of being under siege.

#### *On-line Hate*

In recent years, extremists' on-line presence has reverberated across a range of social media platforms. This extremist content is intertwined with hate, racism, antisemitism, and misogyny—all also through-lines of white supremacist ideology. Such content is enmeshed in conspiracy theories and explodes on platforms that are themselves tuned to spread disinformation. We can look no further than the deadly insurrection at our Capitol, which ADL called the most predictable terror attack in U.S. history, because it was planned and promoted out in the open on mainstream platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube, as well as fringe platforms such as Parler, Gab, 4Chan and Telegram. There is little doubt that fringe platforms have helped radicalize users and normalize both on-line and off-line extremist actions, but Big Tech platforms are no longer unwitting accomplices.

#### *Mainstream Social Media Platforms*

Fringe platforms, despite having relatively small user bases, leverage Big Tech platforms like Twitter and Facebook to increase their reach and influence. In the case of Big Tech, white supremacist propaganda has found its viral channel. It's a perfect storm. First, there is the well-researched human propensity to engage with the most incendiary, inciting, and hateful content. This in turn meets the business model of Big Tech, which depends on increasing engagement of users to surveil them and collect copious amounts of data about them—and their associates and activities—all to sell as many hyper-targeted advertisements as possible. The profit incentive demands engagement; hate, antisemitism, and extremism deliver it; and then algorithms amplify that hateful and antisemitic content to generate even more engagement. Toxic speech is thus given reach and impact unparalleled in human history. For example, in 2020, a single "Stop the Steal" Facebook group gained more than 300,000 members within 24 hours. Thousands of newcomers a minute joined this group and some of them openly advocated civil war.

#### *Meta*

Meta, which owns platforms such as Facebook, Instagram, and WhatsApp, claims that it is meaningfully addressing hate and antisemitism on its platforms. ADL and others, however, continue to expose egregious examples of on-line antisemitism, hate, misinformation, and extremism across the company's products. The spread of QAnon and its consistent elevation of antisemitism, the mainstreaming of the foundational white supremacist and neo-Nazi "Replacement Theory," the Big Lie about the 2020 Presidential election, and COVID conspiracies, all are examples of extremism, antisemitism, and hate that has become increasingly normalized and mainstreamed—in large part because of its viral spread on-line.

Social media companies, like Meta, know their role in the spread and normalization of this hate. Documents disclosed to the SEC by Facebook whistleblower Frances Haugen made it clear that Facebook was aware of both the specific role its platform played in the insurrection and the broader role the platform plays in the spread of disinformation, extremism, and hate. The SEC disclosure included statements from Facebook's internal documents. These documents acknowledged Facebook's role in augmenting "combustible election misinformation," noting "we amplify them and give them broader distribution." Internal Facebook documents also stated that the company had "evidence from a variety of sources that hate speech, divisive political speech and misinformation on Facebook and the family of apps are affecting societies around the world . . . Our core products mechanics, such as virality, recommendations, and optimizing for engagement, are a significant part of why these types of speech flourish."

Notably, extremists leverage mainstream platforms like Meta's Facebook to ensure that the hateful and antisemitic philosophies, which often began to germinate on message boards like Gab and 8chan (now 8kun), find a new and much larger audience. Meta's platforms have served as a gateway for extremists and hatemongers to recruit curious individuals. Extremists use strategies like creating private pages and events; using coded language (called dog whistles) to imply and spread a hateful and antisemitic ideology on mainstream platforms; and linking to hate-filled sites (versus outright posting certain content) to avoid content moderation.

### *TikTok*

In less than 7 years, TikTok—the social media app that allows users to create and share short videos—has amassed over 1 billion users. It is particularly popular among young people. As ADL documented in August 2020 and June 2021, while much of the content on TikTok is lighthearted and fun, extremists and antisemites have exploited TikTok to share hateful messages and recruit new adherents. Antisemitism continues to percolate across the app, with posts perpetuating age-old anti-Jewish tropes and conspiracy theories. Recordings of Louis Farrakhan, Rick Wiles (of TruNews), and Stephen Anderson—all antisemitic individuals whose bigotry has been thoroughly documented by ADL—were readily available on TikTok in 2021. One such post, shared on May 23, 2021, showed a clip of a TruNews segment in which Rick Wiles states: “And our leaders are lowlife scum that screw little girls so the Jews can screw America . . . we’ve allowed Kabbalah practicing Jews to defile the Nation.” TruNews, a fundamentalist Christian streaming news and opinion platform that produces antisemitic, anti-Zionist, anti-LGBTQ+, and Islamophobic content, has been banned from YouTube and Facebook for violating the platforms’ content rules.

### *Twitter*

The pending purchase of Twitter by billionaire Elon Musk has significantly damaged Twitter’s efforts to address extremism and antisemitism. Musk has expressed open disdain both for the idea of content moderation and for the work of specific Twitter staff in making the platform safer and more inclusive. In July 2022, ADL tested Twitter’s enforcement against antisemitism by reporting 225 strongly antisemitic tweets to the platform. Twitter only removed 5 percent of the reported content (11 tweets). Their reasoning was not that this was an enforcement error but rather that they either took “non-removal actions” or that the tweets in question did not have “repeated” antisemitic content, and thus did not rise to a level of breaking their platform policies. The response from Twitter significantly minimizes the impact that antisemitism and hate have on individuals from targeted communities. In another study from this year, ADL found a 37 percent overlap between a set of Twitter users that tweeted false and misleading narratives about the Buffalo extremist attack in May 2022 and disinformation related to the outcome of the 2020 election. Twitter took no or minimal action on these users who repeatedly spread harmful and dangerous false information, which is further evidence of the significant work Twitter must undertake to make their platform safe against antisemitism and harmful false information.

### *YouTube*

YouTube has remained under the radar for its role in spreading hate, antisemitism, disinformation, and misinformation as compared to Facebook and Twitter. YouTube waited more than a month after the 2020 Presidential election to remove videos claiming electoral fraud—by then, millions of people had been exposed to false information that eroded trust in our democracy. Furthermore, ADL research shows YouTube continues to push people toward extremist content despite the company’s claim that it has overhauled its recommendation algorithms.

ADL’s February 2021 Belfer Fellow report indicates that exposure to videos from extremist or white supremacist channels on YouTube remains disturbingly common. The report’s authors conducted a study that measured the browsing habits of a diverse national sample of participants and found that approximately one in ten participants viewed at least one video from an extremist channel (9.2 percent) and approximately two in ten (22.1 percent) viewed at least one video from an alternative (gateway) channel. Moreover, participants often received and sometimes followed YouTube recommendations for videos from alternative and extremist channels. Overall, consumption of alternative and extremist content was concentrated among highly-engaged respondents, most frequently among those with negative racial views. In total, people with high racial resentment were responsible for more than 90 percent of views for videos from alternative and extremist channels.

An investigation undertaken this year showed the ways in which hateful organizations such as the antisemitic and anti-LGBTQ+ New Independent Fundamental Baptist Movement (New IFB) have utilized new product features on YouTube to grow their followings, and how YouTube has not put sufficient protections in place to keep hateful groups from weaponizing their product features. Utilizing the new “YouTube Shorts” product feature, the New IFB was able to grow the views on their content by over 100-fold from an average of 85 views to an average of 8,500 views.

*Extremism in 2021 and 2022*

The January 6, 2021 siege on the Capitol was an assault on our country and our democracy. Many of those who were roused to violence that day did so as the result of weeks and months (and years) of incitement, on- and off-line. These individuals included a range of right-wing extremists united by their fury with the perceived large-scale betrayal by “unprincipled” Republican legislators. Many of the individuals who stormed the Capitol have ties to known right-wing extremist groups, including Oath Keepers, Proud Boys, Groypers, and other white supremacists, and those who believe the QAnon conspiracy theory. A number of Proud Boys members and Oath Keepers have been charged with conspiracy in connection with the January 6 insurrection. More information on these extremist groups is provided below.

Others who participated in the attack on the U.S. Capitol are considered part of the new pro-Trump extremist movement, a decentralized but enthusiastic faction made up of self-described “patriots” who continue to pledge their fidelity to the former President and his false assertions that he actually won the 2020 election and that it was stolen from him by, among other things, massive voter fraud. This new breed of extremist is foundationally animated by devotion to Trump, placing him over party or country. They are living inside an ecosphere of misinformation, disinformation, lies, and conspiracy theories, fertilized by Alex Jones, QAnon, the former President and his enablers, and many others.

*Oath Keepers*

The Oath Keepers are a large but loosely organized collection of right-wing anti-Government extremists who are part of the militia movement, which believes that the Federal Government has been seized by a shadowy conspiracy that is trying to strip U.S. citizens of their rights. Though the Oath Keepers will accept anyone as members, what differentiates them from other anti-Government extremist groups is their explicit focus on recruiting current and former military, law enforcement, and first responder personnel.

New analysis from ADL’s Center on Extremism (COE) found that the leaked membership list for the Oath Keepers includes hundreds of elected officials, law enforcement officers, members of the military, and first responders.

In September 2021, the non-profit journalist collective Distributed Denial of Secrets released the membership database for the Oath Keepers organization. The membership data, which includes more than 38,000 names, provides unique insight into the people who signed up for the organization over the years, and helps illuminate the extent to which the group’s anti-Government ideology has permeated mainstream society.

ADL’s analysis uses the leaked data to highlight the number of individuals who signed up for or supported the Oath Keepers in key areas: Elected office, law enforcement, the military, and emergency services—as well as in the general population.

*Key Findings*

- As of August 8, the Center on Extremism (COE) has identified 373 individuals on the Oath Keepers membership list believed to be currently serving in law enforcement agencies across the country. This number is far higher than any previously identified number of extremists within law enforcement. For comparison, an ADL report released in 2021 identified 76 cases—73 of which were unique—in which extremists were found serving in law enforcement.
- ADL identified individuals we believe are currently holding senior leadership positions within their respective agencies, including at least ten chiefs of police and 11 sheriffs.
- In addition to those actively serving in law enforcement, ADL identified more than 1,000 individuals who we believe previously served in law enforcement.
- ADL’s Center on Extremism (COE) analysis identified 81 individuals on the Oath Keepers membership list who are currently holding or running for public office across the country in 2022. These individuals run the gamut from local office—mayors, town council members, school board members—to State representatives and senators.
- Prior to this year’s primary season, ADL confirmed 42 Oath Keepers-aligned individuals who were up for election for public office in 2022, consisting of 22 incumbents and 20 candidates.
- As of August 8, 21 of these candidates have advanced to the general election either by winning their primary or having their primary canceled. Thirteen of the candidates have lost their primary race. Even more concerning, 4 individuals have already won their general election.



- ADL identified 117 individuals who we believe currently serve in the U.S. military, an additional 11 people who serve in the reserves, and 31 individuals who hold civilian positions or are military contractors.
- In addition to those currently serving in the military, ADL estimates that one in ten of the individuals in the database previously served in the military in some capacity.

#### *The Proud Boys*

The Proud Boys are a right-wing extremist group with a violent agenda. They are primarily misogynistic, Islamophobic, transphobic, and anti-immigration. Some members espouse white supremacist and antisemitic ideologies and/or engage with white supremacist groups. Proud Boys are known to attend public rallies and protests sporting black and yellow Fred Perry polo shirts, other black and yellow clothing, and tactical vests. Members have been known to engage in violent tactics and several members have been convicted of violent crimes.

Nationally, Proud Boys members account for one of the highest numbers of extremist arrestees in relation to the January 6th insurrection, including three New Yorkers who belong to local Proud Boys chapters. Additionally, the Proud Boys latched on to anti-mask and anti-vaccine activism, attending, and at times disrupting, school board meetings as well as related protests and rallies.

There are nine chapters affiliated with the Proud Boys in New York, with the newest chapter created in early 2022. Local Proud Boys have staged flash demonstrations and have advertised and participated in protests against COVID-19 measures in multiple locations around the State.

In December 2021, ADL joined D.C. Attorney General Karl Racine and other pro bono counsel in bringing a civil lawsuit arising out of the January 6 insurrection on behalf of Washington, DC against the Proud Boys, Oath Keepers, and individuals associated with both groups. The case, which brings allegations under the Reconstruction Era KKK Act, among other laws, seeks to hold accountable the groups and affiliated individuals for their role in planning and executing the attack on the Capitol in an attempt to overturn a lawful Presidential election.

#### *Groyper / Groyper Army*

The so-called “Groyper army” (the term “Groyper” is explained below) is a white supremacist group, led by Nick Fuentes, that presents its ideology as more nuanced than that of other groups in the white supremacist sphere. While the group and its leadership’s views align with those held by the white supremacist alt-right, Groypers attempt to normalize their ideology by aligning themselves with “Christianity” and “traditional values,” ostensibly championed by the church, including marriage and family.

Like the alt-right and other white supremacists, Groypers believe they are working to defend against demographic and cultural changes that are destroying the “true America”—a white, Christian nation. They identify themselves as “American nationalists” who are part of the “America First” movement. To the Groypers, “America First” means that the United States should close its borders, bar immigrants, oppose “globalism,” promote “traditional” values like Christianity, and oppose “liberal” values such as feminism and LGBTQ+ rights. They claim to not be racist or antisemitic and see their bigoted views as “normal” and necessary to preserve white, European-American identity and culture. However, some members have expressed racist and antisemitic views on multiple occasions. They believe their views are shared by the majority of white people.

#### *QAnon and Other Conspiracy Theories*

QAnon is a global, wide-reaching and remarkably elaborate conspiracy theory that has taken root within some parts of the pro-Trump movement. It is an amalgam of both novel and well-established theories, with marked undertones of antisemitism and xenophobia. Fundamentally, the theory claims that almost every President in recent U.S. history up until Donald Trump has been a puppet put in place by a global elite of power brokers hell-bent on enriching themselves and maintaining their Satanic child-murdering sex cult. These theories are based largely on cryptic posts from an anonymous user called “Q” who started posting on message boards such as 4chan in late 2017 and claims to have high-level access to secret intelligence within the U.S. Government. Q is a reference to “Q clearance” or “Q access authorization”—terms used to describe a top-secret clearance level within the Department of Energy.

According to QAnon lore, this global elite, known as “The Deep State” or “The Cabal,” control not just world governments, but the banking system, the Catholic church, the agricultural and pharmaceutical industries, the media, and entertainment industry—all working around the clock to keep the people of the world poor, ignorant, and enslaved.

Conspiracy theories, rampant in the United States, have an unusual power to motivate people to action. Some conspiracy theories are associated with various right-wing or left-wing ideologies, while others transcend ideology, like those surrounding the 9/11 attacks or the assassination of John F. Kennedy. Under the right circumstances, such theories can motivate people to violence, especially if the conspiracy theories single out specific people or organizations as the villains.

Most extremist movements develop or depend on conspiracy theories to some degree. In the United States, extreme right-wing movements have a particularly close relationship to conspiracy theories. Anti-Muslim extremists promote “Sharia law” conspiracy theories, for example, to increase anti-Muslim animus, while anti-immigrant border vigilantes justify their patrols with conspiracy theories about Mexican drug cartels waging a secret invasion of the United States.

For some right-wing extremist movements, conspiracy theories lie at the heart of their extreme worldviews. The modern white supremacist movement, for example, centers its beliefs on the notion that the white race is in danger of extinction from growing numbers of people of color who are controlled and manipulated by a nefarious Jewish conspiracy. Anti-Government extremist movements, such as the militia movement and the sovereign citizen movement, are based on conspiracy theories that focus on the Federal Government.

As a result, much of the violence stemming from extremist white supremacists and anti-Government extremists can be attributed, directly or indirectly, to such conspiracy theories. Conspiracy theories often sharpen anger that extremists already feel to the point where they become willing to take violent action.

In 2021, disparate groups of QAnon adherents, election fraud promoters and anti-vaccine activists organized events around the country to promote their causes. This phenomenon underscores the extent to which the line separating the mainstream from the extreme has blurred, and how mainstream efforts to undermine our democratic institutions are bolstered by extremist and conspiratorial narratives and their supporters.

These narratives include:

- That the 2020 Presidential election was stolen by the Democrats (touted at the Health and Freedom events organized by right-wing entrepreneur Clay Clark);
- That a global cabal of pedophiles (including Democrats) who are kidnapping children for their blood, will be executed when Donald Trump is reinstated as President (popular at The Patriot Voice: For God and Country conference, organized by QAnon influencer John Sabal, a/k/a “QAnon John,” and at the We the People Patriots Day event and the OKC Freedom conference);
- That the coronavirus was co-created in a lab by director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, Dr. Anthony Fauci and Microsoft founder, Bill Gates;
- That the coronavirus vaccine contains dangerous ingredients that change your DNA and make vaccinated people “shed” dangerous toxins;
- That Satanic socialists are attempting to take over the country; and
- That if Democrats and “the left” remain in power, a confrontation, potentially violent, will be necessary to “reclaim” the country.

These narratives go well beyond the mainstream into extreme territory.

#### *Long-Term Trends: The Growing Threat of Domestic Terrorism*

While it is impossible to say with absolute certainty what lies ahead, we know that white supremacists and some other extremists, including anti-Muslim extremists, anti-immigrant extremists, and antisemites, are driven by conspiracy theories as well as manufactured fears around demographic change. Some extremists fear that this will only accelerate as the Biden administration is perceived by them to enact more humane policies toward immigrants and refugees who are people of color. Extremists equate those policies to “white genocide.”

Militia and other anti-Government groups may also be very active in the next few years. The militia movement has historically derived much of its energy and vitality from its rage toward the Federal Government. However, the movement’s support of President Trump during his administration dulled that anger. As it progresses, the Biden administration’s existence may give militias an excuse to return to their foundational grievances: the belief that a tyrannical government in league with a globalist conspiracy is coming to enslave them by taking first their guns and then the remainder of their rights.

Finally, antisemitism will likely continue to be a central part of the conspiratorial views that fuel right-wing violence, as it has been for so long. It is crucial to recognize not only the threat to Jews and Jewish institutions this poses, but also both the foundational and animating impetus it gives violent white extremism, whatever its targets. And it is also vitally important to understand the role that antisemitic

conspiracies play in the wider threat to our democracy. Antisemitism isn't just bigotry directed toward Jews. Antisemitism uses hatred and bigotry against the Jewish community to undermine democratic practices by framing democracy as a conspiracy, as Eric Ward of the Western States Center notes, "rather than as a tool of empowerment or a functional tool of governance. In other words, the more people buy into antisemitism and its understanding of the world, the more they lose faith in democracy."

*Extremist and Antisemitic Trends and Incidents in New Jersey*

New Jersey has been a hotbed for extremist activity and antisemitic incidents over the past few years, as white supremacist and extremist groups have continued to maintain an active presence in the State, using propaganda to communicate their hateful messages more broadly and to recruit new members.

In 2020, ADL documented a whopping 323 incidents of white supremacist propaganda distribution across New Jersey.<sup>1</sup> Last year, ADL recorded 179 such incidents—positioning New Jersey among the top 10 States in the country for documented incidents. Patriot Front (101), based in Texas, along with the New Jersey European Heritage Association (59), were the most active groups in the State in 2021, followed by White Lives Matter (10).

The New Jersey European Heritage Association (NJEHA), despite its seemingly innocuous name, is a white supremacist group—active in New Jersey and elsewhere—whose members see themselves as defenders of people of white European descent and white culture. Members hold the white supremacist worldview that unless immediate action is taken, the white race is doomed to extinction by a "rising tide of color" purportedly controlled and manipulated by Jews. The group believes its mission is to "wrest political, economic, and social control away from the hostile elite who have usurped power in America." To do this, followers are called upon to "Reclaim America." The group espouses antisemitic, racist, and anti-immigrant rhetoric, propagandized in the form of flyers, stickers, banners, and social media posts. Known members have current and former ties to racist skinhead organizations, the neo-Nazi National Socialist Movement, other white supremacist groups, and the White Lives Matter movement. Many of NJEHA's members or close associates organized and attended the neo-Nazi, antisemitic "Fash Bash 2019" celebrating Hitler's 130th birthday. Most recently, members of the NJEHA disrupted the South Plainfield Labor Day parade carrying a banner that read "Defend American Labor Close the Border."

In 2021, white supremacist propaganda was distributed in the following New Jersey municipalities: New Brunswick (8), Trenton (8), Montclair (6), Princeton (6), Bordentown (5), Cherry Hill (4), Hamilton (4), Lambertville (3), Asbury Park (3), Somerset (3), Newark (3), Morristown (3), Lyndhurst (3), and Totowa (3). The Northern New Jersey area (Mercer, Middlesex, Monmouth, Somerset, Hunterdon, Morris, Warren, Sussex, Passaic, Bergen, Hudson, Essex, Union) had the most reported incidents of white supremacist propaganda (143). The Southern New Jersey area (Ocean, Burlington, Atlantic, Camden, Gloucester, Salem, Cumberland, Cape May) had 36 reported instances of white supremacist propaganda.

Against this concerning backdrop, antisemitic incidents rose by 25 percent in New Jersey in 2021, reaching 370 total incidents, as detailed in ADL's Annual Audit of Antisemitic Incidents released in April 2022. This is the highest number of antisemitic incidents ever recorded by ADL in New Jersey, and the second-highest number recorded in any State across the country last year (New Jersey was second only to New York).

According to the data, New Jersey experienced increases in antisemitic incidents across all three main categories compiled by ADL—harassment (252 incidents; 34 percent increase from 2020), vandalism (112 incidents; 7 percent increase from 2020) and assault (6 incidents; 150 percent increase from 2020). Incidents took place in public areas (123), in non-Jewish K–12 schools (82), at Jewish institutions (44), at private residences (4), at business establishments (35), and on-line (29).

Geographically, Bergen County accounted for the highest number of documented antisemitic incidents, with 70 antisemitic incidents recorded in 2021. Ocean County had 44 incidents, Mercer County had 39 incidents, Middlesex County had 31 incidents, and Union County had 30 incidents. Of the 70 reported incidents in Bergen County, 49 were incidents of harassment and 21 were incidents of vandalism. In one notable Bergen County incident, a man smashed the windows of a doctor's office with a hammer and asked patients, "Are you Jewish?" Three of the six antisemitic assaults in New Jersey in 2021 occurred in Ocean County.

<sup>1</sup> Propaganda incidents are counted as a single incident even if thousands of pamphlets are distributed.

Antisemitic attacks have continued in 2022, and the Jewish community in Lakewood, New Jersey has been particularly vulnerable. In January 2022, for example, a snowplow driver posted a video to his Facebook page appearing to show his plow intentionally targeting two Orthodox Jewish men. Alongside his video post, the driver wrote, “This one’s for you JC.” A few months later, in April 2022, multiple victims were hospitalized following a violent crime spree in nearby Jackson, New Jersey involving a carjacking, stabbing, and two pedestrians being struck by the stolen vehicle. Acting New Jersey Attorney General Matthew Platkin approved a terrorism charge in this case as Prosecutor Bradley Billhimer stated these attacks were “intended to terrorize the Jewish community in Lakewood and Jackson.”

On New Jersey university and college campuses, there was a 17 percent increase in incidents of antisemitic harassment in 2021. ADL recorded five incidents of antisemitic vandalism on college campuses in New Jersey in 2021, including swastikas being drawn on academic and residential buildings, mezuzahs being stolen and even a Jewish fraternity being egged. This same Jewish fraternity was egged once again during Rosh Hashanah, the Jewish New Year, in 2022.

Jewish institutions also saw a sharp increase in antisemitic incidents in 2021—the 44 incidents that took place at Jewish institutions far exceeded pre-pandemic levels and represented a 76 percent increase relative to incidents recorded in 2020. Of these incidents, 39 were incidents of harassment, four were incidents of vandalism, and one was an incident of assault.

Incidents related to Israel or Zionism in New Jersey, which may be broadly defined as support for Jewish statehood and self-determination in the Jewish people’s ancestral homeland in the Land of Israel, increased by 35 percent in 2021, reaching a total of 27 incidents. Notably, ADL recorded the highest number of antisemitic incidents in New Jersey during the month of May 2021 (56), which directly coincided with the escalating conflict between Israel and Hamas in Gaza. This was 86 percent higher than the State’s average monthly total (30). Of the 56 incidents recorded in New Jersey that month, 14 included explicit references to Israel or Zionism. These included:

- On May 8, an individual in a passing car yelled “Free Palestine” and antisemitic slurs at a group of Jewish people who were praying outside.
- On May 16, four individuals shouted, “Fuck Israel, Free Palestine” after passing a visibly Jewish person on the street.
- On May 17, a Jewish man was harassed with anti-Israel and antisemitic remarks by a passerby in a car.

Consistent with these disturbing trends, 2021 was a record-high year for total reported bias incidents in New Jersey. According to preliminary statistics released by the New Jersey State Police, the overall number of bias incidents reported in 2021 (1,871 incidents) represents the highest annual number of bias incidents reported since the State began tracking them in 1994. Notably, 2021 was the first year in which New Jersey State Police separately tracked incidents occurring in “cyber space,” which previously were classified as “other/unknown.” There were 275 reported bias incidents occurring in cyber space in 2021 (roughly 15 percent of all reported incidents).

Underreporting continues to be a challenge in many New Jersey communities—particularly for those in marginalized communities—as victims of bias crimes and antisemitic incidents face significant barriers to reporting hate crimes in the first instance. There is also significant underreporting of hate crimes to the FBI, particularly where reporting remains voluntary by law enforcement agencies. ADL strongly encourages law enforcement agencies to report hate crime statistics to the FBI and is working with elected officials, law enforcement leaders, and community members across New Jersey to tackle these challenges.

Finally, ADL has been increasingly concerned about anti-Government extremist activity across the country and in New Jersey, including from groups like the Oath Keepers. According to the recently leaked Oath Keepers membership list reviewed by ADL’s Center on Extremism (COE), 588 individuals had ties to New Jersey, including 1 elected official, 12 members of law enforcement, 2 active military, and 4 first responders.

#### *Extremist and Antisemitic Trends and Incidents in New York*

The last 2 years have seen a significant proliferation of hate incidents in New York State, as detailed in ADL’s Center on Extremism’s (COE) June 2022 joint report with the Community Security Initiative (CSI)—Hate In The Empire State. There is a broad diversity of extremist threats in New York, including from anti-Government extremists, militias, white supremacists, and radical Islamists. Throughout 2020 and 2021, extremist groups have engaged in an array of activities, including: Threatening local officials, disrupting school board meetings, running for

elected positions, funding terrorism, conducting cyber attacks, organizing rallies, engaging in propaganda distributions and even committing violence.

White supremacist propaganda distribution accounts for a large proportion of extremist-related incidents in New York. In 2021, New York State ranked seventh nationally in terms of white supremacist propaganda distribution incidents, with 212 such incidents recorded across the State.

The Goyim Defense League (GDL), a network of virulently antisemitic propagandists attracting a range of antisemites and white supremacists, has already been very active in 2022. Other extremist groups active in New York include Black nationalist extremist groups, Islamist extremists that align with al-Qaeda and ISIS, QAnon, and the New York Watchmen. Oath Keepers also has a strong presence. ADL researchers recently documented 1,996 individuals on the leaked Oath Keepers membership list who have ties to New York—5 are elected officials and 45 are members of law enforcement.

Extremist incidents in New York, as is the case across the country, are often rooted in wide-spread campaigns of disinformation and conspiracy theories. A tragic manifestation of this national phenomena occurred on May 14, 2022 in Buffalo, New York, when a gunman killed 10 people and injured 3 more inside a Tops supermarket. According to an on-line screed allegedly written by the shooter and posted before the attack, he espoused white supremacist, racist, and antisemitic conspiracy theories (including the Great Replacement Theory) and claimed his goal was to “spread awareness to my fellow whites about the real problems the West is facing,” and “encourage further attacks that will eventually start the war that will save the Western world.”

Hate crimes remain a significant concern across New York State, and in New York City specifically, where documented hate crimes have more than doubled since 2020. Indeed, according to NYPD data, hate crimes increased 196 percent from 2020 (266 incidents) to 2021 (522 incidents). At the State level, and according to FBI data, antisemitic hate crimes accounted for 88.3 percent of the religiously motivated hate crime incidents in 2020.

