



Legislation Text

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RESOLUTION NO. 230035

Sponsor: Mayor Quinton Lucas and Councilmember Andrea Bough

RESOLUTION - Recognizing the growing problem of antisemitism in America and adopting a Working Definition of Antisemitism as an important educational tool to address it.

WHEREAS antisemitism, including harassment on the basis of actual or perceived Jewish origin, ancestry, ethnicity, identify, affiliation, or faith, remains a persistent, pervasive, and disturbing problem in American society; and

WHEREAS antisemitism may be expressed in speech, writing, visual forms and action, and employs sinister stereotypes to encourage hatred against Jews; and

WHEREAS antisemitism includes calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or an extremist view of religion; and

WHEREAS antisemitism includes denying the fact, scope, mechanisms (e.g., gas chambers) or intentionality of the genocide of the Jewish people at the hands of National Socialist Germany and its supporters and accomplices during World War II (the Holocaust); and

WHEREAS Jews continue to be a targeted minority in the United States and are consistently the most likely of all religious groups to be victimized by incidents of hate, and such incidents are increasing at an alarming rate; and

WHEREAS the deadliest attack against the American Jewish community took place on October 27, 2018, at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, killing eleven worshippers and injuring several more; and

WHEREAS there are approximately 30,000 members of the Greater Kansas City Jewish Community; and

WHEREAS the Anti-Defamation League's Tracker of Antisemitic Incidents has reported seven antisemitic incidents in Missouri since the beginning of 2020 and three of those incidents occurred in the Greater Kansas City area; and

WHEREAS local officials and institutions have a responsibility to protect citizens from acts of hate and bigotry, including antisemitism, and must be given the tools to do so; and

WHEREAS valid monitoring, informed analysis and investigation, and effective policy-making all benefit from accurate and uniform definitions; NOW, THEREFORE,

BE IT RESOLVED BY THE COUNCIL OF KANSAS CITY:

Section 1. That the Council of Kansas City adopts the following non-legally binding definition from the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance Working Definition of Antisemitism and its eleven contemporary examples, which includes:

- “Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities.”
- “Antisemitic acts are criminal when they are so defined by law. 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.”
- “Antisemitic discrimination is the denial of opportunities or services available to others on the basis of a person’s link to or identification as a Jew.”

Section 2. That the Council of Kansas City will ensure that the Working Definition of Antisemitism is available as an educational resource for local agencies responsible for addressing antisemitism and other forms of discrimination, including the City’s Civil Rights and Equal Opportunity Department and the Kansas City Police Department.

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