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CHARLES D. LAVINE
Assemblyman 13th District

CHAIR
Judiciary Committee

June 1, 2023

Hon. Felix V. Matos Rodriguez
chancellor@cuny.edu

Dear Chancellor Matos Rodriguez:

We are appalled that CUNY and its Law School permitted a graduate to deliver a crude, rash and hate-filled speech at a May 12 commencement event.

The speech presented a lengthy compendium of anti-American, anti-Israeli and anti-law enforcement grievances. It painted America as a colonial imperialistic nation imprisoning innocent people.

American Jews are acutely aware of the propagation of Jew hatred. We are well aware that the speaker's anti-Zionist tirades are, as noted by the famed French philosopher Bernard-Henri Levy, simply "a new dressing for the old passion of anti-Semitism. If you are anti-Zionist, that means you wish for a huge disaster for the Jewish people."

The remarks in question were grotesquely inappropriate and were designed to demean and antagonize Americans and Jews.

This conduct did not occur in a vacuum. It was enabled by CUNY refusing to take meaningful action when the Law School Government Association and the law school faculty endorsed the BDS movement against Israel, setting the stage for the hate filled diatribe.

We demand that the Chancellor, the CUNY Board of Trustees and the Dean of the Law School issue a strong denunciation and clear repudiation of this hateful speech.

We demand that CUNY establish a Jewish advisory council that includes students to create a written policy to address a problem that has been permitted to metastasize for far too long. Left unaddressed, this appeal to ancient prejudice will continue to worsen.

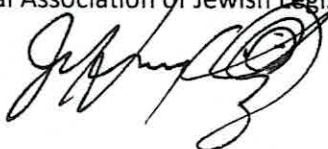
Let us recognize that hatred of Jews is racism and it is both Un-American and anti-American.

We demand this matter be given your most urgent attention.

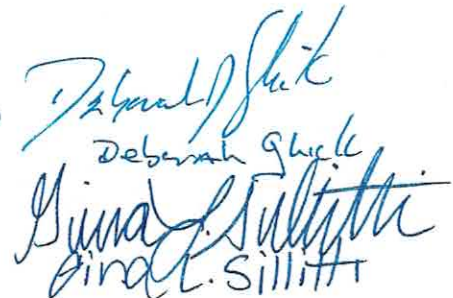
Sincerely,


Charles Lavine

National Association of Jewish Legislators New York




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