

# United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

April 24, 2025

The Honorable Donald J. Trump  
President of the United States  
The White House  
1600 Pennsylvania Avenue NW  
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear President Trump:

We write regarding your administration's assault on universities, including threats and actions to withhold funds or otherwise punish certain institutions of higher learning, in what you claim is an effort to eliminate the very real threat of antisemitism on college campuses.

We also write as Jewish Senators who have spoken out strongly against rising antisemitism here in the United States, including on college campuses, and who have called on university leaders to do more to tackle antisemitism with accountability and action in the wake of the horrific October 7th attack by Hamas on Israel. As such, we are extremely troubled and disturbed by your broad and extra-legal attacks against universities and higher education institutions as well as members of their communities, which seem to go far beyond combatting antisemitism, using what is a real crisis as a pretext to attack people and institutions who do not agree with you.

While we know these attacks span the country's education institutions, there is perhaps no clearer example than that of the administration's attack on Harvard, for which your administration has frozen over \$2 billion in federal funding allocated for the university, threatened to revoke Harvard's tax-exempt status, and attacked Harvard faculty as "woke, radical left idiots<sup>1</sup>". These attacks go far beyond constructive and necessary efforts to support Jewish students on campus during an unprecedented period of domestic antisemitism. They instead seem to be aimed at broadly changing the way the university functions, exacting huge penalties in ways wholly unrelated to combating antisemitism, and, we fear, are instead aimed at undermining or even destroying these vital institutions while hiding behind claims of tackling antisemitism as a guise.

It has become abundantly clear that for this administration, the stated goal of fighting antisemitism – which is needed now more than ever, and for which we stand ready to work in a bipartisan way on real solutions – is simply a means to an end to attack our nation's universities and public schools and their ability to function as multifaceted and vital institutions of higher learning and to protect free speech and the civil liberties of their students and employees. We strongly support efforts to ensure universities uphold their duty to protect students from unlawful discrimination and harassment, but we reject your administration's policies of defunding and punishing universities out of spite, as they actually undermine the work of combating antisemitism – ultimately only making Jews less safe by pitting Jewish safety against other communities and undermining the freedoms and democratic norms that have allowed Jewish

communities, and so many others, to thrive in the United States. We urge you to reverse course immediately.

As such, we request answers to the following questions by April 30, 2025:

1. Why has the administration chosen specific higher education institutions for termination of their federal funding, and what is the process by which the administration identified these institutions as a target? Please describe your process in detail.
2. In the case of Harvard specifically, what specific charges has the administration made against Harvard in regards to antisemitism? Please describe your charges in specific detail, including naming specific cases and why you believe the steps that Harvard has already taken to strengthen its response to antisemitism are insufficient. In the Harvard case, your cuts disproportionately attack the medical school. What are the specific charges you have levied against Harvard Medical School? Why is the administration targeting scientific institutions across the universities, and how have you assessed these penalties, which seem to be totally disproportionate to any charges you have you found?
3. What is the administration's process for identifying which federal funding will be subject to termination? Please provide a list of all federal funding that have been terminated thus far to each of these higher education institutions.
4. In the Harvard example alone, you have withheld funding from the medical school, research on cancer, heart disease, neurodegenerative diseases, and infectious diseases. Has the administration considered the effects of these cuts on medical and other research? How does the administration justify cutting this research funding that will impact all students, including Jewish students, and jeopardizes American innovation and the future success of millions of students? Please provide a detailed list and justification for each research program that you have cut or threatened to cut.
5. Why has the administration slashed 50% of the staff at the Office of Civil Rights at the Department of Education, including the experts who have helped universities assess and create reforms to improve their efforts to combat antisemitism on campus? Why has it closed offices in the very cities where colleges and universities subject to antisemitism investigations are located? Given funding cuts to existing reform mechanisms at the Office of Civil Rights at the Department of Education, how is the administration going to work with universities in a constructive and transparent way to seek reforms and protections for Jewish students, including training on combating antisemitism and legal resources?
6. The administration has taken the step of demanding the Internal Revenue Service revoke Harvard's tax-exempt status. What is your legal justification for doing so when almost every legal scholar has ruled that you have no basis for doing this?
7. Has the administration spoken with a broad range of Jewish students, leading Jewish organizations, and other students on the most impacted campuses to get feedback on what would make them feel the safest? How do you prevent funding cuts from hurting Jewish students and other students who had nothing to do with antisemitic activity on campuses and may in fact have been victims of it?
8. Is the administration applying immigration enforcement tools—such as revoking visas and beginning deportation proceedings—against students based solely on their expressed views and speech, which the administration has identified as antisemitic? Does the

administration believe that the First Amendment protections do not apply to noncitizens, including legal permanent residents? Which activities does the administration believe are not protected by the First Amendment for noncitizens in the U.S.? Are students being charged as inadmissible or with specific crimes to justify their deportation, and if so, which grounds or crimes?

We appreciate your timely response by April 30, 2025.

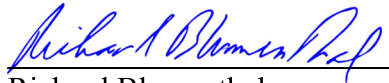
Sincerely,



Charles E. Schumer  
United States Senator



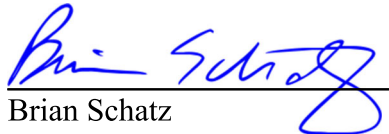
Jacky Rosen  
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal  
United States Senator



Adam B. Schiff  
United States Senator



Brian Schatz  
United States Senator