Against this backdrop, it is not surprising that New York leads the Nation in antisemitic incidents, according to the ADL’s annual Audit of Antisemitic Incidents. In 2021, the number of reported incidents increased 24 percent over 2020 numbers, rising from 336 to 416 incidents. These numbers include a spike in antisemitic incidents driven by extreme anti-Israel sentiment during the May 2021 Israel-Hamas conflict. Incidents motivated by such animus included assault, arson threats, and harassment. For example:

- On May 11, a Jewish preschool received a harassing phone call from an individual who accused Jews of persecuting Palestinians and said that Jews should die.
- On May 15, a Jewish family was harassed while walking to synagogue by a woman who yelled at them, “You evil Jewish people are killing Palestinian children.”
- On May 20, a number of individuals beat and yelled antisemitic slurs at a Jewish man in Times Square.

Overall, ADL’s annual Audit of Antisemitic Incidents found a total of 62 reported incidents in New York in 2021 which occurred at Jewish institutions such as synagogues, Jewish community centers, and Jewish schools—an increase of 41 percent from 2020. One hundred and sixty-one incidents involved a swastika, and 51 incidents involved assault, the highest number ever recorded by ADL in New York.

ADL has continued to track a series of deeply concerning antisemitic incidents in 2022. One particularly troubling incident took place on April 20, 2022, when a 28-year-old man on crutches, who was carrying an Israeli flag, was allegedly assaulted at 42nd Street and Lexington Avenue in Manhattan by a pro-Palestinian activist. According to reports, the victim was punched and knocked to the ground, dragged across the sidewalk and kicked, and told, “This is what happens when you’re a terrorist.” He reportedly sustained injuries, including a concussion. The alleged assailant is being charged with a hate crime, as the attack is believed to have been carried out because of the “perceived national origin or religion” of the victim. Under-reporting continues to be a challenge in New York communities for similar reasons as in New Jersey, as described above. In 2020, only 14 percent of reporting agencies in New York reported one or more hate crimes to the FBI.

#### POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

We need a whole-of-Government approach to address these threats. ADL strongly recommends urgent action to fight antisemitism, prevent and counter domestic violent extremism, and push hate and extremism back to the fringes of the digital

world. To achieve this, ADL created the COMBAT, PROTECT, and REPAIR plans. The COMBAT Plan is a comprehensive, six-part framework for elected officials and policy makers to take meaningful action to fight antisemitism. The PROTECT plan is a comprehensive, seven-part plan to mitigate the threat posed by domestic extremism and domestic terrorism while protecting civil rights and civil liberties. The REPAIR plan is a comprehensive, six-part framework for policy makers and platforms to meaningfully decrease on-line hate, harassment, and extremism. Together, these plans can have an immediate and deeply significant impact in challenging the rise of antisemitism, preventing and countering domestic terrorism, and decreasing on-line hate—all while protecting civil rights and liberties and ensuring that government overreach does not harm the same vulnerable people and communities that these extremists target. Our suggestions come under these areas:

*The COMBAT Plan*

- C—Condemn Antisemitism
- O—Oppose Hate and Extremism Driven by Antisemitism
- M—Make Institutions Safe from Antisemitism
- B—Block Antisemitism On-line
- A—Act Against Global Antisemitism
- T—Teach About Antisemitism

*Condemn Antisemitism*

Public officials and civic leaders must use their bully pulpits to speak out against antisemitism and all forms of hate and extremism. Regardless of its origins—from the far left to the far right and anywhere in between—leaders must call out antisemitism and rally their communities to action.

- Condemning all forms of antisemitism, and responding to antisemitic incidents, in timely, specific, and direct ways.
- Challenging antisemitism in the United States via a whole-of-Government strategy.
- Adopting the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Working Definition of Antisemitism.

*Oppose Hate and Extremism Driven by Antisemitism*

Fighting hate crimes is a critical task, especially as antisemitism, anti-AAPI violence, anti-Black racism, and other forms of bigotry are at such high levels. According to the FBI's annual hate crimes report, hate crimes targeting the Jewish community make up nearly 55 percent of all religion-based crimes.

- Supporting hate crime laws and improving hate crime data collection and reporting.
- Adopting wide-ranging measures to combat all forms of domestic antisemitic extremism, most notably the array of policy recommendations outlined in ADL's PROTECT plan.

*Make Institutions Safe from Antisemitism*

Whether the attack at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, the Chabad in Poway, or hate against Jewish students on college campuses, there is an acute threat of antisemitic violence and harassment. The Jewish community must be protected from these threats and counter the movements that produce them.

- Protecting the physical security of Jewish community institutions.
- Safeguarding Jewish students in post-secondary institutions.

*Block Antisemitism On-line*

Federal and State governments have an important role in reducing on-line hate, harassment, and extremism fueled by antisemitism. Eighty percent of Americans agree there should be more police training and resources to help people with on-line hate and harassment. And an overwhelming majority of Americans agree that laws should be strengthened to hold perpetrators of on-line hate accountable for their conduct (81 percent).

- Adopting ADL's comprehensive approach to combatting on-line hate, harassment, and extremism, including antisemitism, as delineated in the REPAIR plan.

*Act Against Global Antisemitism*

Global antisemitism is on the rise. Cultures of violence, silence, and complacency have helped antisemitism to gain new currency around the world. Without the requisite proactivity and knowledge to recognize this evil, we are at a disadvantage to stop it.

- Strengthening the Office of the U.S. Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism.
- Amplifying intergovernmental cooperation between the United States and foreign governments to fight global antisemitism and specific regional manifestations.
- Countering state-sponsored antisemitism and related terrorism.
- Mobilizing against the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) campaign and other efforts to demonize, delegitimize, and isolate Israel in international fora.

#### *Teach About Antisemitism*

Eliminating antisemitism and other forms of bigotry requires Government and civil society leaders to promote anti-hate, anti-bias, and civics education programs. Particularly now, better understanding of the Jewish community, and robust Holocaust and antisemitism education are crucial to mitigating the hate threatening all of our communities.

- Promoting understanding of Jewish people today.
- Including antisemitism in anti-bias education and related training.

#### *The PROTECT Plan*

P—Prioritize Preventing and Countering Domestic Terrorism

R—Resource According to the Threat

O—Oppose Extremists in Government Service

T—Take Public Health and Other Domestic Terrorism Prevention Measures

E—End the Complicity of Social Media in Facilitating Extremism

C—Create an Independent Clearinghouse for On-line Extremist Content

T—Target Foreign White Supremacist Terrorist Groups for Sanctions

#### *Prioritize Preventing and Countering Domestic Terrorism*

First, we urge Congress to adopt a whole-of-Government and whole-of-society approach to prevent and counter domestic terrorism.

- In mid-June 2021, the Biden-Harris administration released the first-ever National Strategy to Counter Domestic Terrorism. The strategy is laudable, and a step in the right direction. However, many critical details were left unaddressed. Congress must press for further details into how the plan will be implemented, and the steps that will be taken to ensure protection for civil rights and civil liberties. Further, departments and agencies must create their own implementation plans for the Strategy.
- As Congress considers appropriations bills, resources to prevent and counter domestic terrorism are critical to mitigating the threat. ADL urges committee Members to consider supporting significant increases for these necessary resources across the Government in the Commerce, Justice, and Science; Homeland Security; Defense; State and Foreign Operations; Interior; and Labor, Health, and Human Services appropriations processes.

#### *Resource According to the Threat*

We must ensure that the authorities and resources the Government uses to address violent threats are proportionate to the risk of the lethality of those threats. In other words, allocation of resources must never be politicized but rather based on transparent and objective security concerns.

- Congress must ensure that offices addressing domestic terrorist threats have the resources they need and can deploy those resources in a manner proportionate to existing threats. Those resources must be matched with transparency and oversight to hold leaders accountable.
- Congress must exercise careful oversight to ensure that no resources are expended on counterterrorism efforts targeting protected political speech or association. Investigations and other efforts to mitigate the threat should be data-driven and proportionate to the violent threat posed by violent extremist movements.

#### *Oppose Extremists in Government Service*

It is essential that we recognize the potential for harm when extremists gain positions of power, including in Government, law enforcement, and the military.

- To the extent permitted by law and consistent with Constitutional protections, take steps to ensure that individuals engaged in violent extremist activity or associated with violent extremist movements, including violent white supremacist and unlawful militia movements, are deemed unsuitable for employment at the Federal, State, and local levels—including in law enforcement. Appropriate steps must be taken to address any current employees, who, upon review, match these criteria.

- To the extent permitted by law and consistent with Constitutional protections, take steps to ensure that individuals engaged in violent extremist activity or associated with violent extremist movements, including violent white supremacist and unlawful militia movements, are not given security clearances or other sensitive law enforcement credentials. Appropriate steps must be taken to address any current employees, who, upon review, match these criteria. Law enforcement agencies Nation-wide should explore options for preventing extremists from being among their ranks.
- The Department of Defense (DoD) released its internal extremist threat review on December 20, 2021. While the review represents significant progress, we need more information to truly determine the threat posed by extremists within the ranks. DoD should provide further detail on how it will evaluate white supremacists and related threats, as well as how commanders' ability to adjudicate extremism-related guidelines will be overseen.
- Similarly, DHS announced that it completed a review of extremism in its ranks, but the Department itself noted a lack of capacity to fully understand the threat. DHS must develop on-going protocols for a comprehensive picture of insider threats related to domestic violent extremism.
- ADL has worked with law enforcement experts to provide tools for identifying and weeding out extremists in the recruitment process as well as within law enforcement ranks. While there is no evidence that white supremacist extremists have large numbers in our law enforcement agencies, we have seen that even a few can undermine the effectiveness and trust that is so essential.

#### *Take Domestic Terrorism Prevention Measures*

We must not wait until after someone has become an extremist or until a terrorist attack occurs to take action. Effective and promising prevention measures exist, which should be scaled.

- Congress can provide funding to civil society and academic programs that have expertise in addressing recruitment to extremist causes and radicalization, whether on-line or off-line. By providing funding for prevention activities, including education, counseling, and off-ramping, Congress can help empower public health and civil society actors to prevent and intervene in the radicalization process and undermine extremist narratives, particularly those that spread rapidly on the internet.
- These initiatives must be accompanied by an assurance of careful oversight with civil rights and civil liberties safeguards. They must also meaningfully engage the communities that have been targeted by domestic terrorism and the civil society organizations already existing within them, and those communities which have been unfairly targeted when prior anti-terrorism authorities have been misused and/or abused. These initiatives must be transparent, responsive to community concerns, publicly demonstrate careful oversight, and ensure that they do not stigmatize communities. Further, DHS should not be the only agency working on prevention; ADL urges the Department to partner with Health and Human Services and other non-security Departments whenever possible.
- While Congress has funded a small grant program for prevention measures domestically, the program is too small to have an impact at scale. Now that the administration has launched the Center for Prevention Programming and Partnerships within DHS, Congress should significantly scale its grant program; ADL has recommended a \$150 million annual grant level.

#### *End the Complicity of Social Media in Facilitating Extremism*

Congress must prioritize countering on-line extremism and ensure that perpetrators who engage in unlawful activity on-line can be held accountable. ADL has launched the REPAIR Plan, outlined below, which offers a comprehensive framework for platforms and policy makers to take meaningful action to decrease on-line hate and extremism.

#### *Create an Independent Clearinghouse for On-line Extremist Content*

Congress should work with the Biden-Harris administration to create a publicly-funded, independent nonprofit center to track on-line extremist threat information in real time and make referrals to social media companies and law enforcement agencies when appropriate.

- This approach is needed because those empowered with law enforcement and intelligence capabilities must not be tasked with new investigative and other powers that could infringe upon civil liberties—for example, through broad internet surveillance. Scouring on-line sources through an independent organization will act as a buffer, but will not prevent the nonprofit center from assisting law enforcement in cases where criminal behavior is suspected. This wall



of separation, modeled in part on the National Center for Missing and Exploited Children (NCMEC), will help streamline National security tips and resources while preserving civil liberties.

*Target Foreign White Supremacist Terrorist Groups*

Congress must recognize that white supremacist extremism is a major global threat of our era and mobilize with that mindset.

- To date, no white supremacist organization operating overseas has been designated as a Foreign Terrorist Organization. Only one has been designated as a Specially Designated Global Terrorist (SDGT). Congress should review how these designation decisions are made, whether any additional racially or ethnically motivated extremist groups outside the United States, particularly white supremacist groups, have reached the threshold for either designation, and whether such designations would help advance U.S. National interests.
- The Department of State was required to develop a strategy to counter global white supremacist extremism and to add white supremacist terrorism to annual Country Reports on Terrorism. That State has implemented the Country Reports guidance is laudable, and State may have created the strategy. However, the strategy has not been released publicly, making it impossible to evaluate. We urge more transparency from State in this process, for Congress to seek accountability for any gaps in the strategy, and to provide resources to implement it.
- The Department of State must mobilize a multilateral effort to address the threat of white supremacy globally. Multilateral best-practice institutions, such as the Global Counterterrorism Forum, the Global Community Engagement and Resilience Fund, and the International Institute for Justice and Rule of Law, may be helpful mechanisms through which to channel some efforts. Moreover, the Global Engagement Center should be charged with undermining the propaganda of violent extremist groups—not just designated terrorist organizations, but overseas white supremacist violent extremists as well. DHS should participate in these efforts, supporting overseas exchanges, partnerships, and best practices sharing to engage in learning from other countries and sharing U.S. best practices, where applicable.

*The REPAIR Plan*

R—Reorient and Resource Government  
 E—Expose Platform Recklessness  
 P—Put People Over Profit  
 A—Advocate for Targets of On-line Hate and Harassment  
 I—Interrupt Disinformation  
 R—Regulate Platforms

*Reorient and Resource Government*

The responsibility to address on-line harms is fragmented across the Federal and State governments, making it difficult to share information, coordinate enforcement, and establish leadership to ensure accountability. To date, the U.S. Government has not adequately invested in efforts to mitigate these problems. Without concerted action, the Government continues to cede power to social media companies who shirk their responsibility to protect users.

- Government entities must fully use existing authorities to hold social media companies accountable for their complicity in furthering on-line harms.
- Policy makers must convene and prioritize the work of coordinating bodies like the White House Task Force to Address On-line Harassment and Abuse, develop comprehensive strategies to guide their work, modernize and pass legislation to protect against 21st Century hate, bolster research efforts on on-line harms, and appropriately reorient departments to respond to the fluid and diffuse on-line threat landscape. Efforts must be adequately resourced to ensure meaningful and lasting change.

*Expose Platform Recklessness*

Platforms say they have implemented robust protections for users, yet there is no way to independently verify these claims. Moreover, revelations from Facebook whistleblower Frances Haugen revealed that, despite Facebook's claims, its "AI systems only catch a very tiny minority of offending content and best-case scenario in the case of something like hate speech, at most they will ever get 10 to 20 percent." Although platforms allege that providing access to data would undermine user privacy and be too burdensome or expensive to implement, we know Big Tech is made up of billion- and trillion-dollar companies capable of improving systems, hiring ad-

ditional staff, developing better products and practices, and providing genuine transparency.

- Policy makers must prioritize passing legislation that increases independent oversight and transparency of social media platforms. ADL's Stop Hiding Hate campaign advocated for California Assembly Bill 587, which was signed into law in September 2022, to ensure platforms produce transparency reports we can read. Congress must build off of measured solutions, such as AB 587 to truly understand how platform practices impact society and its most vulnerable.
- Platforms must provide access to robust data for researchers, watchdogs, and users. Social media companies must also increase independent oversight of their platforms, including engaging in independent audits of platforms' algorithmic systems, enhanced content moderation, and improvements to user engagement features to help safeguard users. Simultaneously, policy makers should explore legislative solutions such as these to better hold platforms accountable for their wrongdoing and protect users' civil rights.

#### *Put People Over Profit*

Targeted advertising, the fundamental business model utilized by mainstream social media platforms, maximizes profits by optimizing product mechanics that will keep users engaged on-line. To do this, social media companies recommend, rank, and amplify content that keeps us scrolling, reacting, and sharing. The longer users spend on-line and the more engaged they are, the more social media companies track and analyze their activity so platforms can better predict what content to suggest and find as many opportunities as possible to serve users targeted ads. Unfortunately, as research and whistleblowers have shown, the most engaging content is often the most corrosive and divisive. This problematic content, amplified by platforms' algorithms, radicalizes users and mainstreams fringe narratives previously relegated to the underbelly of the internet.

- Policy makers must bolster data privacy and ban surveillance advertising to disrupt harmful business models to protect users, especially children.
- Government agencies and authorities tasked with protecting consumers must boost efforts to protect platform users as tech companies continue to engage in unfair and deceptive practices.
- Platforms must implement recommendations found in ADL's Social Pattern Library and build anti-hate by design principles into their products.
- Infrastructure providers who host platforms complicit in the spread of on-line harms must be held accountable. Providers can no longer support and profit from platforms that are agnostic about content that incites, promotes, or glorifies violence.

#### *Advocate for Targets of On-line Hate and Harassment*

On-line harassment intrudes into users' lives in many ways and often hampers their ability to communicate. While many users have been affected by this activity, data demonstrates on-line harassment disproportionately impacts members of marginalized communities in their ability to work, socialize, learn, and express themselves on-line. According to ADL's latest data, 65 percent of marginalized groups, including women, religious minorities, people of color, LGBTQ+ people, and people with disabilities reported being harassed for an aspect of their identity. These harms are also prevalent in on-line gaming spaces. Findings from ADL's 2021 on-line gaming survey showed 5 in 6 adults ages 18–45 have experienced harassment in on-line multiplayer games. This cannot continue, especially in spaces designed to be pro-social.

- ADL's Backspace Hate campaign supports legislative reform to close gaps in laws that deny victims redress for serious acts of on-line harassment and abuse like doxing, swatting, and non-consensual distribution of intimate imagery.
- Congress must continue to modernize hate crime laws and data collection practices to capture the totality of on-line hate in the 21st Century.
- Law enforcement agencies need enhanced training and additional resources for tracking crimes and developing prudent policies to protect targets of on-line hate.
- Platforms must provide sufficient support services for targets of on-line harassment and abuse.

#### *Interrupt Disinformation*

Violent extremists and malicious actors spread falsehoods to terrorize vulnerable communities, chill civic participation, and disrupt democracy, all while advancing their political aims, radicalizing followers, and inciting violence. Their messages become further engrained in the mainstream by algorithms optimized to amplify content that increases user engagement. Influential people, including elected and ap-

pointed officials, candidates, media pundits, and ideological influencers, spread and normalize this content further, exacerbating profound distrust in Government institutions and processes, science, medicine, and education. The deadly insurrection at the United States Capitol in January 2021 is a key example of how violence can erupt when social media amplifies falsehoods.

- Policy makers and platforms must take a proactive approach to stem the flow of disinformation. Despite fact checks on on-line content, some studies suggest people tend to remember the original falsehood rather than its correction. This behavioral bias underscores the need for creative, forward-leaning solutions. New and meaningful ways to counter disinformation should be identified, including implementing tactics that increase “friction” to slow down and mitigate the spread of harmful content.
- Policy makers must establish effective media literacy programs and share information with the public in a timely and transparent fashion to stymie potential harms from disinformation.
- Platforms must prioritize and increase resources to combat English and non-English language disinformation.
- Policy makers, especially those in party leadership, should penalize elected or appointed officials when they spread disinformation.

#### *Regulate Platforms*

Tech platforms provide the means for transmitting hateful content on a massive scale, while frequently amplifying and legitimizing this content through algorithmic promotion. Although algorithms can assist with facilitating discrimination, harassment, and increased off-line harms, platforms are almost completely shielded from legal liability due to the breadth of Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act (Section 230) and the broad interpretation it has been given by the courts. These sweeping legal protections enjoyed by tech platforms are harmful and continue to perpetuate an on-line ecosystem of hate.

- ADL supports careful legislative reform, but not elimination, of Section 230 to hold social media companies accountable for their role in fomenting hate and extremism that leads to violence. Section 230 reform must address social media platforms’ role in amplifying content that incites violence, discriminates against users, and promotes terrorism. Reform must be focused so that it does not result in an overbroad suppression of free speech, nor unintentionally cement the monopolistic power of Big Tech. Any reform effort must learn from past mistakes and ensure that well-intentioned policy changes do not adversely impact those they are meant to protect. Thoughtful and targeted reform of Section 230 is an important and necessary component to fighting on-line harms and creating a more equitable internet.

#### CONCLUSION

Thank you for the opportunity to testify before this august body and for calling a hearing on this urgent topic. ADL data clearly and decisively illustrate that the impact of hate is rising across the United States, and that domestic extremism, terrorism, and antisemitism will continue to pose a grave threat. It is long past time to acknowledge that these threats overwhelmingly come from right-wing extremists, especially white supremacists, and allocate our resources to address the threat accordingly. We must also address these threats holistically rather than piecemeal. This is precisely what ADL’s COMBAT, PROTECT, and RÉPAIR plans do, applying a whole-of-Government and whole-of-society approach to the fight against antisemitism, hate, and extremism both on- and off-line. On behalf of ADL, we look forward to working with you as you continue to devote your attention to this critical issue.

Mr. TORRES. The Chair recognizes Mr. Stern to summarize his statement for 5 minutes.

#### **STATEMENT OF KENNETH STERN, DIRECTOR, CENTER FOR THE STUDY OF HATE, BARD COLLEGE**

Mr. STERN. Thank you, Chairman Thompson, Vice Chair Torres, Ranking Member Katko, Representative Gottheimer, and the honorable Members of this committee.

In my written testimony, I described how hate against others seen as unrelated to antisemitism actually helps create a climate

where antisemitism can grow, and how increased understanding of hate is a prerequisite for effectively combating antisemitism.

The attack on the Tree of Life synagogue was an act of antisemitism. But no one classifies the murder of Mexicans and Mexican Americans at the El Paso Walmart months later as an act of antisemitism, but if you look at the ideology of the two shooters, they were almost identical. They just picked different targets.

Imagine you are a white supremacist fearful of demographic changes. How can superior people be losing to their inferiors? Someone must be putting their fingers on the scale, and that is where Jews come in. Antisemitism throughout history is a belief that Jews conspire to harm non-Jews, and it provides an explanation for what goes wrong in the world.

Antisemitism gets more traction when democratic norms are threatened, endangering more than just Jews. The 1990's militias took antisemitic tropes and repurposed them to vilify Federal employees. Once people are sucked into a system of conspiratorial thinking, they will inevitably be exposed to antisemitic ideas.

Conspiratorial thinking is more mainstream today than in the 1990's. Frankly, I am less concerned today about what leaders may be saying about Jews and more about what they may be saying about immigrants and Muslims. When people are primed to divide others in this country into us and them, it is inevitable that antisemitism will grow.

Brain science, social psychology, and other fields demonstrate that we are hardwired or at least prewired to see an us and a them. When perceived threats to our identities are tethered to issues of justice or injustice, we feel more comfortable with certainty than complexity and are drawn to binaries, us versus them, good versus evil.

I have four recommendations from hate studies, three of which I will discuss briefly. First, as a society, we calculate the cost of many things, potholes even. But what does hate cost us? We plan to publish an economic analysis approximating the cost of hate crime as a first step in this inquiry, but it would be much more impactful if it is a regular part of the Government reporting of hate crime statistics and also included data drawn from the particular incidents, not only to document the costs but also to illustrate them in real human relatable terms.

Second, how do we make antisemitism and antisemitic violence less likely, especially in a country that is so divided? There is a social psychology study called the Robbers Cave Experiment. Two groups of boys from very similar backgrounds went to a summer camp. Each group didn't know that the other existed, but then they were exposed to each other in a competitive environment. They not only had animosity but acted on it. Later, they had to cooperate to fix the camp's water supply. That superordinate goal or perhaps the creation of a larger group identity helped reduce the hate.

I was inspired by Colin Powell, who suggested a program of national service. I have long wondered what if we took high school seniors from different backgrounds and sent them on a common public service mission. How about a LatinX person from Texas and a Jewish person from New York and a Black person from Los Angeles, and sent them together to work for an organization that

builds homes for American Indian people in South Dakota, for example.

Bring people together from different groups, have them interact with each other and form a new group identity and having them together help someone else might—and I stress might—make them less likely to be drawn into the us versus them thinking that threatens our democracy and increases the potential for antisemitic and other types of hate crimes.

Finally, when the late Robert Hess, the president of Brooklyn College, faced an incident that threatened to tear his campus into tribal groups, his message was: We are all members of the Brooklyn College family. We are all of us in us.

Part of our center's work is to give practical guidance to help communities reject appeals of actors who want to target those amongst us as a them. We recently co-published a community guide for opposing hate. It is a nuts-and-bolts manual about what to do in the aftermath of a hate crime or antisemitic threats.

We stress the importance of working in partnership with political leadership. I can't overemphasize in our divided country how important it is for leaders to underscore that we are all human beings breathing the same air. One way to beat back the acceptance of the idea that we have to be protected from a nefarious them is to find as many ways possible to expand the us.

So finally, I ask that we all find as many ways possible to stress the equivalent of Bob Hess' refrain. We are all human beings, all part of this great Nation, each of whom has an equal right to be part of the social contract in our democracy. The more we expand the us, the less likely there will be attacks on our neighbors, Jews included, because they are seen as a them. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Stern follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF KENNETH S. STERN

OCTOBER 3, 2022

Dear Chairman Thompson, Ranking Member Katko, Representative Gottheimer, and the other honorable Members of the committee: My name is Kenneth Stern. I am the director of the Bard Center for the Study of Hate,<sup>1</sup> which works to increase the serious study of human hatred, and ways to combat it.<sup>2</sup> Before that I directed a small foundation focused on hate,<sup>3</sup> and before that I was the director of the American Jewish Committee's division on antisemitism and extremism, where I worked for 25 years. Among other things during that time at AJC I was the lead drafter of what is now known as the IHRA definition of antisemitism, I was part of the defense effort of Dr. Deborah Lipstadt (today Ambassador Lipstadt, the Department of State's Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism) in her 2000 London defense of a libel charge brought by a Holocaust denier, and I authored a report on the growing danger of the militia movement, released 10 days before the Oklahoma City bombing, with a covering memo warning that there might be some sort of attack on Government on April 19, the anniversary of the siege of the Branch Davidian compound in Waco, Texas, a date of great importance to the militias. I also worked closely with various law enforcement officials, including in New Jersey, particularly Paul Goldenberg who is now a senior fellow for Transnational Security at the Rutgers University Miller Center for Community and Protection and Resil-

<sup>1</sup><https://bcsb.bard.edu/>.

<sup>2</sup>Hate Studies is defined as "Inquiries into the human capacity to define, and then dehumanize or demonize, an 'other,' and the processes which inform and give expression to, or can curtail, control, or combat, that capacity."

<sup>3</sup>The Justus and Karin Rosenberg Foundation was founded by the last surviving member of the Varian Fry group—an operation lead by American Varian Fry to rescue artists and intellectuals—among them Marc Chagall and Max Ernst—from Vichy France.

ience, but was then working on hate crimes committed by skinheads and others. Mr. Goldenberg and I also worked together on a training program for law enforcement officials in Europe through the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), which included a focus on hate crime, including antisemitic hate crime, and on conceiving the Secure Community Network,<sup>4</sup> of which Mr. Goldenberg was a founder.

I know others testifying today will focus, appropriately, on questions of antisemitism, looking at the hatred of Jews in focused ways—on surveys and hate incidents and hate groups and questions of antisemitism in particular venues.

I'd like to focus more on how best to understand antisemitism, perhaps from a bit of a different and broader perspective and a wider lens. And I'll do that in three ways:

- (1) Discuss how antisemitic works as a system of ideas that can pose dangers to people and institutions that aren't Jewish or associated with Jews.
- (2) Discuss how hate against others, seen as unrelated to antisemitism, actually helps create a climate where antisemitism can grow.
- (3) Explore how increased understanding of hate is a prerequisite for effectively combating antisemitism.

