

BOROUGH OF HIGHLAND PARK  
NO. 3-20-105

RESOLUTION CONDEMNING ALL FORMS OF ANTI-SEMITISM

RESOLUTION: Council as a Whole

WHEREAS, Jewish residents of and visitors to Highland Park are experiencing a significant increase in anti-Semitic incidents, including several incidents of anti-Semitic harassment of individuals on the street, property destruction, and hate speech; and,

WHEREAS, the Highland Park Borough Council is aware of the rise of incidents of bias, hate speech and discriminatory behaviors that have impacted our Highland Park youth in our schools on social media, and that hate speech groups are targeting our school age children with messages of hate and sowing division and anti-Semitism among them; and,

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council recognize that anti-Semitism today is being promoted by individuals and groups at both ends of the political spectrum throughout the country; and,

WHEREAS, we acknowledge that following the attacks on the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh and the Chabad of Poway in San Diego by white supremacists, as well as recent attacks on a Kosher super market in Jersey City and at a Chanukah gathering in Monsey, New York, synagogues in Highland Park felt compelled to re-evaluate their own security measures to keep their congregations safe; and,

WHEREAS, we commend New Jersey's Acting Governor Sheila Oliver for issuing Executive Order No. 78 on August 7, 2019, which establishes an interagency task force to provide advice and recommendations to the Offices of the Governor and the Attorney General, and to other state agencies, on strategies and actions to reduce incidents of hate, bias, and intolerance involving students and young adults in our schools<sup>1</sup>; and,

WHEREAS, we recognize that to many Highland Park residents, including people of different faiths, Israel represents the historical, spiritual and religious homeland of the Jewish people, as expressed in Israel's Declaration of Independence and before that in the Balfour Declaration; and,

WHEREAS, we denounce current efforts to deny the Jewish people their right of self-determination and even their basic human rights, by claiming that the existence of a State of Israel, as a homeland for the Jewish people is racist, despite evidence that while imperfect, Israel provides freedom of religion, culture, and economic aspirations even during periods of intense terrorist activities; and,

WHEREAS, we note that in contrast to legitimate protest movements that have sought racial justice and social change and promoted coexistence, civil rights and political reconciliation, movements that coopt legitimate means of social action to unfairly promote economic warfare against the State of Israel in an attempt to deny its legitimacy are another form of anti-Semitism and contrary to the essential values of government under which this council performs its obligations to the public; and,

WHEREAS, the Mayor and Council recognize that there are residents of Highland Park who may criticize the political actions of the State of Israel and support economic boycotts against it, but are themselves not anti-Semitic<sup>2</sup> or anti-Zionist, and still support the right of the Jewish people to self-determination; and

---

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.nj.gov/oag/newsreleases19/EO-78.pdf>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.adl.org/resources/tools-and-strategies/what-is-anti-israel-anti-semitic-anti-zionist>

WHEREAS, the Mayor, Highland Park Council members, State officials and large members of the community recently attended a lecture by the Wiesenthal Center defining and characterizing anti-Semitism<sup>3</sup> which has also been integrated into the United Nations Special Rapporteur's Report on Freedom of Religion or Belief;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Mayor and Highland Park Council accept and adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Association ("IHRA") Working Definition and its Characterizations by the Wiesenthal Center and its further description in the UN Special Rapporteur's Report; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Human Relations Commission establish a subcommittee of members to address anti-Semitism in Highland Park.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and Council, through the Human Relations Commission, establish a series of small group social events that bring together members of the community to build connections over the issue of anti-Semitism.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Mayor and Council, with the Human Relations Commission, establish a series of educational events about the recent rise in anti-Semitic acts.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Borough of Highland Park, will embark on a communications campaign featuring different groups in Highland Park explaining how bias against any marginalized group affects all marginalized groups.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Borough of Highland Park will continue to work closely with all houses of worship to ensure that residents feel safe and secure when practicing their religions within the borough, through the establishment of an ongoing House of Worship Security Chairs Committee with representation from the HPPD for guidance.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Mayor and Council of the Borough of Highland Park condemn all forms of anti-Semitism, just as it condemned hate against any other marginalized population in its Fair and Welcoming Resolution, and the Mayor and Council pledge to work with the Human Relations Commission and other interested parties to develop significant and sustained programming designed to educate our community about all aspects of anti-Semitism and combat its continued spread.

ADOPTED: March 3, 2020

ATTEST:

  
Joan Hullings, CLERK

I, Joan Hullings, Borough Clerk of the Borough of Highland Park, New Jersey, do hereby certify the above to be a true copy of a resolution adopted by the Borough Council of said Borough on the 3<sup>rd</sup> day of March, 2020.

\_\_\_\_\_  
Joan Hullings, Clerk

RECORD OF COUNCIL VOTES

Council Member	Ayes	Nays	Abstain	Absent
Fine	✓			
Foster-Dublin	✓			
George	✓			
Hale	✓			
Kim-Chohan	✓			
Welkovits	✓			

<sup>3</sup> <https://holocaustremembrance.com/working-definition-antisemitism>