First, though, I'd like to provide some historical context. Despite horrible incidents—including attacks on Jews by white supremacists, attacks on Jews by people upset with Israel, and attacks that seem almost a random picking out of Jews (much as in recent years some Asian Americans and others have also been attacked)—I still believe, when it comes to antisemitism, we are in a golden age. During my parents and grandparent's generations there were quotas that kept Jews out of colleges and professions. There were restrictive covenants on property, and overt discrimination in country clubs and public accommodations. Antisemitism isn't just a matter of one data point or another, whether it be the number of hate crimes, attitudes, or anything else. It also has to take into consideration the fact that I—a baby boomer—didn't face the level of antisemitism encountered by my ancestors, and my children, millennials, have experienced it even less. Plus, for the last few decades, one of the major concerns in the Jewish community has been intermarriage. That's a data point too—we're being loved to death.

But of course we're at a moment when I too am concerned, not only about the present, but about the future. I believe that our ability to fight antisemitism is directly related to the strength of our democratic institutions, and I am worried—this even before the events of January 6—about the erosion of democratic norms.

It's been said that antisemitism is like the canary in the coal mine—that hate that starts toward Jews never ends with Jews alone. That's true, but the reverse is true too, and perhaps more important—hate, empowered in society against others, ends up creating a climate where antisemitism is likely to grow. Simply stated, we can't understand antisemitism, and what to do about it, if we limit our thinking to what people say or think about Jews. Antisemitism at heart is an idea, and it works among human beings in systems that encourage ideas to have more or less traction.

For instance, we'd all consider the murderous attack on the Tree of Life synagogue in 2018 as an act of antisemitism. I don't recall anyone classifying the murder of Mexicans and Mexican-Americans at the El Paso Walmart months later as an act of antisemitism, but if you look at the ideology of the two shooters, they were almost identical—they just picked different targets.

And if you look at what helped motivate the Pittsburgh shooter, it was a crescendo of warnings, from political leaders and others, that America was suffering an "invasion" on brown-skinned people from south of our border. He saw Jews as helping make that happen. The El Paso shooter decided to take on the "invaders" directly.

We did a somewhat better job connecting the dots after the horrific mass murder in Buffalo's TOPS market earlier this year. The shooter killed Black people, but he also hated Jews. Yet the two hatreds are not only related—someone who hates one group of people may be more likely to hate another too—but fear of people of color and hatred of Jews actually function as part of systems of ideas—ideologies and theologies.

Kathleen Blee, a sociologist in Pittsburgh who researched women in the Klan and spoke at the founding Hate Studies conference at Gonzaga University in Spokane in 2004, said that the women all had a story about how they came to hate Black people. Whether it was true or not, there was always some anecdote cited, perhaps about how a Black person was playing their radio loudly, and that's when they discovered they hated Black people. But with Jews it was different—an "aha" moment, not related to meeting a Jew, but an understanding of how the world really works.

<sup>4</sup><https://securecommunitynetworks.org/>.

If you see America as a land where white people have been a majority throughout history, but also know that in the next decades non-white people will be the majority, you might feel that your birthright is being taken away. America, of course, is an idea that binds us all together, and not defined by any particular racial identity, but nonetheless there are those who feel a sense of loss at this impending change.

Now imagine that you're a white supremacist, who is not only worried about white "survival," but also believes whites are actually superior to non-whites. Yet, by the demographics, they see themselves losing to "inferior" people of color. How can this be, that superior people are losing to their inferiors? Someone must be putting their finger on the scales. So while racism may be a motivation for much white supremacy, its ideological core is antisemitism, positing the Jew as the secret puppet master making sure whites lose this battle. This has been a theme—the allegation that Jews conspiring to harm non-Jews—throughout history, and in the white supremacist movements in the United States too, positing Jews as behind open immigration, affirmative action, and other efforts viewed as harming white people. The "Great Replacement" theory and the chants of "Jews will not replace us" at Charlottesville are simply the latest incarnation of this very old story line.

#### ANTISEMITISM AS A FORM OF HATE

There are various definitions of antisemitism, some better for one purpose or another, some that are actually used in a counterproductive way (a few words more on that later in footnote 15), but they each have one element in common which is the core of antisemitism, although expressed in slightly different wording. Antisemitism, at heart, is conspiracy theory positing that Jews conspire to harm non-Jews, and antisemitism gives an "explanation" for what goes wrong in the world.

But it isn't like antisemitism is the only form of hate. We can't understand antisemitism fully if we see it as an isolated phenomenon rather than one that is an important subset of the human capacity to hate. Regardless of where, when, major economic system or political system, or any other variable, people have always had the capacity to define, and then sometimes demonize and/or dehumanize, an "other." Antisemitism is a member of the family of hatreds.

The emerging interdisciplinary field of Hate Studies teaches us many things about how human beings think and feel that are essential for understanding antisemitism and what to do about it. Hate, as I said, has been around as long as human beings have. We may need help figuring out whom to hate, but to hate is part of who we are. New studies in neuroscience and neurobiology, supplementing those in social psychology and other fields, confirm that we are hardwired, or at least pre-wired, to see an "us" and a "them." Today brain scientists can even put people in MRIs and see what part of the brain fires in different hate-related circumstances.<sup>5</sup>

Evolutionary psychology also helps us understand why we're frequently influenced more by emotions, even instincts, than pure rational thought. James Waller, writing a landmark essay in Gonzaga University's *Journal of Hate Studies*,<sup>6</sup> noted that if you were thinking rationally, you'd be more afraid of automobiles than snakes and spiders: we're more likely to die in an automobile accident than by an interaction with a snake. But our brains were formed millennia ago, when there were no cars, however snakes and spiders could cause us real harm. So too could the group of "others" on the other side of a hill.

I could take everyone who is attending this hearing today, flip a coin, divide us into group A and group B, with everyone knowing that the assignment to each group was completely arbitrary. But after a group identity is formed, social psychology teaches us that each group will think it is better than the other one, smarter and more attractive.<sup>7</sup> Ethnocentrism and tribal thinking are part of who we are. We're always defining "in-groups," but that also means we have to define what the in-group isn't, and frequently we are xenophobic about the out group. There's also what's called "uncertainty-identity theory," suggesting that people crave certainty, especially about important things related to them, like ethnic, religious, and other identities, particularly when they see their group as under some sort of threat. And much of what goes on is, again, not a matter of pure rational thought, but intuition and emotion. Jonathan Haidt, a leading social psychologist, uses the metaphor of

<sup>5</sup>Dr. Robert Sapolsky discussed the brain and hate in this BCSH webinar: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S5g\\_LAoUYZQ&t=19s&ab\\_channel=BardCenterfortheStudyofHate](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=S5g_LAoUYZQ&t=19s&ab_channel=BardCenterfortheStudyofHate).

<sup>6</sup>Waller, J.E., 2004. *Our Ancestral Shadow: Hate and Human Nature in Evolutionary Psychology*. *Journal of Hate Studies*, 3(1), pp.121–132. DOI: <http://doi.org/10.33972/jhs.25>.

<sup>7</sup>The scholarship described in this section from Hate Studies is summarized in the "Thinking about Thinking" chapter from *The Conflict over The Conflict: The Israel/Palestine Campus Debate*. <http://kennethsstern.com/wp-content/uploads/2020/05/thinking-about-thinking.pdf>.

an elephant and a rider. The elephant is our instincts and sets of morals. Rational thought is the rider, that can steer an elephant to a degree, but in many ways is just along for the ride.

There's also scholarship showing that we want to reduce things to simple formulas. Complexity makes us uncomfortable. We frequently default to easy, binary answers—good and bad, us or them. And especially when our identity is tethered to an issue of perceived social justice or injustice, we may feel righteous trying to suppress, rather than counter, different points of view, and demonize those who hold those views. And of course as part of this process we backfill our thinking, not engaging different ideas as if they might have merit, but looking for ways to reaffirm the correctness of our opinions.

This simplistic way of looking at the world around us, especially when amplified by media, institutions, and leaders, feeds the binary. Our hardwired minds are more likely to see a “them” threatening an “us” when theology or ideology tells us that truth, God, or the combination identifies the “them” as a danger. And it's inevitable that on this us/them plane, antisemitism plays out spectacularly. Whether from the early days of Christianity when Jews were discriminated against and persecuted as an example of what happens when the “them” doesn't recognize “our truth” (in this case that Jesus is God), to the targeting of Jews during the black death for “poisoning wells,” to the blood libel—blaming Jews for ritual sacrifice when Christian children disappeared—to its more modern manifestations (including Nazism), antisemitism, whether on the right and on the left, defines Jews as conspiring to harm non-Jews, and provides an explanation for what goes wrong in the world.

Antisemitism works as a system of ideas, and it has implications for society beyond the question of attacks on Jews. The 1990's militias were targeting Government officials, and I explained in my book about the Oklahoma City bombing that it wasn't coincidental that the leaders of the movement were ones with solid white supremacist and antisemitic credentials. Their vilification of Government officials frequently took antisemitic tropes, and repurposed and transferred them to forest service workers and other Federal employees. The director of program for the Montana Human Rights Network at the time described the militias as “a funnel moving through space.” He meant that at the wide end of the funnel, people were being sucked into the movement by mainstream issues (in the 1990's militias' case, gun control, Federal intrusiveness, land use issues, etc.). Further into the funnel they were exposed to us/them conspiratorial thinking. Further down, the antisemitic conspiracy theories. And, at the small end, warriors who gave their entire identity to militia ideology and committed acts of terror—like Timothy McVeigh—popped out. The beauty of this metaphor is the suggestion that the more pressure there is to move people into the lip of the funnel, the more will be propelled out of the short end. And that's one of my worries today—this type of conspiratorial thinking was fairly relegated to the extremes of society in the 1990's. It's much more mainstream today, and promoted by many more leaders and politicians. One historic measure of the climate of antisemitism—to me a more important data point than how many actors decide to spray paint swastikas in a given year—is whether ideas that may fuel antisemitism are on the extreme, or the mainstream.

Conspiracy theories inevitably gain adherents when leaders define people among us as a “them,” then demonize and dehumanize “them,” casting the vilification not as hate but as a matter of self-defense and something noble. When I speak to Jewish groups I tell them that even if they are only thinking about the danger to Jews, I'm less concerned about what leaders might be saying about Jews and more about what they are saying in recent years about immigrants and Muslims. When people are primed to divide people in this country into “us” and “them” it's inevitable that antisemitism will grow.

#### PRACTICAL LESSONS FROM HATE STUDIES

Hate Studies is an interdisciplinary approach to understanding the human capacity for hate, and what to do about it. It derives from two observations: (1) That hate has always been part of the human condition, yet we don't approach it as we do other human needs and worries, and (2) the efforts to confront hate in society are largely driven by factors other than the application of testable theories of what works, what doesn't, and why.

People get sick, so we have a field of medicine that combines biology, chemistry, physics, and other fields, to help cure diseases and make people healthier. People need structures, so we have a field of architecture that combines physics, math, art, and other fields. Hate Studies is an effort to pull together the knowledge from all the diverse fields that tell us something about hate (on the molecular, personal, cul-



tural, communal, societal, political, and other levels), and help guide us to better understand it and what to do about it.

The first Hate Studies Center was established at Gonzaga University in 1996, which publishes the *Journal of Hate Studies*. Today there are Hate Studies centers at Bard College, California State University at San Bernardino, the University of Pittsburgh and Carnegie Mellon University (a joint program), the University of Ontario Institute of Technology (in Canada), the University of Limerick (in Ireland), and the University of Limerick (in Ireland). Another at a major California university will be announced soon.

And while there is still much work to be done, in fact we're still only about 20 years into building the field, there are some lessons learned about hate and how to approach it that are directly relevant to the mission of this committee, and also generally relevant to the role of Congress, not only for today but also for the decades to come. I have four recommendations, one very concrete, one more of a framework, one aspirational, and one of messaging.

#### LESSON 1—THE COST OF HATE CRIME

Hate Studies is an interdisciplinary field, and economics is an important part. As a society we calculate the cost of many things—childhood obscenity,<sup>8</sup> smoking,<sup>9</sup> gun violence,<sup>10</sup> air pollution,<sup>11</sup> even potholes.<sup>12</sup> But what does hate cost us?

When we think of challenging hate, we think of it generally in moral terms, how it harms people or groups, or as I mentioned earlier, concerns about its effect on our democratic institutions and values. But even if people don't care about the harm hate inflicts on others, they might be concerned if they realized that it actually cost them money. If there's something that could be called a "hate tax," how much would it be?

The groundbreaking work in this field is by Lee Badgett, who wrote a book about the cost of anti-LGBTQ discrimination.<sup>13</sup> In the coming months the Bard Center for the Study of Hate plans to publish an analysis informed by a team of experts, and written by economist Michael Martell, looking at the cost of hate crime, as a first step to encourage economists to look at the cost of hate more broadly. His calculations will include: (1) Direct victim costs (of both the people who died, and those who were wounded), (2) indirect costs—pain, suffering, stress, such as family, counseling, etc., (3) costs of any investigation—to rule out accomplices, responding on scene, etc., (4) costs from lost contributions of victims to society (including missed work, less volunteering—basically examples of behavior changes that followed the event), (5) damage to facilities (repair, new security, etc.). His data is drawn from synthesizing publicly-available information, including that found in the National Crime Victimization Survey and the National Incident-Based Report System of the FBI, in order to approximate a cost. And as valuable as I believe Dr. Martell's report will be, it would be much more useful to underscoring the cost of hate if, as a regular part of the Government reporting of hate crime, it also included data, drawn from the particular incidents, not only to document the costs but to illustrate them in real, human, relatable terms.

Further, as far as I know there is no calculation of the cost of antisemitism, and it would likely be impossible (and, frankly, inappropriate) to have a formula for such an inquiry, given the differences of opinion of what constitutes antisemitism when it comes to issues like Zionism,<sup>14</sup> let alone the cost of the impact of antisemitism on non-Jews. But it might be worthwhile for this committee to consider, for purposes of homeland security, investigating or encouraging the calculation of the societal costs of hate crimes in general, including antisemitic ones.<sup>15</sup> The De-

<sup>8</sup> <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC3047996/>.

<sup>9</sup> [https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data\\_statistics/fact\\_sheets/fast\\_facts/cost-and-expenditures.html](https://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/data_statistics/fact_sheets/fast_facts/cost-and-expenditures.html).

<sup>10</sup> <https://everytownresearch.org/report/the-economic-cost-of-gun-violence/>.

<sup>11</sup> <https://earth.stanford.edu/news/how-much-does-air-pollution-cost-us#gs.cu1c8b>.

<sup>12</sup> <https://newsroom.aaa.com/2022/03/aaa-potholes-pack-a-punch-as-drivers-pay-26-5-billion-in-related-vehicle-repairs/>.

<sup>13</sup> M.V. Lee Badgett, *The Economic Case for LGBT Equality: Why Fair and Equal Treatment Benefits Us All* (Beacon Press, 2020). Dr. Badgett also spoke about her research for a Bard Center for the Study of Hate webinar: [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NsFxIsCV-zj0&t=8s&ab\\_channel=BardCenterfortheStudyofHate](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NsFxIsCV-zj0&t=8s&ab_channel=BardCenterfortheStudyofHate).

<sup>14</sup> Kenneth Stern, *Anti-Zionism, Antisemitism, and the Fallacy of Bright Lines*, The Institute for National Security Studies, Tel Aviv University, June 14, 2021. <https://www.inss.org.il/publication/anti-zionism-antisemitism-and-the-fallacy-of-bright-lines/>.

<sup>15</sup> As I mentioned in passing on page 3, there are various definitions of antisemitism being promoted by different Jewish groups and scholars, including the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition (<https://www.state.gov/defining-antisemitism/>), the Je-

partment of Justice and the FBI already compile data (incomplete, as we all know) on hate crimes. Some sense of the monetary cost associated with these crimes would be helpful, and appropriate to include and publicize among the other hate crime statistics.

## LESSON 2—FURTHER CONNECTING ACADEMICS AND POLICY MAKERS, GLOBALLY

Economics isn't the only field in Hate Studies where policy insights might be useful for this committee.

One of the premises for founding Hate Studies is that ideas from the academy should find better ways of informing policy.

The Bard Center for the Study of Hate is negotiating with a publisher about creating a book (hopefully to appear in 2024) written largely by Hate Studies scholars focused on helping Non-Governmental Organizations apply better, and testable, theories to their work. Essentially, the scholars from a wide variety of hate-related disciplines are being asked, knowing what you know, if you were running an NGO that looked at hate, or some subset of it, what would you do, what wouldn't you do, and why?

One of the chapters will be on hate crimes, written by Jennifer Schweppe of the University of Limerick, Ireland and Mark Walters, of the University of Sussex, Brighton, UK. They, along with scholars such as Barbara Perry of the University of Ontario Institute of Technology, Oshawa, Canada and Neil Chakraborti of the University of Leicester, UK, have been in the forefront of, as Chakraborti calls it, the need to “mind the gap” between scholars and policy makers.

Connecting conversations about hate crime, and the different models and lessons to be shared and learned, is part of the reasons for the creation of the International Network for Hate Studies (INHS).<sup>16</sup> While, as Chakraborti wrote in 2016 “we now know much more about hate crime than ever before; more about the nature, extent and impact of victimization; more about the factors behind the selection of victims;

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rusalem Declaration on Antisemitism (<https://jerusalemdeclaration.org/>), and the NEXUS definition (<https://israelandantisemitism.com/>)—in full disclosure, while the Bard Center for the Study of Hate doesn't endorse one definition or another, we provide an academic home for the NEXUS Task Force's deliberations). As I detailed before the House Committee on the Judiciary in 2017 (<https://docs.house.gov/meetings/JU/JU00/20171107/106610/HHRG-115-JU00-WState-SternK-20171107.pdf>), I was the lead drafter of what is now known as the IHRA definition. I believe the IHRA definition has the best language to guide thinking on what constitutes an antisemitic hate crime (that being this specific part of the definition, one that doesn't mention Israel: “Criminal acts are antisemitic when the targets of attacks, whether they are people or property—such as buildings, schools, places of worship and cemeteries—are selected because they are, or are perceived to be, Jewish or linked to Jews”). It tracks the holding of the U.S. Supreme Court case *Wisconsin v. Mitchell* (<https://supreme.justia.com/cases/federal/us/508/476/>) (see also AJC amicus brief—<http://kennethssterne.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Wisconsin-V.-Mitchell.CV01.pdf>) that the intent to single out (in this case someone or something Jewish or seen associated with Jews) is the gravamen of a hate crime, rather than the question of whether the perpetrator really hated Jews. Thus if I think Jews are rich, and I decide to target Jewish homes for burglary or kidnap a Jew for ransom, even though that is the result of a positive stereotype, that's still a hate crime. Likewise, attacking a Jew or Jewish institution because it is Jewish, in reaction to events in the Middle East, thus holding all Jews responsible for perceived wrongdoing by Israel, would also appropriately fall under this part of the definition.

However, I've also been outspoken against the broad adoption of the definition (which included language about Israel but was written primarily to help data collectors, and was intended to take a temperature of antisemitism over time and across borders) as a type of hate speech code. The definition has been used primarily to suppress and chill some pro-Palestinian political speech, and it is particularly inappropriate to use it in this fashion on university campuses, where the point is to examine ideas, including ones that might be contentious or disturbing. It is important to make a distinction between actual harassment, intimidation, and bullying, on the one hand, and expression of opinions, on the other. The parallel situation would be adopting and employing a state-endorsed definition of racism with political examples, like opposition to the Movement for Black Lives or affirmative action or the removal of Confederate statues. Further, there are also church/state concerns (the question of whether a particular view of Israel and Zionism is necessary to be inside the Jewish “tent” is an internal question that shouldn't be decided by lawmakers), and concerns that, just as there's a danger of promoting hate when people take complex systems and try to reduce them to simple formulas, anti-hate programs that rely on a simple formula also are to be discouraged. They are like black holes sucking away attention from other things that can actually be much more effective. I see a parallel here to the mantra that the obvious and go-to answer to antisemitism is Holocaust education. Holocaust education is of course important and to be encouraged, but it makes little sense to think it will be a panacea for curing antisemitism (see <https://www.jta.org/2007/01/21/opinion/holocaust-education-wont-stop-hate>).

<sup>16</sup><https://internationalhatestudies.com/>.

and more about the effectiveness, or otherwise, of different interventions,”<sup>17</sup> there still remains too much of a disconnect between “real world” experiences and academic insights and research.

Groups like the ADL and AAPI do essential work in the United States collecting and sharing information about antisemitic and anti-Asian hate crimes, and this is a critical contribution especially since hate crime reporting isn’t as complete as it ought to be, as was recognized at the recent White House United We Stand Summit. The steps by the Department of Justice announced on September 15<sup>18</sup> are important. Yet the scholarship of Walters and Schweppe and their colleagues, looking at international norms and trends in understanding and countering hate crimes, and in direct consultation with law enforcement officials to inform their scholarship, offer some new ideas for not only improving data collection and reporting, but also for research into why people might be less inclined to report hate crimes (both because of negative experiences in reporting, and also because of fear and anxiety associated with the incident itself). While hate crime is an international problem, lessons from other jurisdictions are frequently ignored because different countries have different understandings, not only of which groups should be included under hate crime legislation as potential victims of hate crime, or different norms of protection for speech, but even of the term “hate crime” itself.<sup>19</sup>

Hate crimes, of course, impact entire communities and threaten people’s sense of safety and belonging. And there are challenges, not only with reluctance and fear or reporting, or institutional impediments (I’ve heard of desk sergeants suggesting that incidents that might well be hate crimes not be reported because of fear of increased paperwork), but other political and structural challenges as well. It was important that the White House, under both presidents Clinton and Biden, convened meetings about hate and hate crimes. But we should encourage ways to incorporate better the insights of scholars and practitioners around the world about hate-related violence. They have a lot to learn from us, but we can learn more from them too.

### LESSON 3—BREAKING DOWN “US” “THEM” WITH COMMUNITY SERVICE?

I suspect there’s general agreement on this panel and on this committee that reducing the incidents of antisemitism isn’t only a matter of better security for Jewish institutions, or better hate crime reporting, or better educational initiatives. Antisemitism historically has been influenced by events and trends, including political and cultural ones, in society at large. One perplexing question is how do we make antisemitism and antisemitic violence less likely, especially in a society that seems more divided in recent years along political and other fault lines, one in which more people seem willing to be animated by hatred of others (including of Jews)?

Hate Studies might have some additional concrete suggestions here—although I stress what I’m going to propose is something that has not yet been fully explored.

There’s an old study in social psychology study called the Robbers Cave experiment,<sup>20</sup> a study that involved sending two groups of boys from very similar backgrounds to a summer camp in Oklahoma. Each group didn’t know the other existed, but once each bonded separately as a unit, and then were given evidence of the other group’s existence in a competitive environment, they not only had animosity toward each other, but acted on it. At the end, they however, had to cooperate to fix the camp’s drinking water supply. That superordinate goal—or perhaps the creation of a larger group identity—helped reduce the hate.

That suggestion—an additional layer of connected identity—is one I observed from colleagues during my years at AJC involved with intergroup relations. The groups that seemed to have the most staying power—say a project bringing together Blacks and Jews—were the ones that had an additional layer of identity (Black and Jewish lawyers or accountants, for example).

Years ago I was inspired by Colin Powell and others who suggested the potential societal and personal benefits of a program of national service for young people. I’ve long wondered, what if we had a national program that would offer to take teenagers from different backgrounds, say as they were finishing high school, and sent them on a common public service mission? How about a Latinx person from Texas and a Jewish person from New York and a Black person from Los Angeles, and sent them, together, to work for an organization that builds homes for American Indian people in South Dakota, for example? There are lots of ways to mix and match such

<sup>17</sup> Chakrabarti, Neil, *Mind the Gap! Making Stronger Connections between Hate Crime Policy and Scholarship*, Criminal Justice Policy Review (2016) Vol. 27(6), 577, 579.

<sup>18</sup> <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-launches-nationwide-initiative-combat-unlawful-acts-hate>.

<sup>19</sup> Schweppe, Jennifer, *What is a hate crime?* Cogent Social Science (2021), 7.

<sup>20</sup> Sherif, M. (1954). *Experimental study of positive and negative intergroup attitudes between experimentally produced groups: robbers cave study*. Norman, OK: University of Oklahoma.

groups, but the idea of bringing people together from different groups that they might not have met before, have them interact with each other and form a new group identity, have them together help someone else, and create new and negotiated collective memories drawn from their own communal memories might, and I stress might, make them less likely to be drawn into the “us” vs “them” thinking that threatens our democracy, and thus reduce the potential for antisemitic and other types of hate crimes. A pilot project and, if later evaluation documents a reduction of hate over time results, there might be consideration of building such a national service program. It might even pay for itself, if it reduces the cost of hate.

#### LESSON 4—EXPANDING THE “US”

When I was at AJC I worked very closely with the late Robert Hess, president of Brooklyn College. He was instrumental in thinking through a guide I wrote on how to handle “Bigotry on Campus.”<sup>21</sup> One off-hand comment from Bob always stayed with me, and it made sense even before I started learning more about hate and how it works. When an incident at Brooklyn College threatened to tear the campus apart into tribal groups, he would always emphasize what he called “the myth of the institution.” He, as a leader, would reiterate, almost to the point of a mantra, “We’re all members of the Brooklyn College family.” We are all, thus, an “us.”

As I noted, one core lesson from social psychology and other related Hate Studies fields is that we divide the world into “us” and “them.” In most instances that can be not only innocuous but a source of entertainment—whether we cheer for this sports team or that. But this tendency can also lead to decisions that violence is necessary, justified, and proper against a “them.”

Part of the work of the Bard Center for the Study of Hate is to give practical guidance on how to help communities reject appeals of actors who want to target those amongst us as a “them.” Too often a hate incident occurs, people of good will want to “do something,” and they scramble about trying to figure out what to do on the fly, and then, over time, the impetus fades, people move on to other things, and the opportunity to build community and support democratic norms goes by—until the next time, when the cycle repeats.

Earlier this year, in partnership with the Western States Center and the Montana Human Rights Network, we published “A Community Guide for Opposing Hate.”<sup>22</sup> It is a nuts and bolts manual, written by people with years of expertise in studying and organizing against hate, with instructions about how to build a group or sustain an already existing one, how to work with academics, journalists, and Government officials, what to do (and not do) in various scenarios, including in the aftermath of a hate crime or antisemitic threats.<sup>23</sup>

All the authors had experience helping local communities cope with white supremacist and aligned organizations and actors who were trying to build their movements by promoting hatred of others, whether it be based on religion or race, sexual orientation or expression, or people with different political points of view.

We stressed the importance of working in partnership with political leadership, not only on matters of policy, but also in building relationships that can be mutually beneficial, helping stand up together against efforts of hate groups to vilify human beings in the community.<sup>24</sup>

I can’t overemphasize, in the divided country we’re in, how important it is for leaders, and especially political leaders, to set an example of civil discourse despite deep disagreement, and to underscore by action and word that while there may be policy and philosophical differences at play, we’re all human beings breathing the same air. In other words, one way to beat back the acceptance of the division of our

<sup>21</sup> <http://kennethsstern.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/BigotryOnCampus.pdf>

<sup>22</sup> <https://bcsb.bard.edu/files/2022/05/OpposingHateGuide-single-pages-8M-5-3.pdf>.

<sup>23</sup> The manual highlights “Project Lemonade,” an approach that uses social media to crowdsource pledges tied to a metric such as how long a proposed neo-Nazi march might last. The white supremacists would actually be raising money for things they detest, like increased hate crime training for police. The people targeted would feel supported, and others around the world could do something useful to help. See also <https://www.cnn.com/2017/01/13/opinions/kkk-plans-march-on-mlk-day-stern>.

<sup>24</sup> In 2021 we also published a “State of Hate Index” by political scientist Robert Tynes (<https://bcsb.bard.edu/files/2021/09/State-of-Hate-Index.pdf>). He was inspired by the old “Green Book,” used for decades by Black people traveling the South, listing restaurants, hotels, and other services that would serve them (and by a similar book from that period telling Jews which places would serve them, and which would not, in the Catskills). The idea is that not only the number of hate crimes in a State, but also its laws and policies, affect the level of hate a person can experience when crossing a State border. The value of Tynes’s approach is that, again, we don’t silo antisemitism here, sexism and racism and homophobia there, but rather see them as creating a joint tapestry in a geographic area where hate might, in general, be able to flourish more.

community into “us” who have to be protected from a nefarious “them” is to find as many ways possible, in normal speech and practice, to expand the “us.”

So, this isn’t a policy or legislative suggestion, and it’s something that I know many of you do instinctively, and frequently exhibiting political courage when you do. As leaders, regardless of political differences and the political necessities about which I’m not naive, I’d ask that you find as many ways possible, intentionally, to underscore the equivalent of Bob Hess’ refrain. We’re all human beings, all part of this great Nation, each of whom has an equal right to be part of the social contract and this great democracy. The more we can expand the “us,” the less likely there will be attacks on our neighbors, Jews included, because they are seen as a “them.”

Mr. TORRES. The Chair recognizes Ms. Corke to summarize her statement for 5 minutes.

**STATEMENT OF SUSAN CORKE, DIRECTOR, INTELLIGENCE  
PROJECT, SOUTHERN POVERTY LAW CENTER**

Ms. CORKE. Thank you, Chairman Thompson, Vice Chairman Torres, and honorable Members of the committee, for the opportunity to testify today for this important hearing, which comes at a precarious time for American democracy. I am Susan Corke, director of the Southern Poverty Law Center’s Intelligence Project.

There had been a disturbing rise in antisemitic incidents in New Jersey and elsewhere in the country. This uptick in hate-fueled activity is part of a larger hard right movement that stokes the fires of antisemitism, promoting racism, fear, and extremist violence.

Antisemitism, in addition to being a toxic form of prejudice, is also an animating feature of white nationalist ideology, and it is often a leading indicator that a society is more broadly infected and divided by racism.

Established in 1971, the SPLC has been tireless in finding and rooting out hate and extremist groups to create a more fair, inclusive, and unified Nation. The Intelligence Project, which I direct at SPLC, has deep expertise in monitoring and exposing as well as countering the activities of hundreds of domestic hate groups and other extremists across the country, including the Ku Klux Klan, the neo-Nazi movement, anti-Government militias, and others.

White supremacy has gone mainstream, which increasingly threatens people of color, our communities, our education system and democracy itself. The great replacement narrative has become mainstream on the political right over the past few years. This racist conspiracy, which says there is a systematic global effort to replace White European people with non-white foreign populations, provides the central framework, rooted in antisemitic ideology, for the white supremacist movement. The theory has motivated many deadly terror attacks.

Having lived in New Jersey with my multiracial family, I can attest that New Jersey exhibits some of the most incredible benefits of living in a multiracial democracy. However, it was antisemitism which fueled a December 2019 deadly shooting at a Jewish market in Jersey City, New Jersey, where I was living at the time.

I want to urge the committee to focus on the need to invest more in the prevention of radicalization. We want to stop hate crimes before they are committed and build stronger, more resilient communities.

My written statement provides details on some of the 26 hate and anti-Government groups SPLC tracked in New Jersey in 2021, which includes a State-wide chapter of the Proud Boys as well as

other notorious hate groups on the hard right, including Patriot Front, the Oath Keepers, as well as the New Jersey European Heritage Association.

SPLC has been closely tracking the anti-Government, heavily-armed, extremist Oath Keepers group. There are multiple Oath Keeper chapters in New Jersey from Morristown to Cape May. The Oath Keeper leaders consistently pushed for a second Civil War in the build-up to January 6th. Several of the Oath Keepers are currently on trial for seditious conspiracy. The Oath Keepers organization is in some disarray as it faces justice.

However, more than 40 members of the violent Proud Boys also face charges in relation to January 6th alleged activities, including at least two men from New Jersey. Yet the influence of the Proud Boys has grown, not waned. The number of active Proud Boys chapters increased almost 67 percent between 2020 and 2021.

We at SPLC strongly believe that all who helped plan, finance, inspire and perpetrate the deadly January 6th attack must be held accountable. Without such accountability, our democracy will continue to be at risk, with false and nefarious attacks on our elections, on voting rights, and the diversity that makes us strong.

What can we do? My written statement includes many policy recommendations. I will summarize five.

No. 1, expand antiracism education and upstream prevention initiatives. We must bolster community well-being and work to inoculate young people against radicalization. To do that, we must increase funding for prevention and antiracism education initiatives.

No. 2, speak out against hate, political violence, and extremism. Words matter. It is impossible to overstate the importance of hearings like today, with leaders condemning hate and extremism.

No. 3, enforce hate crime laws already on the books and improve hate crime data collection efforts. After 30 years of incomplete data and underreporting, we should support mandatory hate crimes reporting.

No. 4, improve Government response to domestic extremism and fund digital literacy initiatives and evidence-based prevention programs.

No. 5, promote on-line safety and hold the tech and social media companies accountable.

Thank you so much for holding this hearing today. We deeply appreciate the committee's attention to the issue, and we stand ready to work with you as you continue to focus on this important issue. I am happy to answer your questions and yield back to the Chairman. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Corke follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF SUSAN CORKE

OCTOBER 3, 2022

I am Susan Corke, director of the Southern Poverty Law Center's Intelligence Project. Thank you for the opportunity to testify before you today on "Countering Violent Extremism, Terrorism, and Antisemitic Threats in New Jersey."

This hearing comes at a precarious time for American democracy. There has been a disturbing rise in antisemitic incidents in New Jersey and elsewhere in the country. This uptick in hate-fueled activity is part of a larger hard-right movement that stokes the fires of antisemitism, promoting racism, fear, and extremist violence. Antisemitism, in addition to being a toxic form of prejudice in its own right, is also

an animating feature of white nationalist ideology and is in many instances a leading indicator of societal ills that threaten the rights of all.

Established in 1971, the SPLC has been tireless in identifying and rooting out hate and extremist groups to create a fair, inclusive, and unified nation. We are a nonprofit advocacy organization serving as a catalyst for racial justice throughout the South and beyond. We work in partnership with communities of color and allies to dismantle white supremacy, strengthen intersectional movements through transformative policies and initiatives, and advance human rights of all people. Through “Learning for Justice,” our organization provides free resources to caregivers and educators to help advance human rights and inclusive democracy.

The Intelligence Project, which I direct at SPLC, has deep expertise in monitoring the activities of domestic hate groups and other extremists—including the Ku Klux Klan, the neo-Nazi movement, racist skinheads, antigovernment militias, and others. We currently track hundreds of extremist groups operating across the country and publish investigative reports, share key intelligence, and offer expert analysis to the media and public.

We have monitored and assessed how the vile ecosystem that fuels hate and extremism has changed. The current far-right movement is more diffuse than a geographic census of groups. It flourishes on-line and seeks young recruits and political access. In a dangerous shift over the past year, extremist groups like the Proud Boys are getting involved in local politics and creating alliances around other far-right issues like anti-vax, anti-CRT, and anti-LGBTQ.

We are continually evolving our work to better expose, prevent, counter, and remedy hate and extremism in America. To push white supremacy out of the mainstream and remedy harms in communities, we believe it is vital to be able to better spot warning signs and intervene earlier by supporting grassroots partners with resources.

Our dedicated research and analysis of the hate spreading across America requires that we invest wisely in the technology needed to track white supremacy across the digital frontier. We seek to use our research and expertise with policymakers to hold the perpetrators of hate and extremism accountable. We are building capacity for more proactive and long-term prevention of extremism through the adoption of public health models. We also see hope as we listen to the stories of those fighting back against white supremacy and extremism, those who use activism to build community strength.

#### ANTISEMITISM: THE “ENERGIZING PRINCIPLE” BEHIND WHITE NATIONALISM

Eric Ward, senior advisor to the Western States Center and a core SPLC partner, has written widely on antisemitism.<sup>1</sup> In recent testimony before the Senate Committee on Homeland Security and Governmental Affairs, he said, “. . . [a]ntisemitism is the loom on which other hatreds are woven, so essential that it’s easy to ignore. If we seek to counter domestic extremism, we must recognize that antisemitism remains the energizing principle behind white nationalism.”<sup>2</sup>

White supremacy has gone mainstream, which increasingly threatens people of color and our communities, our education system, and democracy itself. The “great replacement” narrative has become thoroughly mainstream on the political right over the past few years. This racist conspiracy, which says there is a systematic, global effort to replace white, European people with nonwhite, foreign populations, provides the central framework, rooted in antisemitic ideology, for the white supremacist movement. The theory has motivated numerous deadly, terror attacks.

In a SPLC/Tulchin poll<sup>3</sup> released June 1, 2022, we found that nearly 7 in 10 Republicans believe that demographic changes in the United States are deliberately driven by liberal politicians. Inherent in this central racist tenet of white supremacy is the false belief that this is part of an effort to gain political power by “replacing more conservative white voters.” In some manifestations of the great replacement theory, believers blame Jews for the supposed genocide of the white race.

<sup>1</sup> Eric K. Ward, *Skin in the Game: How Antisemitism Animates White Nationalism*, Pol. Rsch. Assocs. (Jun. 29, 2017), (<https://politicalresearch.org/2017/06/29/skin-in-the-game-how-antisemitism-animates-white-nationalism>.)

<sup>2</sup> *Hearing on Domestic Extremism in America: Examining White Supremacist Violence in the Wake of Recent Attacks Before the S. Comm. On Homeland Sec. & Gov’t Affs.*, 117th Cong. 6 (2022) (Statement of Eric K. Ward, Exec. Dir. At W. States Ctr.), <https://westernstatescenter.medium.com/written-testimony-submitted-to-the-senate-hearing-on-domestic-extremism-in-america-examining-3a8ea9c86953>.

<sup>3</sup> *SPLC Releases Poll Finding Extensive Mainstreaming of Extremist Narratives*, S. Poverty L. Ctr. (June 1, 2022), <https://www.splccenter.org/presscenter/splc-releases-national-poll-finding-extensive-mainstreaming-extremist-narratives>.

White nationalists seek to return to an America that predates the implementation of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965. There is also a core belief among many antisemitic or racist organizations that the Civil Rights Movement was beyond the capability of African Americans and that their progress was due to the Jewish financiers and puppet masters. These racist aspirations to resist diversity and liberalism are frequently articulated as the desire to form a white ethnostate—with violence as the likely means to accomplish it. In sum, the hard right in America is steeped in white supremacy and sees America’s increasing diversity as a threat that must be countered in politics, in law, in court, in the media—and with violence.

In 2021, the Anti-Defamation League documented a 25 percent increase in anti-semitism in New Jersey from 2020.<sup>4</sup> That was the highest number recorded since ADL began tracking incidents in 1979. In recent years, we have seen how antisemitic beliefs inspire deadly violence. Antisemitism led to a deadly shooting at a Jewish market in Jersey City, New Jersey (my former home city); another mass killing at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania; and a hostage-taking at a synagogue in Colleyville, Texas.

SPLC tracked 26 hate and antigovernment groups in New Jersey last year. The 12 hate groups include a State-wide chapter of the Proud Boys.<sup>5</sup> In 2019, SPLC tracked and reported on the alarming case—at the intersection of antisemitism and racism—of Richard Tobin, an 18-year-old living in Brooklawn, New Jersey, who orchestrated a campaign dubbed “Operation Kristallnacht” for the neo-Nazi white supremacist group, The Base. In reporting on the trial, the Department of Justice stated that in documents filed in this case and statements made in court, “Tobin admitted that in September 2019, he was a member of a white supremacist group, ‘The Base,’ and during that time, he communicated on-line with other members and directed them to destroy and vandalize properties affiliated with African Americans and Jewish Americans.”

SPLC also reported that Tobin had steeped himself in extremist material on-line, including the infamous livestreamed video from the Christchurch Mosque shooter on March 15, 2019, set to the song “Another One Bites the Dust.” SPLC received and reported on exclusive and never-before-heard recordings from The Base which revealed their tactics and terrorist plots. Through the conviction of Base members for their violent plots, our SPLC analysis is that the group suffered insurmountable setbacks and is now defunct; but its members have likely continued to act as part of the white power movement, either as members of other groups or participants in informal on-line extremist communities.

A particular shift over the past year has been that extremist groups, like the Proud Boys have been getting involved in local politics and creating alliances to promote other far-right issues (e.g., running hard-right candidates for school board, threatening volunteer school board members, and running divisive local anti-vax and anti-inclusive accurate history curricula campaigns.)

One of the strongest far-right reactionary campaigns now is being led by anti-LGBTQ activists, targeted especially at trans people through legislation and demonization—attacks that dovetail with QAnon-based conspiracy theories and show a willingness of many GOP activists to entertain the most radical ideas in their midst.

New Jersey is home to chapters of a number of the most notorious groups on the hard right, including the Proud Boys, the Patriot Front, the Oath Keepers, as well as those that are unique to New Jersey, such as the New Jersey European Heritage Association (NJEHA).

#### PROUD BOYS

The Proud Boys is an authoritarian, ultranationalist group that believes in what they call “western chauvinism”—the notion that Western culture and white men are superior to all others.<sup>6</sup> They believe society should be hierarchically ordered, and those who do not conform to their idealized heteronormative, Christian, patriarchal society—including LGBTQ people, feminists, Muslims, and others—should be intimidated into silence or punished by violence.

<sup>4</sup>Sophie Nieto-Munoz, *Reports of Antisemitism in N.J. reached record levels in 2021, group says*, N.J. Monitor (April 27, 2022, 7:02 AM), <https://newjerseymonitor.com/briefs/antisemitism-in-nj-reached-record-levels-in-2021-report-says/>.

<sup>5</sup>*In 2021, We Tracked 733 Hate Groups Across the U.S.*, S. Poverty L. Ctr., <https://www.splcenter.org/hate-map> (last visited Sept. 30, 2022).

<sup>6</sup>*Proud Boys*, S. Poverty L. Ctr., <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/group/proud-boys> (last visited Sept. 30, 2022).



Since the Proud Boys formed in 2016, their political activism has focused on mitigating the perceived threats posed by the left and supporting the agenda of former President Donald Trump and the broader hard-right movement. During the organization's early years, this meant hosting rallies across the country where they would arrive ready to attack counter protesters, resulting in events that frequently descended into violence.

In 2020, the group mobilized around the far right “Stop the Steal” campaign. To overturn the results of that year’s Presidential election, the Proud Boys participated in the January 6 insurrection and were among the first to enter the Capitol building. More than 40 members currently face charges in relation to their alleged actions that day, including at least two men from New Jersey.<sup>7</sup> Rather than leading to a decrease in Proud Boy chapters and their influence, the number of active Proud Boys chapters jumped to 72 in 2021, up from 43 in 2020.

The events of 2020 sparked a broader hard-right focus on masking and COVID-19 policies, inclusive education, LGBTQ rights and inclusion, and what they characterize as “critical race theory”—along with a renewed effort to engage in local politics. Proud Boys have aided this campaign by attending school board meetings, city council meetings, and other local events, where they attempt to intimidate those who hold views they oppose. In December 2021, for example, members of the Proud Boys attended a Woodbridge, New Jersey, city council meeting—where members were discussing inclusive school curricula—to protest what they called “sexual degeneracy” and “the rewriting of history along with racial guilt.”<sup>8</sup>

In recent months, the Proud Boys have shifted their attention toward a tightly-focused campaign of transphobia, homophobia, and misogyny. In the first 6 months of 2022 alone, Proud Boys counterprotested or harassed people on at least 28 separate occasions at LGBTQ and reproductive justice events around the country. Their actions have included carrying guns outside LGBTQ story hour events at libraries, harassing adult patrons at a brunch featuring drag queens, and repeatedly referring to drag queens and LGBTQ people as “pedophiles” and “groomers.”

The Proud Boys’ on-the-ground activism reinforces a larger campaign, being waged in State legislatures and our Nation’s courts, to deprive LGBTQ people, women, and all people who can become pregnant from fully controlling their bodily autonomy. New Jersey Proud Boys have praised other members of their organization who have forced establishments—fearing violence—to cancel LGBTQ events. “We’re so proud to call these men our brothers,” the New Jersey chapter posted to their Telegram channel following the Memphis Museum of Science and History cancellation of the Memphis Proud Drag Show & Dance Party after a group of Proud Boys began protesting outside the museum.

#### ACTIVITIES OF PATRIOT FRONT IN NEW JERSEY

Patriot Front is a white nationalist hate group that seeks to build a white ethnostate.<sup>9</sup> Thomas Rousseau founded the group after the deadly violence at the “Unite the Right” rally in Charlottesville, Virginia, in August 2017. Patriot Front focuses on in-person action. The group is responsible for the vast majority of hate group flyering in the United States, outpacing other groups in placing racist flyers by a factor of 10 to 1.<sup>10</sup>

Patriot Front also conducts banner drops and holds permit-less rallies in cities across the U.S. Patriot Front uses permit-less rallies as a tactic to avoid scrutiny by law enforcement and public officials. For example, in July 2022, approximately 100 members of Patriot Front marched through the narrow streets of downtown Boston without a permit, forcing pedestrians into traffic lanes. As the group marched, members of Patriot Front allegedly assaulted Charles Murrell, a Black activist and artist.

Patriot Front members in New Jersey are part of a chapter that extends into Pennsylvania, Delaware, and Maryland. Patriot Front members in New Jersey also work closely with group members in New York to post racist propaganda and conduct banner drops. All Patriot Front members are required to post a certain amount

<sup>7</sup> Kevin Shea, *A Year Later, most of the 2 dozen N.J. residents charged in Capitol attack await trial*, N.J.com (Jan. 7, 2022, 7:11 AM), <https://www.nj.com/news/2022/01/a-year-later-most-of-the-2-dozen-nj-residents-charged-in-capitol-attack-await-trial.html>.

<sup>8</sup> Carley Baldwin, *Proud Boys, BLM Spar at Woodbridge Council Meeting*, Patch (Dec. 17, 2021, 11:17 AM), <https://patch.com/new-jersey/woodbridge/proud-boys-blm-spar-woodbridge-council-meeting>.

<sup>9</sup> *Patriot Front*, S. Poverty L. Ctr., <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/group/patriot-front> (last visited Sept. 30, 2022).

<sup>10</sup> *Map of Hate Group Flyering in the U.S.*, S. Poverty L. Ctr., <https://www.splcenter.org/flyering-map> (last visited Sept. 30, 2022).

of propaganda each month. Members must purchase Patriot Front propaganda at a premium from Rousseau, who is based in Haslet, Texas.

Patriot Front members in New Jersey send their flyering orders through a chapter leader based in Pennsylvania, who oversees and coordinates the activities of members across State lines. New Jersey members of Patriot Front also must get approval from their chapter leader in Pennsylvania to target areas for racist flyering runs and banner drops.

According to the SPLC's map of hate group flyering in the United States, Patriot Front members have posted 34 separate, distinct pieces of racist propaganda in New Jersey between January 1, 2022, and August 30, 2022. This is a slight decrease in activity from the same time period in 2021 when Patriot Front members circulated 45 pieces of racist propaganda. In 2020, Patriot Front members posted 28 pieces of racist propaganda during the same time period.

Patriot Front members in New Jersey also must get approval from their chapter leader to destroy public murals and memorials. In June 2021, Patriot Front members destroyed a statue to George Floyd in Newark. The same night, Patriot Front members destroyed a bust of George Floyd in Brooklyn, New York. Suspects have not been identified in the vandalism, and the investigations are on-going. In 2021, Patriot Front members destroyed 32 murals that celebrate Black history, Hmong culture, LGBTQ pride, as well as memorials to Black victims of police brutality.

New Jersey members of Patriot Front show up to permit-less rallies and conduct racist flyering runs across the United States. As SPLC's Hatewatch reported earlier this year, a Patriot Front member from New Jersey died in a car crash while on a propaganda run in Utah in February 2021.<sup>11</sup> The accident occurred after the driver fell asleep at the wheel, causing the minivan he was driving to careen into a ditch and flip over. All the occupants of the vehicle were leaders in Patriot Front, most from Texas and one from New Jersey. All six passengers and the driver were taken to local hospitals. Patriot Front founder Rousseau was on board and had to undergo emergency surgery. Patriot Front member and medic Kevin Bersuch from New Jersey died.

#### ACTIVITIES OF NEW JERSEY EUROPEAN HERITAGE ASSOCIATION (NJEHA)

The NJEHA is a white nationalist group that has operated in the State since 2018. The group holds rallies, harasses people at demonstrations and civic events, and has led prolific racist, anti-Black, and antisemitic flyering campaigns.

However, NJEHA drastically decreased posting racist propaganda in the first 8 months of 2022. From January 1, 2022, to August 30, 2022, NJEHA members posted 9 pieces of racist propaganda across the United States, with 3 incidents in New Jersey. In comparison, NJEHA members placed 348 pieces of racist propaganda across the United States during the same period in 2021, which included 81 flyering incidents in New Jersey.

The drop-in flyering incidents most likely shows that the group is adjusting its tactics to focus on real-world harassment campaigns. From June to September 2022, NJEHA has held 5 rallies in which 4 to 6 members participated, including:

- *June 18.*—The group held a rally outside of Joint Base McGuire-Dix Lakehurst in New Jersey against what they labeled “Jewish supremacist control of American foreign policy . . . .”
- *July 30.*—NJEHA members verbally harassed people at a Pride event in Bordentown, New Jersey, and displayed a banner with anti-trans slurs.
- *August 6.*—The group held a rally outside a marijuana dispensary in Bordentown, New Jersey, and displayed a banner that used antisemitic messaging about the perceived Jewish control over access to legal and illegal drugs in the United States.
- *August 30.*—NJEHA members distributed racist flyers to a rally of Trump supporters in Bedminster, New Jersey.
- *September 4.*—NJEHA members held a march in South Plainfield, New Jersey.

As NJEHA members decrease the amount of racist propaganda they post, members have started to work closely with members of Patriot Front in New Jersey. NJEHA propaganda is often located next to Patriot Front propaganda. Members of NJEHA have marched in permit-less marches orchestrated by Patriot Front, including in Washington, DC, on December 4, 2021.

<sup>11</sup>Jason Wilson & Jeff Tischauser, *Patriot Front Leader Involved in Fatal Utah Car Crash*, S. Poverty L. Ctr. (Mar. 2, 2022), <https://www.splcenter.org/hatewatch/2022/03/25/patriot-front-leader-involved-fatal-utah-car-crash>.

## OATH KEEPERS

SPLC has been tracking for years the anti-Government, heavily-armed extremist Oath Keepers group and their leader, Stewart Rhodes.<sup>12</sup> SPLC has repeatedly warned that Rhodes and many of his followers are a threat to communities across the country, given their stated intentions to undermine our democratic institutions.

Last week, the Department of Justice began jury selection in the seditious conspiracy trial of Oath Keepers leader Stewart Rhodes, along with members Thomas Caldwell, Kenneth Harrelson, p—t)D65tly [sic] Meggs, and Jessica Watkins.

The group parroted false claims that the 2020 Presidential election was stolen, but it was not the first time the organization had engaged in election conspiracies mongering. Oath Keepers had previously worked to interfere with elections, like at their so-called “Operation Sabot” in 2016, when they patrolled at polling locations and at “Operation DefendJ20” in 2017 when Oath Keepers, Three Percenters, and the far-right Bikers for Trump groups descended on the Capitol to “protect” Trump supporters.

Since the inception of the group in 2009, the Oath Keepers has steeped itself in conspiracy theories and trained for a revolution against the State. Like the rest of the anti-Government militia movement, Oath Keepers use fear of gun confiscation, globalization, and other anti-Government conspiracy theories (often rooted in coded antisemitism) to organize outside legitimate channels. The group uses a military-style hierarchical structure, arms training, and emergency response events to engage members.

Since 2015 there have been multiple Oath Keeper chapters that have actively operated in New Jersey, in communities from Morriston to Northvale, Southamptown Township to Cape May, and Manville to Newton. Notably, former New Jersey State Assembly Republican candidate Ed Durfee attended the events outside the Capitol on January 6. Durfee has been a member of Oath Keepers since 2009, a regional director for the organization at times, and as a volunteer, he contributed to the organization’s national efforts. Durfee followed a similar path to the organization as founder Stewart Rhodes, first dipping his toes in the extremist politics of Libertarian Ron Paul and energized in opposition to the election of President Barack Obama.

The group has long focused their recruitment efforts on elected officials, veterans, first responders, active military, and law enforcement. Rhodes himself did a short stint in the army, attended Yale University Law School, and formerly was a politically active Ron Paul staff member. Rhodes was later disbarred in Montana and admonished by the Arizona bar for his unethical practices.

Rhodes’ inflammatory calls to action were shocking prior to January 6 and are shocking now. He did not call for a military uprising but a militia one, stating, “When is the military going to march on D.C. and clean out that den of vipers? . . . To be free, Americans must be armed, and the bulk of the military power must be in the hands of the people themselves within sovereign States.”

Rhodes and other leaders have consistently pushed the idea of a “second civil war” in the build-up to January 6. Prior to the insurrection, four Oath Keepers had been convicted of crimes ranging from stockpiling bombs to threatening public officials. The organization had engaged in a number of stand-offs with the government between 2011 and 2020, from Arizona to Montana and Virginia.

They used these events served as test cases, culminating in the attack on the Nation’s capital. In the weeks before, Oath Keepers trained at the State level, recruiting so-called security for the November 21, 2020, Stop the Steal rally in Atlanta, Georgia. They urged volunteers to bring long guns, batons, and body armor.

The threat Oath Keepers and similar organizations pose to our communities is perhaps best said by 86-year-old Jack Hines, a WWII veteran. After an Oath Keepers event in 2010, Hines said his fear was that Rhodes or some other Oath Keeper leader will declare an emergency, mobilizing its membership to mount an armed insurrection against the government. “I think that’s one of the most dangerous things I’ve ever heard of in my life,” Hines said. “That’s court-martial material, asking soldiers to take a dual oath. I don’t see it any other way.”

As of now more than 20 Oath Keeper members or associates have been arrested and charged for allegedly taking part in the raid that occurred at the U.S. Capitol on January 6. The Oath Keepers and Proud Boys being charged with seditious conspiracy for the actions on and before January 6th, are the first seditious conspiracy charges in the country since 2010, and one of only four incidents of such charges in 80 years.

<sup>12</sup>*Oath Keepers*, S. Poverty L. Ctr., <https://www.splcenter.org/fighting-hate/extremist-files/group/oath-keepers> (last visited Sept. 30, 2022).

Our democracy suffered a terrible, deadly attack on Jan. 6, 2021, when Oath Keepers joined together with other extremists to attempt to stop the peaceful transfer of power through violence and intimidation. Today, Oath Keepers is in disarray, its leadership being held accountable for the destruction it caused, and the organizational brand tarnished with the images of January 6.

It is of the utmost importance that Oath Keepers—and all those who helped plan and perpetrate the deadly January 6 attack—be held accountable. Without such accountability, our democracy will continue to be at risk, with false and nefarious attacks on our elections and voting rights. We must do everything we can to prevent that and to protect free and fair elections to ensure a truly inclusive democracy.

#### MAINSTREAMING OF WHITE SUPREMACY

For many decades, the hard-right, anti-democracy movement pushed forward, edging its way back into politics in order to mainstream their hateful ideas and emerge from the extreme fringes, where they had been relegated by the incredible efforts of civil and human rights leaders. These leaders had worked to shift culture and policy in favor of equity and inclusion. Using age-old tactics of fear and grievance, enabled and enriched by new technology, the hard-right found new momentum along with political favor with Trump and hard-right elected officials who used their microphones to platform hate. The Fox TV network and its headliner Tucker Carlson helped to spread and normalize these anti-democratic and hateful ideologies among millions of American households.

After 4 years of national alignment with the Trump administration, these groups have not gone back to the shadows. They have coalesced into a hard-right movement and have evolved their tactics. Hard-right hate and anti-Government extremists returned to their bread-and-butter focus on attacking local democratic institutions and rallying against the Government. They are targeting local public health boards, school boards, libraries, and elections administration. Groups like the John Birch Society are peddling anti-science disinformation and propaganda, forming protests and rallies, and causing disturbances in front of hospitals, public officials' homes, schools, and libraries. The John Birch Society has had a notable presence around the country, and States like New Jersey are experiencing a significant organizing presence by radical organizations claiming to be the voice for all parents.

The hard right has been involved in local education fights for many decades. The movement has a foundation in fighting against desegregation, busing, affirmative action in admissions, and the creation of ethnic/Black studies programs. A decade ago, these groups and their predecessors were fighting comprehensive sex education and evolution curriculum. Last year hard-rightists took to local government venues to take on COVID-19 public health measures. Today these groups have again taken on city hall and are using local venues to spout anti-LGBTQ messages.

As COVID-19 has waned, these organizations have not vacated their focus on local government but have instead targeted teachers and librarians by pushing book bans and challenging educators' employment for the content of their lessons. Hard-right anti-democracy candidates ran in school board races in the spring and are focusing on these races again this fall. The loud bullying tactics have had a chilling impact, resulting in teacher shortages and uncontested races in some places.

These intimidation tactics discourage and even prevent people, particularly communities of color and other targeted groups, from fully participating in local political life. In many instances—especially the assault on education—they are designed to chill any discussion of racism and other forms of discrimination.

The infiltration of the hard right in local politics has exemplified how the anti-democracy hard right rejects equality and pluralism. This movement is working to create communities in which white people hold more political, social, and economic power than others, just by virtue of the group they belong to by birth or by choice. These movements are a threat because they are authoritarian, reactionary, and very often conspiratorial. They espouse a view of society that is exclusionary, and generally target people of color, women, LGBTQ people, immigrants, and non-Christians.

Amid all the hate and bigotry and the railing against the Government, we see many are fighting back and rebuilding community every day, resisting its destruction. While Americans are fearful of what may come, SPLC polling indicates that a broad range of people in the United States from all parties are fearful of what may come, but they still support their teachers, want civil discourse, and are appalled by the January 6 attacks. There is hope and evidence of hard work being done to save communities and democracy.

## THE NATURE AND MAGNITUDE OF THE CURRENT HATE CRIME THREAT

Criminal acts motivated by bias are very personal crimes, with unique emotional and psychological impacts on the victim—and the victim's community. Hate crimes are intentionally and specifically directed toward individuals because of their personal and immutable characteristics. These crimes effectively intimidate other members of the victim's community, leaving them feeling terrorized, isolated, vulnerable, and unprotected by the law. Hate crimes have a multiplier effect and can make an entire community fearful, angry, and suspicious of other groups—and the power structure that is supposed to protect victims. The long-term repercussions of hate crimes are wide-ranging and can damage the fabric of our society and fragment communities.

It is impossible to address our Nation's hate crime problem without measuring it accurately. Under the Hate Crime Statistics Act of 1990 (HCSA),<sup>13</sup> the FBI is required to compile hate crime data from the approximately 18,000 Federal, State, university, city, and Tribal law enforcement authorities and publish an annual report.<sup>14</sup> Unfortunately, reporting is voluntary for State, local, and Tribal law enforcement agencies, and many do not provide their information.<sup>15</sup> Underreporting remains a persistent issue, obscuring the scale and scope of hate crimes in this country. For the third year in a row, participation in the FBI data collection program declined in 2020.<sup>16</sup> To the extent States and cities are reporting credible hate crime data, the HCSA report provides a measure of accountability for States and cities and a revealing look into their ability and readiness to address hate crime. A large city that does not report data to the FBI—or affirmatively reports zero hate crimes—does not inspire confidence that its leadership is ready and able to address hate violence.

Trends documented in the 2020 FBI HCSA report are sobering and alarming, but incomplete.

- The FBI reported 8,263 hate crime incidents, compared to 7,314 reported in 2019, a 13 percent increase and the highest numbers reported since 2001.
- Race-based hate crimes were most numerous, making up 5,227 of 8,263 total hate crimes reported in 2020 (63 percent)—the highest number of race-based hate crimes since 2004, and a deeply disturbing 32 percent increase over 2019. As in every year since 1991, most of the race-based crimes were directed at Black people—2,871 of the 5,227 (55 percent), a dramatic 49 percent increase over 2019.
- Crimes against individuals and property in Asian American/Pacific Islander communities increased 56 percent, from 179 reported crimes in 2019 to 279 in 2020.
- Religion-based crimes were second-most numerous, with 1,244 reported religion-based crimes—a very significant 18 percent decline from the 1,521 reported in 2019. Crimes directed against Jews and Jewish institutions were the most numerous among religion-based hate crimes—683, about 55 percent—but a significant 28 percent decline from the 953 reported in 2019. Every year since 1991, crimes against Jews or Jewish institutions have constituted between 50 percent and 80 percent of religion-based hate crimes reported to the FBI.
- 1,110 hate crimes were directed against people and institutions on the basis of sexual orientation, down 7 percent from 1,195 in 2019.
- 266 hate crimes were directed against people and property on the basis of their gender identity—a 34 percent increase after an 18 percent increase in 2019—and, by far, the highest reported since the FBI began collecting this specific data in 2013.
- The FBI report documented 22 hate crime murders, significantly down from 2019's record high of 51 hate crime murders. Still, 22 is the third-highest number of hate crime murders recorded since the FBI began collecting this data in 1991.

Though clearly incomplete due to underreporting, the annual FBI HCSA reports provide the most comprehensive national snapshot available of hate violence in

<sup>13</sup> Hate Crime Statistics Act, Pub. L. No. 101-275, 104 Stat. 140 (1990) <https://www.Congress.gov/101/statute/STATUTE-104/STATUTE-104-Pg140.pdf>.

<sup>14</sup> See *id.*

<sup>15</sup> See, for example, the ADL chart listing almost 70 cities in the United States with populations over 100,000 that either did not report any data to the FBI in 2020, or affirmatively reported zero (0) hate crimes. <https://www.adl.org/sites/default/files/pdfs/2022-05/FBI%20Hate%20Crime%20Statistics%20DNR%20and%20Zero-Reporting%20U.S.%20Cities%20-2013-2020.pdf>.

<sup>16</sup> See 2020 FBI Hate Crime Statistics, Dep't of Just., <https://www.justice.gov/ers/highlights/2020-hate-crimes-statistics> (last visited Sept. 30, 2022).

America. Even more importantly, the HCSA report has sparked many improvements in the way police departments across the country address hate violence.

To understand the annual FBI HCSA report, there are several key facts to keep in mind:

*Reporting hate crime data to the FBI is not compulsory and therefore vastly under-reported*<sup>17</sup>.—The FBI HCSA is reporting exclusively on crimes. Not arrests, not prosecutions—just the facts as they appear at the scene of the crime. Forty-six States and the District of Columbia have hate crime laws, but even States without a hate crime statute report hate crime data to the FBI. The recently-updated FBI Hate Crime Data Collection Guidelines and Training Manual contains definitions, scenarios, and best practices for reporting this data to the Bureau.<sup>18</sup>

Studies have shown that more comprehensive, complete hate crime reporting can deter hate violence. The International Association of Chiefs of Police’s March 2021 Model Hate Crime Policy promotes mandatory hate crime reporting to the FBI and hate incident reporting as a best practice.<sup>19</sup> The National Policing Institute’s Open Data Initiative demonstrated conclusively the police-community relations benefits of credible, real-time hate crime data.<sup>20</sup>

The numbers do not speak for themselves. On average, more than 21 hate crimes occurred every day in America in 2020—one every 75 minutes or so. The impact of these crimes on communities can never be reduced to mere numbers. Behind each of the 8,263 reported criminal incidents in 2020 is a victim of violence, intimidation, or vandalism, who has been targeted for no other reason than their race, religion, national origin, gender, gender identity, or sexual orientation.

Accurate hate crime data collection is a two-way street. Improved reporting requires both law enforcement agency capability and willingness to accurately collect the data and trust from the community that reporting to the police will matter and make a difference. If Black, Indigenous, and people of color (BIPOC) or targeted community members—including immigrants, people with disabilities, LGBTQ community members, and others, along with people with limited language proficiency—cannot report, or do not feel safe reporting, law enforcement cannot effectively address these crimes.

#### THE COVID-19 HATE CRIME ACT

Enactment of the Federal COVID-19 Hate Crimes Act in May 2021, which included the provisions of the Khalid Jabara and Heather Heyer National Opposition to Hate, Assault, and Threats to Equality Act (NO HATE Act) in Section 5, is an important step forward.<sup>21</sup> The new law—sparked by thousands of incidents of violence, harassment, and intimidation directed against Asian American and Pacific Islander community members—authorizes incentive grants to stimulate improved local and State hate crime training, prevention, best practices, and data collection initiatives. The law also authorizes grants available for State hate crime reporting hotlines to direct individuals to local law enforcement and support services.

Comprehensive hate crime data collection and enforcement and implementation of current laws are both essential. But the law is a blunt instrument to confront hate and extremism—it does not address the disparate root causes of hate, nor does it adequately mitigate future harms to historically targeted and marginalized communities. Simply put, we cannot legislate, regulate, tabulate, or prosecute racism, hatred, or extremism out of existence.<sup>22</sup>

<sup>17</sup>Hate crime reports came from 15,138 law enforcement agencies (out of 18,625 across the country), a 3 percent decline from 15,588 in 2019, and, disturbingly, the third straight year of decline in police participation in the HCSA program. Only 2,389 of the 15,138 agencies that participated in the FBI data collection effort—less than 16 percent—reported one or more hate crimes. Every other agency, including almost 70 cities with populations over 100,000, either affirmatively reported zero (0) hate crimes or did not report any data to the FBI at all.

<sup>18</sup>*Hate Crime Data Collection Guidelines and Training Manual*, Fed. Bureau of Investigation (2022), <https://le.fbi.gov/file-repository/hate-crime-data-collection-guidelines-and-training-manual.pdf/view>.

<sup>19</sup>*Model Policy to Investigation of Hate Crime*, Int’l Ass’n of Chiefs of Police (2021), <https://www.theiacp.org/sites/default/files/2021-03/Hate%20Crimes%20Formatted%202021-03-23.pdf>.

<sup>20</sup>*Releasing Open Data on Hate Crimes: A Best Practices Guide for Law Enforcement Agencies*, Nat’l Policing Inst. (2018), <https://www.policinginstitute.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/01/PF-Releasing-Open-Data-on-Hate-Crimes-Final.pdf>.

<sup>21</sup>*National Opposition to Hate, Assault, and Threats to Equality Act*, Pub. L. No. 117–13, 135 Stat. 26 (2021), <https://www.Congress.gov/117/plaws/publ13/PLAW-117publ13.pdf>.

<sup>22</sup>Michael Lieberman, *Hate Crimes, Explained*, S. Poverty L. Ctr. (Oct. 27, 2021), <https://www.splcenter.org/hate-crimes-explained>.

## VICTIM ASSISTANCE AND BUILDING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

Approaches to hate crimes and violent extremism should be de-securitized, with a focus on community investment, education and prevention initiatives, and social and economic support rather than solely investing in law enforcement agencies and the after effect of hate violence.<sup>23</sup> Early, age-appropriate education implemented, far upstream and prior to the exposure to radicalizing extremist content, has also proven to be an important component of challenging and mitigating extremist harm.<sup>24</sup>

When religious communities, houses of worship, Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs), and other institutions working to serve and uplift distinct communities are targeted for violence and vandalism, it is imperative that the needs of victims-survivors are addressed first. It is understandable that one instinct is to increase physical security for our houses of worship and community institutions—higher walls, more cameras, more bulletproof glass, and even armed guards.

We, therefore, appreciate the robust support in Congress for significantly increased funding for FEMA's Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NPSG), proposals which will double the currently funding level of \$180 million. But no amount of money can ensure the security of our communal institutions. Synagogues, other houses of worship, HBCUs, and other community institutions cannot become armed fortresses, isolated and segregated from the broader community.<sup>25</sup>

As Congress and the administration assess the proper budget for NPSG programs to deter and detect attacks, we urge you to complement this support with a parallel commitment to fund research and prevention initiatives to address what the administration labeled as “long-term contributors to domestic terrorism” in its trailblazing May 2021 National Strategy for Countering Domestic Terrorism.<sup>26</sup> Like other recent intelligence community reports,<sup>27</sup> assessments<sup>28</sup> and Congressional testimony,<sup>29</sup> the review concluded the two most lethal elements of today's domestic terrorism threat are: (1) Racially- or ethnically-motivated violent extremists who advocate for the superiority of the white race and (2) anti-Government or anti-authority violent extremists, such as militia violent extremists.

One of the four pillars promoted in the administration's holistic, Government-wide National Strategy approach to addressing violent extremism is a commitment to confront long-term contributors to domestic terrorism, which aligns with SPLC's approach:

“Individuals subscribing to violent ideologies such as violent white supremacy, which are grounded in racial, ethnic, and religious hatred and the dehumanizing of portions of the American community, as well as violent anti-Government ideologies, are responsible for a substantial portion of today's domestic terrorism. Tackling the long-term contributors to this challenge demands addressing the sources of that mobilization to violence—with leadership from relevant domestic-facing agencies, coordinated by the White House's Domestic Policy Council and in close partnership with civil society.

“That means tackling racism in America. It means protecting Americans from gun violence and mass murders. It means ensuring that we provide early intervention

<sup>23</sup> Harsha Panduranga, *Community Investment, Not Criminalization*, Brennan Ctr. For Just. (2021), [https://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/2021-06/2021\\_06\\_DHS\\_Targted\\_Prevention.pdf](https://www.brennancenter.org/sites/default/files/2021-06/2021_06_DHS_Targted_Prevention.pdf).

<sup>24</sup> Polarization and Extremism Research Innovation Lab & Southern Poverty Law Center, *Parents & Caregivers Guide to Online Radicalization, Assessments & Impact*, <https://www.splc.org/peril-assessments-impact>, July 2021.

<sup>25</sup> Juliette Kayyem, *A Synagogue Shouldn't Be a Fortress*, *The Atlantic* (Jan. 17, 2022), <https://www.theatlantic.com/ideas/archive/2022/01/colleyville-standoff-synagogues-risk-defenses/621280/>.

<sup>26</sup> *National Strategy for Countering Domestic Terrorism*, The White House (2021), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/National-Strategy-for-Countering-Domestic-Terrorism.pdf>.

<sup>27</sup> *Domestic Violent Extremism Poses Heightened Threat in 2021*, Off. of the Dir. of Nat'l Intel. (2021), <https://www.dni.gov/files/ODNI/documents/assessments/UnclassSummaryofDVE-Assessment17MAR21.pdf>.

<sup>28</sup> *Strategic Intelligence Assessment and Data on Domestic Terrorism*, Fed. Bureau of Investigation & Dep't of Homeland Sec. (2021), <https://s3.documentcloud.org/documents/20743448/strategic-intelligence-assessment-and-data-on-domestic-terrorism-may-2021.pdf>.

<sup>29</sup> *Threats to the Homeland: Evaluating the Landscape 20 Years After 9/11: Hearing On Worldwide Threats Before the S. Comm. on Homeland Sec. & Gov't Affs.*, 117th Cong. (2021) (Statement of Christopher A. Wray, Dir. of Fed. Bureau of Investigation), <https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Testimony-Wray-2021-09-21-REVISED.pdf>; *Threats to the Homeland: Evaluating the Landscape 20 Years After 9/11: Hearing On Worldwide Threats Before the S. Comm. on Homeland Sec. & Gov't Affs.*, 117th Cong. (2021) (Statement of Alejandro N. Mayorkas, Sec'y of U.S. Dep't of Homeland Sec.) <https://www.hsgac.senate.gov/imo/media/doc/Testimony-Mayorkas-2021-09-21.pdf>.

and appropriate care for those who pose a danger to themselves or others. It means ensuring that Americans receive the type of civics education that promotes tolerance and respect for all and investing in policies and programs that foster civic engagement and inspire a shared commitment to American democracy, all the while acknowledging when racism and bigotry have meant that the country fell short of living up to its founding principles. It means setting a tone from the highest ranks of government that every American deserves the life, liberty, and pursuit of happiness that our Declaration of Independence recognizes as unalienable rights. And it means ensuring that there is simply no governmental tolerance—and instead denunciation and rejection—of violence as an acceptable mode of seeking political or social change.”<sup>30</sup>

SPLC is working to develop and build prevention and resilience initiatives to prepare families, communities, and schools with strategies to counter radicalization, empower people of color, and build resilience. In partnership with the Polarization and Extremism Research and Innovation Lab (PERIL) at American University and its research that recognized young people’s increased vulnerability to on-line radicalization during the pandemic due to increased time on-line, we partnered to create *Building Resilience and Confronting Risk in the COVID-19 Era: A Parents and Caregivers Guide to Online Radicalization*.<sup>31</sup>

The guide is a tool that enables parents, caregivers, and other adults to understand on-line radicalization and explains how those features can lead young people to adopt extremist views that may lead to violence. The resource outlines strategies for engaging youth who may have become exposed to extremist ideas—or even begun a process of radicalization—and provides resources for additional help and support. In an impact study of the guide, we found that after just 7 minutes reading it, parents and caregivers feel better equipped to intervene and engage with a young person who might be susceptible to manipulative and hate-fueled rhetoric.<sup>32</sup>

Similarly, SPLC’s Learning for Justice program has developed a “Digital Literacy Framework” to help educators, parents, and youth alike recognize the intricacies of internet usage and how it can be manipulated to harm users. Learning for Justice’s framework offers seven key areas in which students need support developing digital and civic literacy skills. The framework outlines the overarching knowledge and skills necessary while also detailing more granular examples of student behaviors to help educators evaluate mastery.<sup>33</sup>

Approaching and preventing radicalization, however, must be a whole-of-community initiative. SPLC is committed to the proposition that all adults—from educators to coaches and religious leaders—should be equipped with information to identify susceptibility to hate-fueled narratives and should possess the tools to build resilience against these harmful and manipulative ideologies. We must make this information widely available and free from accessibility barriers and equip people with such resources to foster a sense of commitment to social cohesion. Such wide-spread sharing of knowledge and resources will only broaden and strengthen the network of care that will ensure a healthy and thriving community.

For a truly empowered and healthy democracy, the needs of individuals and communities who have been targeted and harmed by hate must remain at the center of any response and mitigation efforts. Basing support in the strength and experiential knowledge of the community ensures that well-being is tailored to the specific needs and asks of those harmed or targeted.

#### BUILDING FOR THE FUTURE: THE WHITE HOUSE UNITED WE STAND SUMMIT

At the United We Stand Summit hosted by the Biden administration in mid-September, the White House rolled out an impressive number of Government initiatives,<sup>34</sup> along with funding commitments and several public-private partnerships de-

<sup>30</sup> *National Strategy for Countering Domestic Terrorism*, The White House (2021), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/National-Strategy-for-Countering-Domestic-Terrorism.pdf>.

<sup>31</sup> Polarization and Extremism Research Innovation Lab & Southern Poverty Law Center, *Parents & Caregivers Guide to Online Radicalization, Assessments & Impact*, <https://www.splcenter.org/peril-assessments-impact>, July 2021.

<sup>32</sup> Polarization and Extremism Research Innovation Lab & Southern Poverty Law Center, *Parents & Caregivers Guide to Online Radicalization, Assessments & Impact*, <https://www.splcenter.org/peril-assessments-impact>, July 2021.

<sup>33</sup> *Learning for Justice*, S. Poverty L. Ctr., <https://www.splcenter.org/learning-for-justice> (last visited Sept. 30, 2022).

<sup>34</sup> United We Stand, <https://unitedwestand.gov/> (last visited Sept. 30, 2022).



signed to foster unity and build community trust and resilience in New Jersey and across the country.

SPLC had written to Domestic Policy Council Director Susan Rice in advance of the summit, urging planners to focus on survivors and their families, concentrate on forward-looking, long-term prevention initiatives—not merely enforcement of existing laws—and center community-based resources and best practices to address the harms of hate-fueled violence.<sup>35</sup>

We will be pressing the Biden administration to continue to address these issues—both in Washington and in community-based, follow-up field hearings and roundtables to highlight evidence-based best practices, public-private partnerships, restorative justice initiatives, and effective law enforcement and community responses to hate crimes and extremism that can be replicated and scaled.

#### CONCLUSION

We must acknowledge that hate crimes and the harms they cause to victims and their communities cannot be solved by law enforcement alone. We must do more to support victims, survivors, and their communities. Congress and the administration must support programs and initiatives designed to prevent hate, antisemitism, bias-motivated criminal activity, and extremism.

New Jersey is one of the most diverse States in the country; notably in a recent study it has higher racial and ethnic diversity; higher diversity of education attainment; and higher linguistic diversity than 44 other States.<sup>36</sup> Having lived in New Jersey with my multi-racial family, I can attest that New Jersey exhibits some of the most incredible benefits of living in a multi-racial democracy. However, it was also in the New Jersey *Tobin* case, where we witnessed one of the more extreme examples of how antisemitism and racism are dangerously intertwined in the white power hate movement.

Several States, particularly in the South, are currently passing laws restricting teaching about racism and other painful truths about our national history. Concealing the truth about our history does not protect our youth; it makes them susceptible to misinformation and fails to equip them with the critical thinking skills and education they need to navigate a new age where disinformation and manipulation are spreading on the internet. Much more needs to be done to teach young people the unvarnished truth about American history—both good and bad—so that we can learn lessons from the past to shape a better future.

#### POLICY RECOMMENDATIONS

##### *Expand Anti-Racism Education and Upstream Prevention Initiatives*

To bolster community well-being and ensure that all individuals are prepared to inoculate young people against radicalization, funding for prevention and education initiatives is imperative. We applaud the White House’s recent announcement of \$1 billion in new funding through the Safer Communities Act “to support safer and healthier learning environments,” as well as new funding through the Department of Commerce to improve digital literacy and for the Department of Health and Human Services to “support student well-being and resilience in the face of hate and trauma.”<sup>37</sup>

- The Department of Education and the Department of Justice should fund programs aimed at preventing extremism and promoting deradicalization—and move from punishment models to restorative justice initiatives that build community resilience. Especially in these divided and polarized times, every elementary and secondary school should promote an inclusive school climate and activities that celebrate our Nation’s diversity.
- Congress and the Department of Education should fund programs to develop and promote civics education and develop curricula addressing structural racism, as well as funding for States to implement their own related initiatives.

<sup>35</sup> Margaret Huang, *SPLC Letter to Ambassador Susan Rice*, S. Poverty L. Ctr. (2022), <https://www.splcenter.org/sites/default/files/splc-letter-united-we-stand-summit-2022.pdf>.

<sup>36</sup> Adam McCann, *2022’s Most & Least Diverse States in America*, Wallethub, <https://wallethub.com/edu/most-least-diverse-states-in-america/38262>.

<sup>37</sup> White House, *FACT SHEET: New Actions from the Biden-Harris Administration and the Public and Private Sectors to Foster Unity and Prevent Hate-Motivated Violence*, <https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2022/09/15/fact-sheet-new-actions-from-the-biden-harris-administration-and-the-public-and-private-sectors-to-foster-unity-and-prevent-hate-motivated-violence/>.

- Congress and the Biden administration should fiercely oppose efforts to falsely attack educational gag order on teaching truth and hard history, and other efforts to place restrictions on inclusive education.

*Speak Out Against Hate, Political Violence, and Extremism*

Words matter, especially from our leaders. It is impossible to overstate the importance of elected officials, business leaders, and community officials using their public platforms to condemn antisemitism, hate crimes, threats to HBCUs, and vandalism and violence against houses of worship and other minority institutions.

*Enforce Hate Crime Laws*

Enforcement of existing Federal and State hate crime laws—and training for judges, prosecutors, and law enforcement officials charged with enforcement—is critical, but insufficient. The law is a blunt instrument against hate and racism. We cannot legislate, regulate, tabulate, or prosecute racism, hatred, or extremism out of existence.

*Improve Hate Crime Data Collection Efforts*

- After 30 years of incomplete data and consistent FBI HCSA underreporting, Congress and the Biden administration should support mandatory hate crime reporting. Until legislation to require reporting can be support expanded incentives—more carrots and more sticks—toward making hate crime prevention initiatives and credible hate crime reporting by all law enforcement agencies a condition precedent to receiving Federal funds. Special attention should be devoted to large underreporting law enforcement agencies that either have not participated in the HCSA program at all or have incorrectly reported zero hate crimes.
- The FBI recently designated civil rights and hate crime as one of its highest national threat priorities.<sup>38</sup> Though reporting hate crime data to the FBI is voluntary, the Department of Justice and the FBI should build the capacity of State and local law enforcement agencies to provide data to the FBI, and support efforts to expand the use of National Incident Based Reporting System (NIBRS) among local law enforcement agencies. The FBI can and should do more to encourage reporting.

*Improve Government Response to Domestic Extremism*

- Though most hate crimes are not committed by individuals affiliated with an organized hate group, the Biden administration and Congress should continue to closely track and assess the nature and magnitude of the problem of domestic extremism and should fund resilience and digital literacy initiatives as well as Government and academic research on best evidenced-based prevention programs.
- Congress should enact the Domestic Terrorism Prevention Act (S. 964/H.R. 350) to establish offices within the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Department of Justice, and the FBI to monitor, investigate, and prosecute cases of domestic terrorism—and require these offices to regularly report to Congress. The legislation would also provide resources to strengthen partnerships with State and local law enforcement and community-based groups to confront far-right extremism.
- Every State prohibits private militias, and many States have laws prohibiting political violence, restricting firearms in the State capital/government buildings and near polling places, and banning paramilitary training for civil disorder. Federal and State authorities should raise awareness about these laws—and enforce them.

*Promote On-line Safety and Hold Tech and Social Media Companies Accountable*

Social media companies should not enable the funding or amplifying of white supremacist ideas or provide a safe haven for extremists. Consistent with the First Amendment and privacy considerations, Federal and State government officials should implement rules and regulations to ensure that tech companies comply with civil rights laws prohibiting discrimination. Law enforcement should scrutinize platforms and ensure they are enforcing prohibitions on activities that endanger the public or conspire against the rights of others.

Thank you for holding this hearing. We deeply appreciate the committee's attention to antisemitism and extremist threats to New Jersey and our Nation. We stand ready to work with you as you continue to focus on this critical issue.

<sup>38</sup> U.S. Department of Justice: *Combatting Hate Crime*, Dep't of Just., <https://www.justice.gov/opa/press-release/file/1428666/download>.

Mr. TORRES. The Chair recognizes Rabbi Reed to summarize her statement for 5 minutes.

**STATEMENT OF RABBI ESTHER REED, INTERIM EXECUTIVE  
DIRECTOR, RUTGERS HILLEL**

Rabbi REED. My name is Rabbi Esther Reed, and I am the executive director of Rutgers Hillel, a Hillel serving one of the largest Jewish undergraduate populations on any campus in North America. Hillel International is the world's largest Jewish student organization, with a presence on more than 850 campuses.

On behalf of the global Hillel movement and Rutgers Hillel here in New Jersey, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony and for your commitment to countering antisemitism.

Hillel was founded 99 years ago, and for the first time in recent memory, Jewish students feel unsafe and unwelcome at their own schools.

I am here today to share with you what is happening on campus and to make two requests. We urge continued security funding for religious institutions and enhanced enforcement of the Department of Education's—OK.

Mr. TORRES. We want to make sure you are heard.

Rabbi REED. I appreciate that. I want to be heard.

Mr. TORRES. We will restart the clock.

Rabbi REED. Restart the clock, start all over again?

Mr. TORRES. Up to you, but you will have your time restored.

Rabbi REED. OK. I am here today to share with you what is happening on campus and to make two requests. We urge continued security funding for religious institutions and enhanced enforcement of the Department of Education's responsibility to protect the rights of Jewish students.

Antisemitism on campus has risen to unprecedented levels. Hillel tracked 561 incidents of hate against Jewish students last year, a 15 percent increase from the previous year and more than triple the number of incidents 4 years ago. This hatred comes in the form of graffiti, physical assault, social media rhetoric, and the social exclusion of Jewish students.

At Rutgers New Brunswick alone, AEPi, a Jewish fraternity, was egged 2 years in a row while students were participating in the solemn 24-hour memorial practice of reading aloud names of Holocaust victims on Holocaust Memorial Day, as well as on the major Jewish holiday, Rosh Hashanah, 1 week ago today.

The tires of Jewish students, their cars were slashed. White supremacist groups posted antisemitic recruitment fliers on campus. My student, Ben, who wears a kippah or yarmulke on his head, was afraid to go to his internship in Jersey City the day a Kosher grocery store was shot up there.

Eggs thrown at a fraternity don't make international headlines. Slashed tires don't make the evening news. A college student staying home from his internship isn't usually on the agenda of a Congressional meeting.

But nobody wants Rutgers to be the next headline. Nobody wants Rutgers to be the home to the next tragedy, like the ones the Jewish community faced at the Tree of Life synagogue in Pittsburgh,

the shooting in Poway, or the hostage taking in the Colleyville synagogue in Texas. We need your help to stay out of the headlines.

First, I want to thank you, as Members of Congress, for appropriating funds for the security needs of religious institutions. This year, Hillels received grants totaling \$1.9 million for physical security enhancements.

These Nonprofit Security Grant Program funds make a concrete difference in the security and safety of my students. Rutgers Hillel installed bollards in front of our building to protect us from a car and prevent a car from ramming through and harming Jewish students. We installed new fencing at the back of our facility to prevent intruders. We don't want our institutions and facilities to be ringed with security devices, but, sadly, they have to be.

The Jewish community needs more funding to keep us safe, and we urge the committee to be vigilant in ensuring that the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights will investigate, address, and enforce violations of the Federal civil rights of Jewish students.

There are dozens of pending cases involving allegations of antisemitism under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, including an action filed against Rutgers University in 2011. Many of the other pending complaints are also over a year old and have yet to be investigated. Every week that goes by is another example of Jewish student right to equal opportunity not being protected.

On behalf of my students, I appreciate the committee's vigilance in ensuring the Department of Education carries out its responsibilities under Title VI.

I will leave you now with the words of my student Adina, a student at Rutgers Newark. Jewish students there tell me that they keep their heads down and they hide their Jewish identities so that they can avoid trouble. Adina says this: Every day I am stressed about going to school. Every single morning I need to think about things when getting ready for school. Am I dressed too Jewish? Do I look too Jewish? Does my shirt have any Hebrew on it? I can't wear something if it says Israel on it. It has become a habit that as I leave the parking deck I check to make sure that my necklace is inside my shirt.

Jewish students like Adina should not have to tuck in their Jewish star when they are heading to class. No student should be afraid to express their Jewish identity in New Jersey in 2022.

Again, I thank you for the opportunity for keeping my students safe and for your leadership on this vital issue. Thank you.

[The prepared statement of Rabbi Reed follows:]

PREPARED STATEMENT OF RABBI ESTHER REED

OCTOBER 3, 2022

My name is Rabbi Esther Reed, and I am the executive director of Rutgers Hillel, a Hillel serving one of the largest Jewish undergraduate populations on any campus in North America. Hillel International is the world's largest Jewish student organization, with a presence on more than 850 campuses.

On behalf of the global Hillel movement and of Rutgers Hillel here in New Jersey, thank you for the opportunity to submit testimony to the committee and for your commitment to countering antisemitism.

Hillel was founded 99 years ago and now, for the first time in recent memory, Jewish students feel unsafe and unwelcome at their own schools.

I am here today to share with you what is happening on campus and to make two requests: We urge continued security funding for religious institutions; and en-

hanced enforcement of the Department of Education's responsibility to protect the rights of Jewish students.

Antisemitism on campus has risen to unprecedented levels. Hillel tracked 561 incidents of hate against Jewish students last year, a 15 percent increase from the previous year, and more than triple the number of incidents 4 years ago.

This hatred comes in the form of graffiti, physical assault, social media rhetoric, and the social exclusion of Jewish students.

At Rutgers-New Brunswick alone:

- AEPI, a Jewish fraternity, was egged 2 years in a row while students were participating in the solemn, 24-hour memorial practice of reading aloud names of Holocaust victims on Holocaust Memorial Day, as well as on the major Jewish holiday, Rosh Hashana, 1 week ago today.
- The tires of Jewish students' cars were slashed.
- White supremacist groups posted antisemitic recruitment flyers.
- My student, Ben, who wears a kippah, or yarmulke, on his head, was afraid to go to his internship in Jersey City the day a Kosher grocery store there was shot up.

Eggs thrown at a fraternity house don't make international headlines. Slashed tires don't make the evening news. A college student staying home from his internship isn't usually on the agenda of a Congressional hearing.

But nobody wants Rutgers to be the next headline. Nobody wants Rutgers to be home to the next tragedy like the ones our community faced at the Tree of Life massacre in Pittsburgh, the shooting in Poway, or the hostage taking in the Colleyville synagogue in Texas.

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These Nonprofit Security Grant Program funds make a concrete difference in the safety of my students. Rutgers Hillel installed bollards in front of our building to prevent a car from ramming through and harming Jewish students. We installed new fencing at the back of our facility to prevent intruders entering.

We don't want our institutions and facilities to be ringed with security devices, but sadly, they have to be.

A Rabbi friend recently went to a clergy meeting in his town in NJ. His Christian colleagues were having a lively debate about whether to lock the front doors of their churches. They were weighing their desire for privacy against the value of being a welcoming sanctuary. And my Rabbi friend thought about the active-shooter drills his synagogue's pre-school needs to run to keep 2-, 3-, and 4-year-old children safe from harm. He was devastated that the current landscape of antisemitism precludes him from leaving his door unlocked anymore.

And to be clear, locking the door is not enough.

The Jewish community needs more funding to keep us safe, and we urge the committee to be vigilant in assuring that the Department of Education's Office of Civil Rights will address, investigate, and enforce violations of the Federal civil rights of Jewish students.

There are dozens of pending cases involving allegations of antisemitism under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, including an action filed against Rutgers University in 2011. Many of the other pending complaints are also over a year old and have yet to be investigated.

Every week that goes by is another example of Jewish student rights to an equal educational opportunity not being protected.

On behalf of my students, I appreciate the committee's vigilance in ensuring the Department of Education carries out its responsibilities under Title VI.

I will leave you with the words of Adina, a student at Rutgers-Newark. Jewish students there tell me that they keep their heads down and hide their Jewish identities so they can avoid trouble.

Adina says:

"Every day I am stressed about going to school. When it was announced that we were returning to in-person classes, I was not excited because it is so unpleasant being a Jew on the Rutgers-Newark campus. Every single morning, I need to think about things when getting ready for school.

- "Am I dressed too Jewish?"
- "Do I look too Jewish?"
- "Does my shirt have Hebrew on it?"
- "I can't wear something if it says the word, Israel."

- “It has become a habit that as I leave the parking deck, I check to make sure my necklace is in my shirt.”

Jewish students like Adina should not have to tuck in their Jewish star when they are headed to class.

No student should be afraid to express their Jewish identity in New Jersey in 2022.

Again, I thank you for this opportunity, for keeping my students safe, and for your leadership on this vital issue.

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*Testimony of Rabbi Esther Reed, given in memory of her stepfather, Michael Kesler, a Holocaust survivor brought to the United States by the organization that later became Hillel International, who passed away in 2021 at the age of 97.*

Mr. TORRES. Ms. Huffnagle.

**STATEMENT OF HOLLY HUFFNAGLE, U.S. DIRECTOR FOR COMBATING ANTISEMITISM, AMERICAN JEWISH COMMITTEE**

Ms. HUFFNAGLE. Thank you, Vice Chairman Torres, for the introduction. Chairman Thompson and distinguished Members of the committee, thank you for convening today’s hearing and for offering American Jewish Committee this opportunity. I am Holly Huffnagle, AJC’s U.S. director for combating antisemitism, and it is an honor to be with you today and with our esteemed witnesses.

Given the limited time, I won’t summarize what is happening or why antisemitism is rising, although I have provided those explanations in my submitted written remarks. Instead, I want to focus on prevention. How can we go beyond simply responding to antisemitism but actively work to prevent it.

I want to list ten measures which I pulled from AJC’s recently published Call to Action against antisemitism in America: And the first, to prevent antisemitism, understand the problem. Thirty-four percent of Americans today are not familiar with antisemitism. They have either never heard the word before or they have heard it but don’t know what it means.

So to ensure that antisemitism is properly understood, Congress should reintroduce and pass the bipartisan Antisemitism Awareness Act.

Second, to prevent antisemitism, engage the Jewish community. Thirty-six percent of Americans don’t know someone who is Jewish, but Americans who do are significantly more likely to know what antisemitism is, know that it is a problem, and know that it is increasing. Congress can lead here in helping constituents understand antisemitism as well as who Jews are, and they can convene stakeholders, including law enforcement, to discuss antisemitism and hate crimes.

The third, to prevent antisemitism, invest in Jewish community security. Fifty-six percent of Jewish institutions have increased security between 2018 and 2020. Congress plays a crucial role in safeguarding these institutions through legislation and funding.

Fourth, to prevent antisemitism, be prepared for the patterns. We know antisemitism often rises during election cycles, around Jewish holidays, and during flare-ups in the Middle East. Government leaders and law enforcement should be on alert during these times and provide support to the Jewish community as needed.

Fifth, to prevent antisemitism, gather better data, including hate crime reporting. States, including New Jersey, should consider cre-

ating a task force to study and prevent antisemitism. We also need improved hate crime reporting from law enforcement. Nearly 90 percent of cities do not report hate crime data to the FBI, and the 2021 Jabara-Heyer NO HATE Act establishes grants to incentivize reporting, but it needs to be funded. Only once funded will local governments, including those in New Jersey, be able to leverage Department of Justice resources.

Sixth, to prevent antisemitism, issue unequivocal condemnations. Grouping antisemitism with a long list of other hatreds and bigotry when it was only the Jewish community attacked, it is unhelpful and even hurtful. We just saw this exact response from Rutgers University when it was just a Jewish fraternity house that was vandalized. Congress can lead here and call out antisemitism unambiguously.

Seven, depoliticize the fight against antisemitism. Instead, participate in bipartisan caucuses and coalitions to combat antisemitism and hate.

Eight, urge the White House to create a national action plan to combat antisemitism. Only through collaborative efforts of all facets of government will we be able to achieve unity of effort toward addressing the problem.

No. 9, fund educational initiatives. The importance of education in prevention can't be overstated. While programs to combat racism and intolerance provide an important framework, they may downplay or ignore the problem of antisemitism. Because of its complexity, antisemitism should be addressed as a unique form of hatred.

Tenth and finally, to prevent antisemitism, stop its proliferation on-line. The digitization of anti-Jewish prejudice has been the leading contributor to its rise in the last decade. Lawmakers from both sides of the aisle can hold social media companies liable for content on their platform if their algorithmic amplification leads to off-line violence or harm.

To conclude, it is much more challenging to discuss prevention than to discuss—and to discuss what is actually working, but we know better data, shining a flashlight on the issue has worked. We know trainings on antisemitism within DEI spaces has worked, as we have seen policies changed. We know pushing on social media companies has worked. We still have a long way to go, but we are much farther now than we were 5 to 7 years ago.

We know that coalition building has worked, especially since behavioral science shows that people change when information comes from someone they know and someone they trust, and that might not always be the Jewish community, which is why having non-Jewish allies is so paramount. We know that fostering Jewish pride, Jewish life, being proudly Jewish, it works.

When these interventions are used together, we notice a difference and we see glimpses of success, which is why having the House Homeland Security Committee take on and champion these preventative measures right now is so critical in New Jersey and across the United States.

Thank you for your commitment to this issue, and I look forward to your questions.

[The prepared statement of Ms. Huffnagle follows:]

## PREPARED STATEMENT OF HOLLY HUFFNAGLE

OCTOBER 3, 2022

Thank you, Congressman Torres for the introduction. Distinguished Members of Congress, thank you for convening today's hearing and for offering American Jewish Committee this opportunity to present brief remarks. I am Holly Huffnagle, AJC's U.S. director for combating antisemitism. It is an honor to be with you today, and with our esteemed witnesses.

We are gathered here in New Jersey and virtually because we are facing a growing threat of antisemitism and extremism. In the past year alone, in New Jersey, the Katz JCC reported a bomb threat in Cherry Hill, NJ in March; in April, a Nazi swastika was graffitied outside of a cemetery in Haddonfield, eggs were thrown and Jewish students were harassed following a pro-Palestine rally at Rutgers University, and an Orthodox Jewish man was stabbed by a man making antisemitic remarks; in July, a Nazi swastika and "Kill Jews" graffiti were discovered on a Lake-wood walking path; the far-right, white supremacist Goyim Defense League distributed antisemitic flyers in Lindenwold and Brigantine in August; and, just a few days ago, in September, eggs were again thrown at the Jewish fraternity at Rutgers University during Jewish New Year. There has been a 25 percent increase in antisemitic incidents in the State in 2021, and it is on track to increase again in 2022. New Jersey is not alone. Unfortunately, we are witnessing rising antisemitism across the United States.

Before the committee today, we must look at a few key questions. The first is what is happening right now? The second is why? Why is this happening—in this moment? And third and finally, what does rising antisemitism mean for the future of the United States and what can be done? While American Jewish communities continue to thrive in the United States—and thank goodness they do not face levels of persecution here compared to other parts of the world—we must turn the tide back on rising antisemitism to protect not only American Jews, but our democracy as well.

First, what is happening? Antisemitism is rising in the United States. It is becoming more violent, and more open. According to the FBI, crimes targeting Jews comprised 55 percent—the majority—of all religious bias crimes, although Jews are only 2 percent of the population of the United States.<sup>1</sup> In the past year, 41 percent of Americans have seen antisemitism—and many more than once. And American Jews are experiencing antisemitism. In fact, one in four (24 percent) American Jews have personally been targeted by antisemitism this past year. American Jews are also changing their behavior out of fear of antisemitism. They are avoiding certain places, avoiding wearing things that might identify them as Jewish (such as a kippa or a Star of David necklace), or avoiding posting content on-line that might reveal their Jewish identity. That last piece jumps significantly for young American Jews (ages 18–29).<sup>2</sup> Today, antisemitism is more visible, easier to access, easier to share and spread than ever before.

Second, why? Why is antisemitism rising? And why now in 2022? No reason justifies antisemitism, but there are several factors happening concurrently contributing to the current rise.

1. Rising economic uncertainty: There is a long history of Jews being blamed or scapegoated for society's economic woes.
2. Waning confidence in Government and in democracy: We have seen antisemitism on full display in anti-Government movements.
3. An increased emphasis on race and national identity:
  - On the far-right, the number of white nationalist and supremacist groups in the United States has increased by 55 percent between 2015 and 2019.
  - On the opposite end of the spectrum, on the far-left, Jews are labeled as "white" and even "white supremacists." The irony is real white supremacists benefit from these anti-Jewish attacks.
4. A deepening polarization over the Israeli-Palestinian conflict:
  - This cause is especially coming to a head on U.S. college campuses and universities, where Jewish students have been excluded from participating in certain groups or clubs because they are seen as supportive of Israel.
5. The fading legacy of the Holocaust, combined with Holocaust denial and distortion:

<sup>1</sup>This data comes from the FBI Hate Crime Data Explorer (2021).

<sup>2</sup>These statistics are from American Jewish Committee's most recent *State of Antisemitism in America* report (2021).



- When awareness of the Holocaust diminishes, so does the understanding of where unchecked antisemitism can lead. A recent study shared that 48 percent of American Millennials and Gen Zers cannot name Auschwitz, or the name of any other concentration camp or ghetto. 63 percent of Americans aged 18 to 39 do not know that 6 million Jews were murdered.
- Most disturbingly, 11 percent believe Jews caused the Holocaust. That number jumps to 13 percent if we just look at how respondents from New Jersey answered. 13 percent of 18- to 39-year-olds in New Jersey believe Jews caused the Holocaust.
- Relatedly, the distortion of the Holocaust with inappropriate comparisons, such as to Covid-19 protocols or to abortion, is increasing. Holocaust distortion is an attack on Jewish memory and identity, and it normalizes downplaying the Holocaust. It is unacceptable.

6. The internet and social media: The digitization of antisemitism has been the greatest contributor to the rise of antisemitism, antisemitism mis/disinformation, and conspiratorial thinking in the last decade.

7. There are more sources of antisemitism in America today: Antisemitism does not just come from far-right white supremacists, as it did in Pittsburgh. We see it on the far left, we see it from religious extremists like we did at a kosher market in Jersey City in December 2019, and we even see it within segments of other minority communities. And it is this complexity of antisemitism, coming from all these different sides, that creates the biggest challenge to combat it.

8. And finally, ignorance: Increasing levels of ignorance about what antisemitism is and what it looks like, is how antisemitism is growing and spreading unnoticed. Not only do one-third of Americans not know what antisemitism is, the majority who do, see antisemitism solely as a hatred. We often hear the phrase, “I am not antisemitic. I don’t hate Jews. Jews have too much power and they control the media. But I don’t hate them.” This lack of knowledge that antisemitism is more than a hatred but also a certain perception about Jews—a conspiracy about Jews—was the main issue in mislabeling the hostage situation in Colleyville, Texas this past January.

Conspiracy is the belief that there is someone or something in power who is exploiting humanity or controlling world events. To the antisemite, Jews are this “someone” in power; for example, the statements “Jews control the banks” and “Jews control the government” were phrases spoken by the perpetrator in Colleyville. That is why he chose a synagogue—the one closest to the location where Aafia Siddiqui<sup>3</sup> was held—for the site of this attack. But the FBI originally erroneously said the incident was “not related to the Jewish community.” The record was corrected, but numerous news outlets continued to run the original line.

With this example, but also many others, the conspiratorial nature of antisemitism makes it different from other forms of racism which vilify their victims as inferior. (Of course, Jews have also been historically vilified as inferior.) But antisemitism is unique because it also perceives its target—Jews—as being “superior”—as having too much privilege, too much power, and attacks them for that. There is a large blind spot in today’s society when it comes to antisemitism because here we have a minority who is assailed because of their perceived power. Therefore, we cannot just see antisemitism as a hatred or a religious bias—it is not just about criticizing Judaism or Jews as a religion; Jews are primarily attacked today for who they are (no longer for what they believe), for their perceived power and influence, or for the Jewish State, Israel.

This brings us to the crux of the issue. What does rising antisemitism mean for the future of America? And what can be done?

Because antisemitism at its core is envy, resentment, distrust, and conspiracy, when we see rising antisemitism, we also witness the weakening of democratic, pluralistic society.<sup>4</sup> And because we know when societies cannot stop rising antisemitism—by ignoring it, minimizing it, or even redefining it—they often fail to protect their democracy as well, it is urgent to generate a society-wide effort—led by our government leaders—to address the problem head-on.

Earlier this month, AJC published a Call to Action Against Antisemitism in America to mobilize and unite American leadership in all sectors of society to under-

<sup>3</sup>A Pakistani national who is serving an 86-year sentence at the Federal Medical Center, Carswell in Fort Worth, Texas, United States for attempted murder and other felonies.

<sup>4</sup>Because antisemitism is an ancient hatred—traced back two thousand years, it’s familiar—there is unfortunately a large repertoire of accusations and tropes to choose from to blame someone—often Jews (or coded words for Jews)—for these crises. But antisemitism is not only an attack on Jews; it is really an assault on the core values of America.

stand, respond to, and prevent antisemitism, and I want to pull today from the preventative measures—How can we go beyond simply responding to antisemitism, but actively work to prevent it? I am going to list ten data-backed measures; I will be skipping the details of each measure, for the interest of time, but have provided a full account in writing for the record.

1. *To prevent antisemitism, understand the problem.*—34 percent of Americans are not familiar with the term antisemitism—they have either never heard the word before, or have heard it but do not know what it means.<sup>5</sup> For governments, law enforcement agencies, and others who have a practical need to identify and respond to antisemitism, the best tool continues to be the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Working Definition of Antisemitism, with almost 1,000 entities—governments, multilateral bodies, universities, sports teams, etc. using it, which defines antisemitism as “a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews.”<sup>6</sup> That “certain perception” piece—that antisemitism is not just a hatred of Jews, but a conspiracy about Jewish power and control—was vital to comprehend the actions of the hostage-taker in Colleyville, Texas last January. And it was initially missed. To ensure antisemitism is properly understood, Congress should reintroduce and pass the bipartisan Antisemitism Awareness Act.

2. *To prevent antisemitism, engage the Jewish community*<sup>7</sup>.—36 percent of Americans do not know a Jew. Perhaps unsurprisingly, Americans who say they know someone Jewish are significantly more likely to know what antisemitism is and view antisemitism as a problem, with 66 percent saying so, compared to 49 percent of those who do not know anyone Jewish. But even those who know Jews, many Americans do not know who Jews are—they think of Jews solely as a religious group. But Jews are a diverse, multiethnic, multiracial people.<sup>8</sup> Given this diversity, characterizing Jews as only “white” and “privileged” ignores history and present reality. Congress can lead here in helping constituents understand antisemitism and who Jews are, as well as facilitate a standing Jewish community or interfaith advisory board to help ensure regular communication. Convening stakeholders, including law enforcement, and creating a diverse network of community leaders to discuss antisemitism and hate crimes, is critical. Finally, engage Jewish communities by empowering them. Jewish community members, particularly leaders in Jewish institutions and synagogues, should participate in security training to be prepared in case of an emergency. Community members can also be trained as volunteer security guards.

3. *To prevent antisemitism, invest in Jewish community security.*—56 percent of Jewish institutions have increased security between 2018 and 2020. Address physical attacks and domestic terrorism. Physical attacks against Jews are often perpetrated by white supremacist extremist groups and home-grown violent extremists. A Federal plan to address the propagation of extremist ideologies in public institutions, such as prisons and law enforcement units, is recommended as well as the reestablishment of interagency initiatives between Federal and State agencies to address domestic terrorism. Through funding and legislation, Congress plays a crucial role in safeguarding Jewish institutions. The 2018 Protecting Religiously Affiliated Institutions Act protects synagogues, community centers, and nonprofits against threats of force. The Nonprofit Security Grant Program provides \$360 million in security funding for high-risk nonprofits. Law enforcement should encourage Jewish institutions to apply for these grants. Additionally, the Domestic Terrorism Prevention Act, already passed in the House, should be passed by the Senate to authorize dedicated domestic terrorism offices within the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Justice, and the FBI.

4. *To prevent antisemitism, be prepared for the patterns.*—A heightened awareness of the situations and times when antisemitism increases enable proactive planning to combat it. Antisemitism often rises during election cycles, around Jewish holidays, and during flare-ups in the Middle East. Government and community leaders, allies, and law enforcement should be on alert during these times and provide support to the Jewish community, as needed.

<sup>5</sup> Members of Congress can share AJC’s Translate Hate glossary on their websites as a resource for constituents. AJC’s *Recognizing When Anti-Israel Actions Become Antisemitic* is designed to help elected officials navigate and address Israel-related antisemitism.

<sup>6</sup> To date, 28 States along with the District of Columbia have endorsed the IHRA Working Definition of Antisemitism. New Jersey has yet to take this important step.

<sup>7</sup> When an antisemitic incident occurs, Members of Congress should check in with their local Jewish communities. A standing Jewish community or interfaith advisory board can help ensure regular communication.

<sup>8</sup> The Jewish people include Ashkenazi Jews descended from Eastern Europe, Black Jews from Ethiopia, Brown Jews from India, and Mizrahi and Sephardi Jews from North Africa, the Middle East, Turkey, and Iran.

5. *To prevent antisemitism, gather better data, including hate crime reporting.*—

To date, there still isn't a comprehensive study that looks at antisemitic attitudes, sources of antisemitism and root causes, and American Jews' experiences with antisemitism all in one place. In AJC's upcoming survey, we are asking about antisemitism in the workplace;<sup>9</sup> if Jewish students feel excluded because they are Jewish or their assumed or actual connection to Israel; Jews' experiences with antisemitism on-line and on social media; if what happened in Colleyville made American Jews feel less safe as a Jewish person in the United States; if their institutions have increased security measures; and if they feel safe in those Jewish institutions. But civil society cannot fund this data alone. At the State level, New Jersey should consider creating a task force to study and prevent antisemitism. We also need improved hate crime reporting from law enforcement. In 2020, Jews were the target of 55 percent of all religiously motivated hate crimes, despite accounting for just 2 percent of the U.S. population.<sup>10</sup> As astonishing as that number is, many hate crimes are not reported to law enforcement by victims and nearly 90 percent of cities do not report hate crime data to the FBI. An insufficient grasp of the problem impedes efforts to find solutions.<sup>11</sup> The Jabara-Heyer NO HATE Act, signed into law in May 2021, establishes grants to incentivize reporting; robust funding of at least \$15 million is necessary. Once funded, local governments can leverage Department of Justice resources for hate crimes bias training and establishing hate crimes hotlines.

6. *To prevent antisemitism, issue unequivocal condemnations.*—We continue to see blatant incidents of antisemitism, yet responses are often "antisemitism and all forms of racism, intolerance, and xenophobia are unacceptable wherever and whenever they occur." But grouping antisemitism with a long list of other hatreds and bigotry, when it was only the Jewish community attacked, is unhelpful and even hurtful. We just saw this exact response over Rosh Hashana from Rutgers University when a Jewish fraternity house was vandalized. In addition, challenging rising antisemitism alone does not compete with combating racism—an allegation we have heard. Fighting hatred, bigotry, conspiracies about the "other," go hand in hand.<sup>12</sup> Antisemitism is also present within segments of communities who experience racism and, even in these delicate situations, it must be challenged. Congress can lead here and call out antisemitism unambiguously.

7. *To prevent antisemitism, depoliticize the fight against it.*—While bipartisanship has been critical to U.S. success in countering hatred of Jews in the United States and abroad, the fight against antisemitism has become increasingly politicized. When considered only through a partisan lens, antisemitism is not being countered, but instrumentalized. Instead, we urge Government leaders to participate in bipartisan caucuses and coalitions to counter antisemitism and hate.<sup>13</sup> Congressional caucuses model the power of coalitions to condemn hate, support vulnerable communities, and raise awareness.<sup>14</sup>

8. *To prevent antisemitism, urge the White House to create a National action plan to combat antisemitism.*—At the very least, the White House can appoint an official to improve interagency coordination to deploy each agency's resources most effectively and ensure a whole-of-Government response to antisemitism, which is cur-

<sup>9</sup>This will include asking if Jewish employees have avoided expressing views on Israel out of fear of reprisal or animosity.

<sup>10</sup>In 2021, 4 in 10 U.S. adults witnessed antisemitism, including negative remarks or on-line content about Jewish people. It is crucial to report these occurrences to authority figures, law enforcement or, if on-line, to the social media platform. Everyone should be encouraged to report anti-Jewish incidents.

<sup>11</sup>Law enforcement should work with the Jewish community when antisemitic crimes occur, increase security to Jewish institutions, and accurately record and report antisemitic hate crimes.

<sup>12</sup>For example, the language of "Jews will not replace us" chanted by white nationalist marchers at the Unite the Right Rally in Charlottesville, in August 2017, was the same "great replacement" conspiracy theory that led to the murders of African American shoppers in Buffalo, NY in May 2022. In response to what happened in Buffalo, Black activist Eric Ward, said it best: "It is important for us to understand that African Americans were killed because they were Black, but the motivating story that drove the killer was an idea that he was at war with the Jewish community."

<sup>13</sup>This is especially vital now, given the divisions in our country. A recent large Pew survey, for instance, revealed that "growing numbers of Americans see people in the opposite political party as close-minded, dishonest, unintelligent and even immoral." In addition, there has been a massive breakdown of public (and private) trust; not only are we not speaking as much to those who are or who think differently than us, studies show we are less trusting—of others and our institutions. Congress must rebuild this trust with the public and with each other.

<sup>14</sup>With more than 150 Representatives, and more than half the Senate, the House and Senate Bipartisan Taskforces are a useful example of reflecting political will to address the problem, which should lead to increased legislative measures.

rently lacking. Federal efforts should also involve Congress and include a funding mechanism to meet security, educational, and training needs. Only through the collaborative efforts of all facets of the government, will we be able to achieve unity of effort toward addressing antisemitism. Additionally, comprehensive State or city-wide strategies to respond to and prevent antisemitism should be considered.

9. *To prevent antisemitism, fund educational initiatives.*—The importance of education in prevention cannot be overstated. Education and trainings—on Jews, the Holocaust, antisemitism, and more importantly, Jewish life—provide an opportunity not only to show solidarity but to gain knowledge and tools to identify and respond to antisemitism and Jewish community needs. Programs to combat racism and intolerance provide an important framework, but they may downplay or ignore the problem of antisemitism. Because of its complexity, antisemitism should be addressed as a unique form of hatred. The Never Again Education Act, signed into law in 2020, promotes U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum educational programming around the country. As only 39 States mandate Holocaust education, Congress should continue to fund and incentivize education on Jewish history, the Holocaust, and the contributions of Jews to America. Congressional staff should also be trained to identify and respond to antisemitism, including Holocaust denial and distortion. Finally, as misinformation spreads on-line and off, media literacy is increasingly important. Several recent antisemitic attacks originated on social media, where posts and videos demonizing Israel were viewed and shared hundreds of thousands of times. Congress should allocate resources for media literacy programs educating about the urgent need to check sources and question bias, especially on-line and on social media.

10. *Finally, to prevent antisemitism, stop its proliferation on-line.*—The digitization of antisemitism has been one of—if not the—leading contributors to the rise of anti-Jewish prejudice in the last decade. Fifteen percent of young American Jews (18–35) were personally targeted by antisemitism on-line in the past year (many more have seen it) and 31 percent have avoided posting content on-line that would identify them as a Jew out of fear of antisemitism. Social media companies have the responsibility to remove antisemitic content, and lawmakers from both sides of the aisle and some platforms should work to reform Section 230 of the 1996 Communications Decency Act to hold social media companies liable for content on their platforms. Bills like the Protecting Americans from Dangerous Algorithms Act would hold social media companies accountable if their algorithmic amplification of content leads to off-line violence. Other bills, such as the Platform Accountability and Transparency Act, the Platform Accountability and Consumer Transparency Act, and the 2019 Filter Bubble Transparency Act address algorithms and the role of content moderators. Bipartisan, common-sense Federal reforms like these should be fully examined. For clarity and consistency, we must ensure one solution, not 50 individual State solutions, sufficiently addresses the problem.

To conclude, it is much more challenging to discuss prevention, and to discuss what is actually working. We know better data—shining a flashlight on the issue, has worked; we know trainings on antisemitism within DEI spaces have worked as we see policies changed and corrected; we know pushing on the social media companies has worked—we still have a long way to go, but we are much farther than we were 5 to 7 years ago; we know that coalition building has worked, especially since behavioral science has demonstrated people change when information comes from someone they trust, someone like them—which might not be the Jewish community so non-Jewish allies are paramount here; and we know being proudly Jewish—fostering Jewish pride and Jewish life—works. When these interventions are used properly, used together, and used continuously, we notice a difference and we see glimpses of success—even if partial—which is why having the House Homeland Security Committee take on and champion these preventative measures is so critical—in New Jersey, and across the United States.

I want to thank you for your time and your commitment. Despite the threats of antisemitism, Jews across the country and around the world are proudly displaying their Jewish identities. The Jewish community has incredible allies, from local houses of worship and community leaders to elected officials at all levels, such as the Members of Congress here today. And those leaders are speaking out, in defense of their Jewish friends and for the sake of our democratic values. We are very grateful to the House Committee on Homeland Security for bringing attention to this pressing and pervasive issue, and for the participation of committee Members both virtually and in-person in New Jersey.

Thank you.

Mr. TORRES. I thank the witnesses for their testimony. I will remind each Member that he or she will have 5 minutes to question the witnesses. I will now recognize myself for questions.

I will start with ADL. Outside the State of Israel, the United States is home to the largest Jewish population in the world. The United States has historically been seen as a sanctuary for Jews fleeing oppression and persecution elsewhere. Has America lost its reputation as a safe space for Jews?

Mr. RICHMAN. I wouldn't say that America has lost its reputation as a safe space for Jews. This is a country that has rule of law and democracy and is a place where Jews have found a home. But it is in trouble. There are troubling signs and, of course, not just for the Jewish community. The Jewish community does not live in a vacuum. Hate is on the rise against many marginalized communities, including the Jewish community.

This is not a matter of whether or not the United States has lost its way. It is a question of recalibration. So our plans, our COMBAT Plan for combating antisemitism, our PROTECT Plan for fighting extremism, and our REPAIR Plan for mitigating on-line hate are ways to approach that.

Mr. TORRES. I worry about the radicalizing trajectory of American politics. Richard Hofstadter famously wrote about the paranoid style in American politics. As American politics becomes more paranoid, there is reason to think that it will become more antisemitic.

So I am curious to know what does January 6th tell us about the relationship between extremism in general and antisemitism in particular? Among the insurrectionists who invaded the U.S. Capitol were Oath Keepers and white nationalists and Holocaust deniers. So what does it tell us about the relationship between the two?

Mr. RICHMAN. There is obviously a close relationship between extremism and antisemitism. January 6th shows us certainly a degradation of democracy. It also shows us the increasing polarization in our country. Polarization has been a huge driver of antisemitism.

With regard to your question about extremism, we have seen an enormous rise in not just extremism but in extremist rhetoric becoming more mainstream, extremists becoming more emboldened, and that has led to antisemitism.

Perhaps here in New Jersey, we can cite some figures related to that. White supremacist propaganda is a big and growing problem. ADL began tracking white supremacist propaganda. We are talking about flyering and stickering and banner drops in communities.

We began tracking this in 2017. In 2017, there were 12 incidents of white supremacist propaganda in New Jersey. Last year, there were 179 such incidents of white supremacist propaganda. That is an enormous rise. It not only speaks to the rise of extremism, but it speaks to how emboldened extremists have become.

Mr. TORRES. I want to touch on what has been a subject of controversy, which is the relationship between anti-Zionism and antisemitism. There are some people who deny that there is such a relationship, but there have been growing attempts to institutionalize BDS on college campuses.

On September 28, the Jewish Journal reported that nine student groups at the University of California Berkeley School of Law amended their bylaws to ban pro-Israel or Zionist speakers. Sur-

veys indicate that the overwhelming majority of the Jewish community identifies as pro-Israel.

So if a student association adopts a policy that has the real-world effect of excluding most of the Jewish community, is it fair to see that as an example of how anti-Zionism in policy could morph into antisemitism in practice? I will direct that to the rabbi.

Rabbi REED. Can you hear me?

Mr. TORRES. Yes.

Rabbi REED. OK, just making sure.

There is no question, as Mr. Richman said earlier, that it is possible to criticize Israel without being antisemitic, but what we see time and time again is that criticism of Israel can be antisemitic.

So when you make a blanket statement that someone who is a Zionist is not permitted to be part of a group, which we see on college campuses across the country, that is antisemitism.

Mr. Torres, as you just said, the majority of the Jewish community identifies as Zionist, even though we are also proud Americans. We believe that Israel has a right to exist as a Jewish state within safe and secure borders. We can argue about what those borders are, we can argue about the details, but we believe that there is the right for Israel to exist as a Jewish state. Therefore, by saying that Zionists are excluded, you are excluding the majority of Jews in the United States when you make those policies.

Mr. TORRES. A question for ADL on the same topic: In May and June 2021, I think we saw the amplification of anti-Zionism on social media taken to a new extreme.

So what impact, if any, did the anti-Zionist words and ideas circulating on social media have on antisemitic incidents?

Mr. RICHMAN. In May and June 2021, following the Israel-Hamas conflict, ADL saw more than a 100 percent increase in antisemitic incidents year over year, so obviously had a very tangible real-world impact, including right here in New Jersey, where we saw a 35 percent increase in anti-Jewish/antisemitic—or anti-Israel/antisemitic incidents in this State.

Mr. TORRES. So what happens on social media does not stay on social media.

Mr. RICHMAN. That is correct.

Mr. TORRES. I see my time is expired, so I will now recognize Mr. Green for 5 minutes.

Mr. GREEN. I thank Chairperson Thompson for having the wisdom, the foresight, and being absolutely judicious in providing us this forum. Mr. Chairman and colleagues, the great poet Emily Dickinson reminds us that a word is dead when it is said, some say. I say that it just begins to live that day.

Words have power. Words cause actions. Words must be appropriate. When they are not and they are antisemitic, we have to condemn those who would utter such words.

I have a special relationship with the Jewish community, because I know my history. I know who Arthur and Joel Spingarn are. I know their relationship with the NAACP. I was president of the Houston branch for about a decade. I know why the NAACP has a medal styled the Spingarn Medal.

So I have a special relationship. I believe people of color have a special relationship because of the way we have had to combat these invidious forms of discrimination through the decades.

So today I just want to make one point. Hopefully, I will make it perspicuously clear, and that point has to do with a statement that has been recently made. A former President of the United States of America has recently called or indicated that the Majority leader in the Senate had a death wish when he supported legislation sponsored by Democrats. That is incitive. That can cause harm. The Majority leader shouldn't have a former President say such a thing.

No one can be above our criticism. We cannot allow people, simply because they have had a title or they hold a title, to escape the truth associated with the harm words can cause.

This former President went on to say that his wife, he referred to her as Coco Chow. She was born in Taiwan. That is a racist statement. That is a racist statement from a former President of the United States, the same President who said there are some very fine people among the bigots/racists in Charlottesville, the same President who said that there are S-hole countries in Africa.

If we allow any one of us to become exempt from the criticism that we will direct to many of us, most of us, then we do our country a disservice.

I am 75 years old. I know what racism looks like. I know what antisemitism looks like. As a child, I had to drink from colored water fountains. I had to sit in the back of the bus, balcony of the movie. I understand what we are up against, friends, and I am pledging my support for any legislation that we produce to fight antisemitism.

Finally this: Dr. King reminds us that at some point—or there comes a time was more appropriately the way he said it, when silence becomes betrayal. We all have a duty to speak up, regardless as to who the perpetrator is, and especially if it emanates from the highest office in the land.

So my question is simply this: Have we said enough about the incitive comments that have emanated from the former President? I would beg anyone who would desire to answer to do so. Fear not, dear brothers and sisters, fear not.

Mr. RICHMAN. ADL, as a 501(c)(3) organization, is not permitted to comment on individuals in that way, but I would say that using your bully pulpit, leaders using their bully pulpit is a critical tool in combating antisemitism and combating hate and combating extremism, and I certainly urge the Members to do that.

ADL uses its voice very vigorously. Most certainly if you look at our commentary on what the former President said yesterday that you made, the reference you made with regard to Ms. Chao, ADL spoke out very vigorously about that.

Mr. GREEN. Rabbi.

Rabbi REED. I also work for a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, but I would say that we need to call out hatred wherever we see it, whether that is on campus or off campus, with our elected officials or anyone else in a position of leadership, people in the entertainment industry. There are people in lots of different areas who

get a lot of attention, and when they say something hateful it is our responsibility to speak out.

Mr. GREEN. My time has expired. Thank you, Mr. Chairman, for indulging me.

Mr. TORRES. The Chair now recognizes for 5 minutes the gentleman from Rhode Island, Mr. Langevin.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman. Can you hear me OK?

Mr. TORRES. We can.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Very good. I want to begin by thanking our witnesses for their testimony today. I want to thank the committee for holding this very important hearing. We all know and clearly see the rise of antisemitism. Clearly, the best disinfectant really to combat antisemitism is sunlight and accountability, calling it out and speaking out against it wherever and whenever we see it. So this hearing bringing it more to light is very important.

Mr. Richman, if I could start with you, in your testimony you laid out policy frameworks and recommendations for a whole-of-Government approach to fight antisemitism, prevent/counter domestic violent extremism, and push hate and extremism back to the fringes of the digital world.

Looking across the range of recommendations present in ADL's COMBAT, PROTECT, and REPAIR plans, are there measures that, in your view, would be of greatest benefit or are particularly urgent and should, therefore, be priorities for Congress to act on?

Mr. RICHMAN. Thank you for the question. I would reiterate that points that were made because those, I think, are particularly critical. Prioritizing and promoting efforts to counter violent extremism, as well as oversight and transparency for those efforts; establishing an interagency task force to combat antisemitism; adapting the IHRA working definition of antisemitism as a guideline—and I stress that, as a guideline—for understanding antisemitism, and identifying its modern-day manifestations; legislated and the complicity of social media companies; creating an independent clearinghouse to identify on-line extremist content; continue to fund and grow programs to protect marginalized communities like the Nonprofit Security Grant Program; and ensuring that the measures announced at the White House United We Stand Summit are implemented in full.

I would add a couple of other points to that that I think are relevant since you are asking the question, and certainly using one's bully pulpit is a critical tool. As was mentioned before, also supporting the CP3 office, including authorizing its work to ensure the Governments' prevention efforts. I know that Congressman Malinowski has been active on that. Supporting education efforts, including on-line literacy. ADL has been at the forefront of anti-bias, anti-hate, anti-bullying education across the country. More than 4 million students are touched every year by those programs. Of course, with regard to social media, holding them accountable for the proliferation of content. Here I point to AB 587, that is the Assembly Bill in California that was just passed to hold social media companies accountable. That is, of course, at the State level. But that type of legislation I think should be looked at and possibly implemented Nation-wide. We have our COMBAT plan, our PROTECT plan, and our REPAIR plan, copies of that available for all



of the members to look at in detail. There is much more to it. I have only outlined some of the recommendations.

Mr. LANGEVIN. Very good. Very helpful suggestions. Thank you for that.

If I could turn now to Professor Stern. Antisemitism, with respect to the rise of antisemitism on college campuses, clearly, antisemitism has become more and more common, unfortunately, on college campuses. Sir, can you help the committee fully understand what has caused the surge of antisemitism in academic settings, and how you endorse we should respond?

Mr. STERN. Well, thank you for that question. To put things into context, there are about 4,000 college campuses in the United States. The ADL statistics show that there were 155 campus antisemitic incidents of which 24 were related to Zionism in Israel. In my recent book, I noted there were 149 campuses with anti-Israel activity.

So in the context, it is a very small number. It is disturbing as individual incidents are, as we heard from Rabbi Reed. If we look at the data also, there are twice as many pro-Israel activities on campus each year than anti-Israel.

With that said, there is a challenge. Some campuses, antisemitisms, we have heard, comes into play, holding Jewish students collectively responsible for Israel, using antisemitic tropes, cutting and pasting Israel as a Jew.

Where it is difficult is this: I am a Zionist, and I find anti-Zionism disheartening. But I think it is wrong to say that all anti-Zionism is antisemitism. It is, in my view, harmful to impose definitions of antisemitism on campus like the IHRA definition, which was used for different purposes, and we can't ignore that it has been used to trope pro-Palestinian speech. Which is, I think, why the Association of Jewish Studies president testified against the Antisemitism Awareness Act.

So with that context, let me do six quick suggestions of what schools should do. First, tackling the antisemitism should require understanding of the institution's principles. They should always support ideas of academic freedom, not have to explain them away.

Second, let's not forget that this battle is happening in an environment where students will be encouraged to seek out safe spaces, microaggressions, and trigger warnings. There is a difference between being harassed and intimidated and shut down, which should never happen having to engage, you know, with difficult ideas. I think that is an important thing to focus on too.

Third, there needs to be an increase in opportunities for emotional empathy to tell students what they would feel like if they were in a Jewish student's position or Palestinian student's position and courses that do that forth. We need more full semester courses on antisemitism—

Mr. TORRES. The gentleman's time has expired.

Mr. STERN. OK. Thank you.

Mr. TORRES. The Chair will now recognize Congressman Gottheimer for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

In 2021, the Southern Poverty Law Center documented 1,221 hate and anti-Government extremist groups across the United

States, including antisemitic and neo-Nazi groups in New Jersey. During the January 6th Committee hearings this summer, Jason Van Tatenhove, a former spokesman for the Oath Keepers, testified that his breaking point with the group was learning that the group were Holocaust deniers. Rioters wearing antisemitic imagery were present on the day of the January 6th attack.

I will start—actually, Mr. Richman, can you talk a little further about the beliefs, ideology of the members of groups like the Oath Keepers, and how they align with Mr. Van Tatenhove’s testimony, and these groups pose a threat to the Jewish community? If I could start with you.

Mr. RICHMAN. Certainly, groups like the Oath Keepers and the Proud Boys—and, now, these are not white supremacist groups. These are far-right groups, nationalist groups, militarist groups. We could add to that white supremacist groups like the American Identity Movement, the White Lives Matter movement, New Jersey European Heritage Association, the Goyim Defense League. All of those pose a threat to the Jewish community. All have espoused antisemitic rhetoric, some of them more than others, like the Goyim Defense League, which focuses its venom specifically on the Jewish community.

But all of those groups are focused on extremism, use extremist methods, are lashing out at many groups, not just the Jewish community, with vigorous forms of hate.

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. In your report that you put out in 2021, Oath Keeper membership data revealed that politicians and elected officials, including here in New Jersey, had signed up for an Oath Keepers membership.

Can you tell us a little bit more about the findings in this report and why you think public officials are aligning with the Oath Keepers, what are their ties to antisemitism?

Director Doran, I will ask you to add to that. How have groups like Proud Boys and Three Percenters and Oath Keepers presented a threat to local law enforcement?

So if you can start first, Mr. Richman.

Mr. RICHMAN. So in about a year ago, a journalist collective had uncovered 38,000 names of people who had signed up to be members of the Oath Keepers. ADL analyzed that list painstakingly over the course of the year. We analyzed it for—to find people in position of leadership or influence, like those in the military, like those in police forces, teachers, elected officials, with ties to the Oath Keepers. We discovered that quite a number of people were connected to those different positions of leadership, including 10 police chiefs, including those who were in office, those who are running for office around the country, which, of course, is very, very troubling because of the extremist rhetoric that the Oath Keepers—

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. What do you make of that tie? Why do you think they are joining groups like the Oath Keepers?

Mr. RICHMAN. Perhaps they believe in the stance of the Oath Keepers, which is anti-Government. They are a group that believes in militarism. They target specifically those in the military and in law enforcement. That has been the pattern of the Oath Keepers.

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Ms. Doran, do you want to comment a little more in that, director, about groups like Proud Boys and Three Percenters, Oath Keepers, the kind of threats they are presenting that you see in the State for law enforcement?

Ms. DORAN. Thanks for the question, Congressman. First, let me just state right up front that OHSP does not classify groups or organizations as extremists. We recognize the First Amendment protective rights and activities. We also do not monitor violent or potentially violent incidents and assesses strategic and tactical trends among multiple different domestic ideologies.

With that said, you know, we are aware of what is going on in the news, but we basically are looking at analytical purposes, but we don't look at groups specifically.

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Doctor, you have tracked extremists before?

Ms. DORAN. We have tracked ideologies related to that and look at public information to see what is going on there and then use that as part of our analysis.

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Are you concerned about these growing threats in our State?

Ms. DORAN. Absolutely.

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. OK. Thank you.

Last question. If I can turn to the rabbi. We talked about Rutgers before and the significant spike in New Jersey of antisemitic comments and vandalism and harassment. Can I ask you a quick question? Do you believe it is appropriate for a State university such as Rutgers to invite antisemitic groups such as Democracy for the Arab World Now, DAWN, which has ties to al-Qaeda and Hamas networks to campus and then apologize for those groups?

Rabbi REED. I guess I would need clarification when you say Rutgers University invites. Every registered student organization has freedom at Rutgers University to bring speakers that they are interested in having speak. So if a registered student organization brings a speaker, then that is the right of that registered student organization. They all can bring a speaker that other groups disagree with.

If it is a department, that might be more complicated, although there is academic freedom as well. So it is a very complicated issue. I certainly feel that it is incumbent on university leadership to speak out whenever there is hatred on campus, whether that is in the form of an invited guest or member of the university community. The administration needs to speak out when incidents happen, as they did not speak out when AEPi was egged last year.

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. They didn't make any comments, the university.

Rabbi REED. The university spokesperson made a statement. There has not been any statement from the administration themselves.

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Have you reached out to the administration?

Rabbi REED. Yes.

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Thank you.

I guess I am over. I yield back my time. Thank you.

Mr. TORRES. The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey, Congressman Malinowski.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Thank you. Thanks, Mr. Chairman. Is this on? It is hard to tell. Oh, yes. OK. Good.

I wanted to focus some of my questions on the role of social media. But I think that the larger point I would make to start this off is that none of what we are discussing today is new. Antisemitism is not new, extremism is not new, conspiracy theories are not new. QAnon, for example, is just a modern version of the ancient antisemitic blood libel in very modern on-line form.

What is new is the speed with which these hateful ideas spread and, I think, the growing weakness of traditional institutions encountering them. I do think one of the central reasons for this is that we all get our information—all of us get our information about the outside world today filtered through social media platforms, whatever the original source of that information is. If antisemitism and hatred is a virus, Facebook is the wind. It is designed to be the wind. It is literally consciously designed to amplify information and content that triggers hateful, fearful, insecure emotions among its users because those emotions are what drive engagement, time spent on platform and, ultimately, advertising revenue.

Mr. Richman, you have referred to some of this in your testimony. I wonder if maybe you could elaborate on ADL's views on that problem and the solution. We will take it from there.

Mr. RICHMAN. So certainly you are correct that the social media platforms are designed to amplify these messages through their algorithms. ADL's REPAIR plan tries to address this with a multifaceted approach to focusing on hate on-line. I think I would recommend a few points here. From the perspective of the members, instituting public-facing community guidelines that address hateful content and harassing behavior is critically important. Regularly evaluating and publicly reporting on how social media platforms fuel discrimination, bias, and hate, and then making product or policy improvements based upon those evaluations are important.

I mentioned AB 587. That is a California Assembly Bill that was just signed by Governor Newsom, which requires social media companies to report to the legislature how they are addressing hate misinformation on-line. Very important. ADL worked closely with legislators in the State of California on that issue. Work with communities targeted by harassment to design product features and policies that will reduce the influence and impact of hate in ways most helpful to those directly targeted.

ADL has its Center for Technology and Society that is focusing on this issue and is making these recommendations. The Center for Technology and Society and ADL as a whole looks forward to being your partner in helping to implement some of these recommendations.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Understood. I think ADL has also recommended that Congress move forward a bill that I co-sponsored, the Protecting Americans from Dangerous Algorithms Act, which would waive some of the protections of section 230 with respect to social media algorithms if they are responsible for real-world violence, attacks like the attack on January 6th.

Ms. Huffnagle, maybe I could turn to you, because I know that your organization has also been championing legislation like this

and maybe I ought to give you the chance to make a few remarks about it.

Ms. HUFFNAGLE. Thank you. We also supported the bill to—against—Protecting Americans from Dangerous Algorithms Act. That is very important, actually, in this time because it is no longer a free public space for these ideas, that the best ideas will rise forth. We know these algorithms are actually promoting the worst ideas, the antisemitic ideas, and that is why we are seeing these off-line reverberations.

I think one of the most important things that we are realizing in our work at American Jewish Committee—and we do work with Twitter, we work with TikTok, we work with Meta, we work with YouTube—is there is a lack of realization of the complexity of antisemitism. Only certain elements of antisemitism are defined on the platforms and that speech comes off. It is often the most violent. But the danger is the conspiratorial antisemitism or when the word “Zionist” is used as a proxy for Jews. That has a free pass. We can just look at Ayatollah Khamenei’s Twitter account, and to see antisemitism just with the word “Zionism” or “Zionist” in its place, and it has reached beyond, you know, any reach that we will be able to have.

So this is what we are seeing, and if we don’t tamp down on the antisemitism and how it is defined and how employees within the companies understand antisemitism, we are not going to be successful in removing it from the platforms.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Well, I would just say in conclusion that the tech companies have created literally the perfect machine for spreading hatred. If I post—if I am on the left or the right and I post something antisemitic on Facebook or YouTube or Twitter, the algorithm automatically calculates, knowing almost everything about everyone in the world, who in the world is most susceptible to that message and connects me to that person, connects my message to that person. Never before in human history have we had such a machine.

If we don’t do something about that, there is nothing that can be done with section 230, because you cannot hold them liable. You cannot sue them. Federal judges have correctly thrown out lawsuits brought by victims of terrorism against Facebook because section 230 prohibits them from hearing the lawsuit. Then have begged us in their opinions to address this problem in legislation. I hope that this Congress, and if not this Congress, the next one, will take this up.

Thank you so much. I yield back.

Mr. TORRES. Thank you.

We will proceed to a second round of questioning. I will recognize myself for 5 minutes.

I have a question for Ms. Corke regarding hate crimes reporting. I know at one point not every State and local government reported hate crimes to the Federal Government, and the majority of those that did reported no hate crimes, which strikes me as implausible.

So has there been an improvement in the state of hate crime reporting to the Federal Government? Ms. Corke.

Ms. CORKE. Thank you for the question. No, I would say after 30 years of incomplete data and underreporting, this continues to be

a serious problem. One thing SPLC has been recommending is that we would like to see Congress and the administration support mandatory hate crime reporting. Until there is legislation to require reporting, which can, you know, include incentives, more carrots and sticks, it needs to be a condition that is preceded to receiving Federal funds.

As you know, it has been a consistent problem year over year. It stretches plausibility that cities as big as, you know, New York, for example, can be reporting few to no hate crimes. As we know, good research and data is what makes for good policy. So we would strongly support increased attention from Congress to improving hate crime reporting.

Mr. TORRES. Great. I have a question for the rabbi. An organization entitled StopAntisemitism came out with an assessment of 25 universities and colleges. The climate of antisemitism in each of those colleges, only to receive the perfect score, Tulane and Brandeis. Rutgers received a C-minus. Does that comport with your experience?

Rabbi REED. I will say that in my 21 years being at Rutgers University, unfortunately, there has been a significant number of antisemitic incidents. In the last 2 years alone, I have a list here of 40 separate incidents in the last 2 years. That is a lot for Jewish students on campus to have to deal with. That does not include the unreported incidents, like when someone is walking by a visibly Jewish student and says under their breath, F-ing Jew. The student doesn't report that to the authorities. That is not listed in the ADL statistics. It just is part of the life of a Jewish student.

A Jewish freshman was harassed by their non-Jewish roommate when they put Hanukkah decorations up on the door of their joint dorm room. When the student reported it to Residence Life, Residence Life considered it to be a roommate dispute and had the Jewish student move to a different room, in a different dorm where they had to make new friends. The student came to see me in Hillel. He had never been to Hillel before. This is an 18-year-old boy who came to me crying because of how he had been mistreated by his antisemitic roommate.

So, yes, I think that there are issues that our students face on campus all the time. In terms of how it affects our students, many of them, especially if they come from not such a strong Jewish education, not such a strong Jewish background, they just want to hide their identity and make it all go away. They would want to—

Mr. TORRES. So in some sense, Jewish students have to be in the closet?

Rabbi REED. They—yes. There are Jewish students who are closeted. They don't want to be targeted. They are exhausted from constantly having to defend themselves or defend the actions of a country mile and miles away, you know, defend the actions of the State of Israel that they have no responsibility for.

Mr. TORRES. I have a question for Mr. Richman. In an article that went viral in Tablet, they had a provocative title, "It's Open Season on Jews in New York." The author, Armin Rosen, brought to light a shocking statistic: 118 adults have been arrested for antisemitic hate crimes in New York City since 2018, yet only one has been convicted and imprisoned. Only one.

I know in your role you speak frequently to leaders in the Jewish community, to victims of antisemitic hate crimes. Have victims of antisemitic hate crimes lost confidence in the ability of the criminal justice system to secure justice on their behalf? If so, what is that crisis of confidence? What impact does that have on the reporting of hate crimes?

Mr. RICHMAN. The report that you mentioned, that report came out this past July. ADL has reason to believe that there are factual inaccuracies there. We have spoken with law enforcement. We work very closely with law enforcement. We work very closely with the DA's office who have indicated many inaccuracies in that report. I do not believe that the people have lost faith in the issue of hate crimes and the ability of hate crimes laws to protect people.

I would also say that just because a person is not ultimately convicted of a hate crime—and that is, of course, not an issue for ADL, we are not law enforcement, we are not prosecutors; a lot of nuance that goes into that. Just because a person is not ultimately prosecuted for a hate crime does not mean that the law does not take their case seriously and does not mean that that person is not being held to account for their crime. Hate crimes will simply elevate the level from a class C to a class B felony, for example.

Mr. TORRES. I just want to—before I move on, is the ADL fundamentally satisfied with efforts to prevent, police, and prosecute antisemitic hate crimes?

Mr. RICHMAN. There is always more that can be done. But we do believe that law enforcement and the district attorneys are working vigorously to prosecute hate crimes.

Mr. TORRES. My time has expired, so I will now recognize Mr. Payne, if you are available, for 5 minutes.

I will now recognize Mr. Green for 5 minutes.

Mr. GREEN. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

We have indicated today, in fact, that it is necessary for us to stand up for others, speak out, have courage. Mr. McConnell and I don't agree on very much, but I am going to stand up for him. My failure to stand up for him would be a failure to stand up for myself. I am going to stand up for his wife, former Transportation Secretary Chao.

So to this extent, I have a question for Ms. Corke with the Southern Poverty Law Center. The comments that I styled incitive, how can those comments adversely impact a response to Mr. McConnell or his wife?

Ms. CORKE. I am sorry. Can you restate the question—standing up for Mr. McConnell and his wife, how does that—

Mr. GREEN. Mr. McConnell and his wife, you probably—I assume you are aware that the former President has said that Mr. McConnell had a death wish for supporting certain legislation, and called his wife Coco Chow, which is a racist comment. The death wish comment is incitive, and I am asking your opinion as to how this can adversely impact them or others?

Ms. CORKE. That is reprehensible. To be—for somebody like the former President Trump to be using his platform to be trying to intimidate a Member of Congress and his wife, who has been a long-time public servant, using racial stereotypes and threatening violence over social media. The danger and the impact of that is in-

credibly alarming. It is a legacy from the Trump administration and why we are seeing the normalization of this kind of rhetoric. There is a greater acceptance of the use of politically violent rhetoric like this from President Trump on down to other political leaders, as well as what is normalized on FOX News.

SPLC has tracked that there is a much higher degree of political—acceptance of political violence amongst the American public now. The mainstreaming of these racist violent ideas is an increasing problem in our country. Therefore, I condemn Trump's use of this language and to be threatening a Member of Congress. It is just beyond the pale.

Mr. GREEN. Thank you.

Permit me to ask this, friends, to anyone who would care to respond. When we fail to denounce persons who hold high office, is that something that is more of a failure than to denounce a person who is on the street and happens to say something? Does it take on an even greater meaning when it is said by someone who holds a high office?

Rabbi, what do you think?

Rabbi REED. As a rabbi, I am in the spotlight and certainly able to be criticized. I joke, when I am driving down College Avenue in New Brunswick where the main Rutgers campus is, when students are walking across the street looking at their phones and not paying attention to the fact that I am driving, I am always afraid that, God forbid, should I actually hit them, the headline would say, Rabbi Hits College Student, as opposed to me as an individual.

I do think that people who have leadership positions are recognized because of their leadership positions, and that when someone in a leadership position or even in a former leadership position does something wrong, says something wrong, acts inappropriately, that we do call them to task, not only because what they did was reprehensible, but also because of the stature that they currently held or once held.

Mr. GREEN. My time has expired. Thank you again, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. TORRES. The Chair now recognizes the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Gottheimer, for 5 minutes.

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Since 9/11, Americans have been aware of the threat to the homeland presented by terrorist organizations overseas in the way that we hadn't. Foreign terrorism remains an on-going concern to our safety. The January 6th attack on the Capitol invited a stark reminder that dangerous, violent extremist groups are present right here in own country. These groups, as we talked about, are Proud Boys, Oath Keepers, Three Percenters, Patriot Front, to name some of the well-known ones. I mentioned earlier, the trial of Oath Keepers leader Stewart Rhodes and some other members present at the Capitol on January 6th starts today.

Ms. Corke, if I can ask you a question. As of 2021, there were reportedly 3,800 hate incidents targeting the AAPI community nationally. How are these extremist groups targeting this community specifically, and what can we do to better address these threats?

Ms. CORKE. Thank you. I really appreciate that question. You are correct, there has been an alarming rise in disturbing discrimina-



tory and violent incidents against people of Asian American and Pacific Island backgrounds.

You know, we saw close to the SPLC offices, a little over a year ago, the violent tragedy targeted against Asian-American women at the spa. That is a particular intersection that we see. The intersection between misogyny and male supremacy and violence directed toward people of the AAPI community.

I deeply appreciate your question about what can we do, because SPLC has been very much focused on the greater need for prevention, that once it becomes a hate crime, it is already too late. So we very much appreciate the administration's summit and the commitment of additional resources; a billion dollars going to Department of Education, Department of Health and Human Services, Humanities, because preventing these incidents in the longer term requires a much greater commitment and investment to prevention of radicalization.

We at SPLC have been working on a series of resources for parents, educators, caregivers to understand how radicalization happens, to see the warning signs and have the tools to intervene effectively. That is the type of resource that we believe should be more widely available to parents and caregivers. As well as digital literacy, SPLC has Learning for Justice Program, which has a number of resources available on digital literacy. You know, building up community resilience so that the grants to local communities—

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. This is—just to jump in there because I think this is related as well. You know, we have seen recent situations involving neo-Nazi, white nationalism group Patriot Front targeting the LGBTQ community. I think it is related to, obviously, your broader efforts to make sure we stand up to it.

Why do you think—what are we seeing here from the goals of this group in particular as well?

Ms. CORKE. Yes. The Proud Boys have shifted their strategy, so they felt they had power during the Trump administration. The current strategy, which is a dangerous one, is that they are going after the grassroots. They are really trying to activate and instill fear at the local levels. We have seen an incredible uptick in anti-LGBTQ rhetoric and efforts that are not coming from the hard right. That is something that we are raising alarms about because there has, you know, been increasing violence. This is an explicit tactic of groups like the Proud Boys to try to animate at the grassroots level to be designating LGBTQ persons, particularly trans persons, as a danger and to be mobilizing the population against it. It is an incredibly dangerous trend.

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Thank you very much.

You know, I am shifting gears. I am introducing my bipartisan bill, the FASTER Act, today, which will allow law enforcement to notify financial institutions when a terrorism suspect in Federal custody—is in Federal custody and merely freeze their assets, as well as providing a National clearinghouse to collect information.

Mr. Richman, how do you—and anyone can add to this—how are these hate groups financing their activities? What are you seeing? What authorities and tools do you think we should be giving our

Federal agencies to help cut off the financing of domestic extremists? Any thoughts on that.

Mr. RICHMAN. Well, first of all, you know, I want to thank you for your leadership on the NDAA and using that to fight anti-semitism and extremism at the DOD. Really, I would urge that they add that to the final bill.

In terms of considerations with regard to finance, I would need to get back to you on that with additional details. But I will be reaching out to the staff on that.

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Thank you. Anybody else, before I run out of time, want to comment on that, on the financing side? I don't know if anybody on the long line is prepared on that.

If not, I yield back. Thank you.

Mr. TORRES. Of course. The Chair now recognizes for 5 minutes the gentleman from New Jersey, Mr. Malinowski.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Thank you so much.

In my last round, I asked a question that I knew the answer to, shamelessly plugging my legislation to save the world. So it is a good cause.

But I wanted to engage you, Rabbi, on a question I actually don't know the answer to. I just want to explore with you, when there is a pattern such as what you described at Rutgers—and we have seen this at other universities—particularly when an argument can be made that this goes beyond students harassing other students, but that there may be some institutional discrimination. Groups registered with the campus, as Mr. Torres outlined, adopting rules that essentially discriminate against Jewish students regardless of their views. What is the proper role of the Justice Department in using its tools under civil rights legislation to push university campuses to do more and to do better?

I assume you would not say the answer is nothing. I assume you would also probably agree that immediately cutting off Federal funding for Rutgers University, which would deny financial aid to the very students that you advocate for every single day, is also not the answer. What is the appropriate instrument?

Rabbi REED. So I do feel that Jewish students have a right, equal right to education in a safe environment, just like every other kind of student has equal right to education in a safe environment, and that it is incumbent upon our Government to enforce that right and to protect Jewish students.

I mentioned before the Department of Education's Title VI, the multiple cases that are very slow to be adjudicated. There are dozens of cases that have been brought on behalf of Jewish students against universities that are just sitting there, including the one at Rutgers from 2011. I was there when the incident took place. I witnessed it myself. I can't believe it is 2022 and nothing has happened.

So I think that it is incumbent on the Government to take responsibility and to act through the proper procedures and the proper channels when these kind of incidents take place.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Well, that is something that I think we should all be discussing a bit more, because I want to make sure we do that in the right way.

I also want to maybe double down on some of the points that Mr. Green was making about the importance of responsible political leadership in our country. We are all Democrats up here. I think that gives us a particular responsibility to condemn things like the BDS movement, which are associated with the political left. It is equally appropriate for us, as Mr. Green did, to call out the silence and complicity of people on the other side when leaders in their party engage in, well, legitimizing racist ideologies, dangerous anti-Government ideologies in our country.

Mr. Stern, maybe if I could bring you into this and ask you, if a leading party candidate for the U.S. Senate in one of the most hotly-contested races in the country runs an ad showing himself with an AR-15 rifle marked with a Q, is that helping or hurting the fight against antisemitism in the United States?

Mr. STERN. Well, thank you for that question. I am also working for a college which is a 501(c)(3). I am not going to say something about one particular candidate, but just generally, I think when leaders campaign on ideas that say conspiracy theories are fine, that we ought to vilify some others, that we ought to see the world as very simple, it is a problem because that secret group behind there is doing something to harm us. That inevitably harms our democracy, and it actually poses a threat to Jews, in particular, because as I put in my written testimony, one cannot go into the sewer of conspiratorial ideas without being exposed to and sometimes being animated by them to see Jews as that secret force behind. So I think it is important to call that out whenever it happens.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Well, let me—again, and just make this yes or no. I will just throw out some more examples. When leading politicians use rhetoric that basically sounds like the white replacement theory, accusing immigrants of being invaders to our country, calling immigration a plot to replace native-born or white Americans on the voting rules, is that something that helps or hurts the cause of fighting antisemitism?

Mr. STERN. It hurts tremendously. Our center gives an award for a Republican State committee woman named Beth Rickey, who showed personal courage to speak out against David Duke when he was in the legislature in Louisiana. She actually helped push back against him. I am seeing fewer voices of courage like hers these days pushing back against these types of ideas.

I fully agree with you, it should not just be a partisan issue. I think it is important when people that basically may agree with us on policy do things like this, we have a special obligation to speak out.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Thank you.

Just a final note. I am not sure if you guys are right that being a 501(c)(3) organization prohibits you from calling out a statement by a particular individual. Mr. Richman, your executive director, Mr. Greenblatt regularly uses his platform, I think, appropriately to respond to statements by leaders in the public space that are wrong. I don't think a university professor or a rabbi is somehow precluded from doing that by any Federal statute, so long as it is done objectively in keeping with the values and principles of your organization.

So I think we can all be a little bit more brave when we see such things. Otherwise, they are just going to continue to proliferate. Thank you. I yield back, unless somebody wants to respond to that.

Mr. RICHMAN. I will just say you are absolutely correct, and that is why I mentioned to Congressman Green that we called out the statement that was made by the former President. We certainly call out statements. We certainly focus on issues. We won't attack an individual directly just as an individual.

Mr. TORRES. I now recognize myself for a third round of questioning. We are going to do 10 rounds. I am kidding.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Until the problem is solved.

Mr. TORRES. That is how we solve problems in Congress.

I want to echo, actually, what Congressman Malinowski said that, obviously, there is nothing new about extremism. What is new is the technology that enables it to spread to an extent and at a pace we have never seen before. I will add one more observation, that there is a mutually reinforcing relationship between social media and mainstream media. We know replacement theory is heavy on hate. It combines antisemitism with nativism, as evidenced by the mass murder of 10 Black Americans in Buffalo.

The most prominent proponent of replacement theory, arguably, has been Tucker Carlson, who is a creature of mainstream media, yet his ideas do spread virally on social media. I am sure that Tucker Carlson would deny that he is antisemitic. But a case could be made that by promoting conspiracy theories, by promoting extremism, he is creating a climate that is far more conducive to antisemitism. Is that a fair assessment?

Mr. RICHMAN. We need look no further than the Tree of Life Massacre in 2018, which was fueled by the great replacement theory. If we recall, that synagogue was attacked because the week before they had held a HIAS Shabbat, a Hebrew Immigrant Aid Society Shabbat. So this particular individual who targeted the synagogue believed that that synagogue was promoting immigration, was promoting bringing in Black and Brown people to replace white people in this country. That is the great replacement theory, and, certainly, we see the results of that.

Mr. TORRES. Right. So to be clear, those who traffic in conspiracy theories, who traffic in extremism in general, are inciting antisemitism regardless of whether you intend to do so. Is that—

Mr. RICHMAN. They are inciting antisemitism. They are inciting all forms of hate against marginalized groups.

Mr. TORRES. Mr. Stern—and if I misheard you earlier, please, I apologize—but I don't know if I heard correctly that you had concerns about the IHRA defi—I know ADL supports the IHRA definition. Did you express earlier that you had objections to or concerns about the IHRA definition?

Mr. STERN. Yes. I think for some things it is perfectly fine. I think it is the clearest set on, of rules or guidance on, looking at hate crimes. Of course you would have to look at somebody who really hates Jews, they selected them to be a victim of a crime. But I am worried—and I testified in front of the Judiciary Committee in 2017—that it is being used on campus in a way that, to my view, harms academic freedom. It actually is sort-of like a black hole, taking away from the other things that universities should be

doing, like surveying increased classes and so forth. It serves as a simple thing that is sort-of a de facto hate speech code, which is how it is being seen by people that stops academic freedom, and I think it harms Jewish students.

So I think it is—you know, to me, there is a caution about that, specifically about we need things to push academic freedom—

Mr. TORRES. Can I ask, how does it undermine academic freedom?

Mr. STERN. Because what it is doing is it is, telling people that are pro-Palestinian that some of their comments are off the board. So if you look at the history of the Title VI litigations before the Antisemitism Awareness Act was proposed, they included things like classes that talked about Palestinian rights. They included things like a program that said the creation of Israel was a tragedy for Palestinians. They talked about what was being syllabized. They talked about, you know, the speakers that were coming into campus. That, to me, harms the academic enterprise.

What you want to do is things like the Narrow Bridge Project at Brown, which is just pull together students who are Zionist and anti-Zionist and give them the tools to have credible discussion and figure out why we have such differences, not to say we are going to take a certain set of political ideas—political ideas, I disagree with, by the way, by and large—and say that the university is putting its finger on the scales saying those ideas are less acceptable than other ideas.

Mr. TORRES. Correct me if I am wrong, and I might be wrong about this, but my—whenever you have a definition, there are always going to be cases in the gray area, there is always going to be misapplications of any definition. But it seems to me that the purpose of the IHRA definition is to recognize that there can be a relationship between anti-Zionism and antisemitism.

So in the case of the University of California at Berkeley School of Law, if you impose a blanket ban on all pro-Israel and Zionist speakers, that is the kind of policy that has antisemitic effects in the real world, and that is what is meant to be captured by the IHRA definition. Is that your understanding of the workings of the definition?

Mr. STERN. Let me give you a parallel. Say there is a definition of racism that was going to be used on a campus, and it included political examples, like opposition to affirmative action, opposition to taking down confederate statues, opposition to Black Lives Matter. You know, would you want that as the sort-of guideline on campus because it is political speech?

I agree that Zionist students feel hurt. I think that the university should try to, as Aaron Temerinski did, talk about the need for having an inclusive environment where everybody feels part of the fabric. But I worry about Government saying that a particular use of a tool like this is a problem.

The other thing is it is a church-state problem here. There is debate inside the Jewish community about whether to be a Zionist is required to be inside the tent. I don't know how that is going to be decided, but I sure as heck don't want Government to decide it.

Mr. TORRES. My time has expired. So the Chair will now recognize for 5 minutes the gentleman from Texas, Mr. Green.

Mr. GREEN. Thank you again, Mr. Chairman.

I am going to ask you, Ms. Corke, the impact of referring to human beings of color who happen to be of Latino or Latin ancestry, refer to them as illegals, the illegals, what is the impact of doing this, in your opinion?

Rabbi, I am coming to you next.

Ms. CORKE. Thank you for that question. The intent certainly is to instill fear and to define those people who are seeking immigration as the other, as the enemy. It is often used an explicit strategy to stir up fear. That is the intention and that is also the impact, to be defined as other and to be dehumanized in such a way, that kind of language.

You know, hate crimes and discrimination, the harm goes beyond the initial—the words or the initial incident. You know, I was going to say, you may forget the words but you will remember how it made you feel.

On the impact to the community that identifies with the nationalities of people coming to this country, it impacts that whole community beyond the individuals that are a target. It makes the broader community feel less safe, that they are considered lesser-than. So it is very dangerous and it is divisive and it corrodes up the fabric of our democracy. We are, you know, a Nation of immigrants. So that kind of fear-mongering rhetoric is dangerous.

Mr. GREEN. Thank you.

Mr. Malinowski, I want to thank you for broaching this issue because it is exceedingly important that we take a position, take a stand. It is about human beings. Their humanity is being assaulted and they are being put in harm's way by virtue of how they look. So we have to take a stand.

Rabbi, where do you stand?

Rabbi REED. Well, the Jewish tradition teaches that every human being is made in the image of God. In that sense, each one of us has intrinsic holiness. We all have a responsibility to take care of one another, recognize the holiness in the other person, and to appreciate and respect their humanity.

So calling a group of people illegals, calling them names, hate-mongering, causing fear, that is going to cause—ultimately, verbal attacks lead to physical attacks. So we need to prevent that by recognizing that we are all made in the image of God.

Mr. GREEN. Mr. Richman.

Mr. RICHMAN. We are also a Nation of laws, and these people are here legally. They have come to us seeking asylum. They have come to us seeking to be protected. That is enshrined in our law. We are obliged to adjudicate their cases and decide what is next. So calling them illegals is not only inappropriate and hate-mongering, but it is incorrect.

Mr. GREEN. Is there anyone else who would like to respond? I don't want to appear to be overly selective.

Ms. HUFFNAGLE. I would like to respond, if that is OK, Representative. Holly Huffnagle with American Jewish Committee. Just coming back to what you said earlier—

Mr. GREEN. With AJC.

Ms. HUFFNAGLE. Yes, with AJC—about speaking up and speaking out. I think where we are now, 2.5 years after the pandemic,

this really deepening, polarized society is speaking up in general might not be enough. We actually—like, again, that behavioral science is showing that people are going to listen to people they trust, to people they know. So Democratic leaders condemning antisemitism on the right, like from the Proud Boys, from the Oath Keepers, that is incredibly important, but it might not be as effective or go as far if not for Republican leaders; people they know, people they trust, people who are like them condemning it.

ASo I think something that we are encouraging, especially as studies have shown, like a Pew study came out last month that showed people don't trust people in the other party anymore. Like, I think it was like 25, 30 percent of Americans won't even trust people if they are the opposite political party.

So that is why we really need, you know, to call out our own side of the aisle first. I think, you know, getting leaders and working together in that bipartisan way will actually be the start of, not just for helping Jews, but for Latinos, for the LGBTQ community, for other communities as well.

Mr. GREEN. Mr. Chairman, because I won't be here for round 10, I just need to make a final statement.

Dear friends, especially to my conservative friends, and I have many, this is an admonition. Your failure to speak up and speak out is putting your brand at risk, because conservatism is being conflated with racism, sexism, antisemitism, and all of the invidious phobias. I would encourage you to have the courage to speak out and protect the conservative brand, which is a legitimate brand. We may differ, but I respect the conservatives.

I would hope that you would remember what Emily Dickinson called to our attention: "A word is dead when it is said, some say. I say it just begins to live that day." Let not these words live.

I thank you, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. TORRES. I just want to set the record straight, we will have 20 rounds, not just—

[Inaudible.]

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. We are better now? OK.

Dr. Doran, if I can just ask you a question to clarify something. As I was reading through your 2022 threat assessment report, and you start: At the beginning of 2020, we reported home-grown violent extremism and domestic extremists as New Jersey's greatest threats.

You go on to say: As we look toward the end of the pandemic, our analysts find that home-grown violent extremists and white racially-motivated extremists remain high-level threats.

You obviously have a chart where you list the threat levels.

You note that, on page 11, "charges have been filed against 26 individuals from New Jersey, including 22 males and 4 females," under the multiple domestic extremist section here. Then you say: Over the last 2 years, domestic extremists leveraged multiple national events to mobilize and justify violence throughout the United States.

On page 13, you talk about "militia extremists will likely plot independent attacks against government institutions, facilitate recruitment efforts, and encourage communication among followers and State chapters to exchange ideologies and spread

disinformation.” I guess this is from your website. The title at the top is Militia Extremists, where you feature the Oath Keepers on the bottom left. You say: “Militia extremists will likely target Government officials and law enforcement with threats of violence surrounding issues of perceived Government outreach.”

You also note that the top eight groups listed in New Jersey Office of Homeland Security Protection 2022 State Threat Assessments are all extremist groups.

So I just want to make sure I give you a chance to clarify that you, using your own report, and of these groups, you do see domestic violent extremists as a threat to the State of New Jersey still, and many of these groups, including Oath Keepers and others that you directly mention and have in your report are of concern.

Ms. DORAN. Thank you for the question, Mr. Congressman.

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Thank you.

Ms. DORAN. Yes, those extremists still are a high threat. When our analysts are looking at all of this information, we consider—you know, regardless of, you know, our high threats or, you know—we look at all the information from around the country.

While we have not seen as many instances of white racially-motivated extremists doing specific acts here in New Jersey, we notice that in Nation-wide. We are looking collectively at our information throughout the United States and then, looking at our own data and our own analysis, that we have to consider that a very high threat, along with the cybersecurity and also——

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. But you do mention that charges have been filed against 26 individuals from New Jersey, including 22 males and 4 females.

Ms. DORAN. Yes.

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. As of February 1, five of the individuals pleaded guilty. That is on your multiple domestic extremist page, page 11.

Ms. DORAN. Yes, with regard to January 6th.

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Right. So I mean we would consider them domestic violent extremists under—you have it under actually—you have it under domestic extremism attack time line.

Ms. DORAN. Yes.

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. So those are domestic extremists, right, under your own admission?

Ms. DORAN. I would say we are an apolitical organization and so I am speaking—yes.

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Of course, you are. No, I know. But this is your report. I just wanted you to confirm, because I just want to clarify what you said before. It sounded like we should not be concerned about these threats, domestic violent extremist threats, including the Oath Keepers, you know, on your page here. I just want to make sure——

Ms. DORAN. Oh, no, we are very concerned.

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. OK.

Ms. DORAN. As I mentioned in my earlier comments is that we look at ideologies, not necessarily always the individuals, but we are very much concerned of those individuals that were here in New Jersey who participated in the events of January 6th.



Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Although you have been for years tracking many of these groups——

Ms. DORAN. Yes, we have.

Mr. GOTTHEIMER [continuing]. In your reports.

Ms. DORAN. Yes. Like I said, we——

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Proud Boys, Three Percenters, Oath Keepers, and others. I know you for years have been tracking them.

Ms. DORAN. Yes, we have. Now, generally what we do is, like I said, is we look more at the ideologies, though we are, obviously, looking at public information when we compile our data. Some of how we determine our statistics and numbers may vary slightly differently than perhaps the ADL and other places.

But yes, that is very much considered to be one of the top threats here for New Jersey, and we stand by that.

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Thank you so much.

I yield back.

Ms. DORAN. Thank you.

Mr. GOTTHEIMER. Thank you.

Mr. TORRES. The Chair recognizes for 5 minutes Mr. Malinowski.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Thank you so much. Well, I am glad you guys had that exchange. Let me just put this bluntly. The Oath Keepers are an organization that recruits members of law enforcement and the United States military to make war against the U.S. Government and our political system.

I cannot think of anything more dangerous. That is their purpose. They talk about the U.S. Constitution. They recruit people from within our uniformed services to undermine the U.S. Constitution. They were a central part of an attempt to violently overthrow the U.S. Government on January 6, 2021. We should be crystal clear about the threat that that organization poses to our way of life in the United States. It says everybody has a right to free speech in this country. Everyone has a right to express the craziest, most dangerous ideas; but when people conspire to take those kinds of actions, we can label them for what they are.

With that, let me build upon Mr. Torres' questions earlier on about movements that promote conspiracy theories. I think there are sort-of two sides to that coin.

When you look at groups like QAnon are on the one hand promoting wild conspiracy theories. On the other hand, they are also promoting mistrust for all the institutions in our society that have been set up to help people distinguish between falsehood and objective reality, right?

I mean, we have these institutions. Nonpartisan press, for example, has played that role. People are confused about what is true, but we used to trust Walter Cronkite. When he said Richard Nixon violated the law, Republicans all across this country accepted that as the truth.

There are Government institutions, scientific institutions, the FDA, the Centers for Disease Control. People used to trust those institutions. Law enforcement institutions, the FBI. If the FBI labeled you a terrorist group, that pretty much ended the argument in the United States for most people.

We are now in a situation where there is an active movement to undermine the credibility of any of these institutions that helps us distinguish between what is true and what is false.

Would you agree with that, Mr. Richman?

Mr. RICHMAN. I think there is an active misinformation campaign for sure. You are, of course, correct that for many years traditional media played a role, a role in pushing hate to the margins of society.

Social media is not able to do that. Section 230 of the Communications Decency Act enshrined the fact that that was not going to be somehow curtailed in any way, legislated against in any way. There is freedom for that.

It is not just about proliferation of misinformation. It is also about recruitment. It is also about finding others who share your hateful ideas. There is a lot to social media that go way beyond just the information that is out there.

Again, of course, thank you very much for your support of the—or your introduction of the algorithmic amplification act, a very, very important way to control hate on-line.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Thank you so much. When people systematically try to define the media as fake news, when they systematically denigrate the objectivity of science, when they call for defunding the FBI or nonpartisan institutions in our Government the deep state and say, all these deep state people need to be replaced by our people, that also, in a way it is the flip side of promoting the conspiracy theories. You are destroying the institutions in our society that can push back against those theories. It is just as dangerous and just as conducive to antisemitism as putting out the blood libel, it seems to me.

But for anybody on the panel, would you agree with that?

Mr. STERN. I would. I mean, the idea of conspiracy theories and so forth are, as I said, much more mainstream now than they were, you know, 20, 30 years ago. That creates the dynamic where, you know, more people can see this as noble to attack others.

I think one of the things that we haven't mentioned today about this is that even though we are driving media and social media people into their buckets and we are talking about regulation, we haven't talked enough about how we can use this tool as a better way to combat hatred.

I think there are some good models out there. We have some in our new guide for community groups, but there are some that use—turn free speech on its head. When people say something that is hateful, you can organize against it and have people donate money to things that haters would actually be repulsed at. So there are other models out there to be used more effectively, and I think we need to have more discussion about that too.

Mr. MALINOWSKI. Thank you. I yield back.

Mr. TORRES. I thank you for your testimony and the Members for their questions.

Rabbi REED. Can I make one more statement? I am sorry to breach protocol, but it just came to my attention that President Jonathan Holloway of Rutgers University has released a statement during this hearing that condemns hatred and bigotry and talks about the actions the university is taking in light of the egging of

AEPI last week and the three other times that AEPI at Rutgers was targeted in the last 2 years. I wanted to make sure the public——

Mr. TORRES. [Inaudible] on the subject?

Rabbi REED. In the last week, yes.

Mr. TORRES. How long ago was the incident?

Rabbi REED. A week ago last Monday. It took a week.

Mr. TORRES. [Inaudible] I thank the witnesses for their testimony and the Members for their questions. The Members of the committee may have additional questions for the witnesses. I ask you to respond expeditiously in writing to those questions. I want to thank Mr. Gottheimer for hosting us, I want to thank the township of Teaneck for hosting us. Under committee rules the record shall be kept open for ten business days.

Without objection, the committee stands adjourned.

[Whereupon, at 12:12 p.m., the hearing was adjourned.]

