

The Honorable Tim Walberg
Chairman
Committee on Education and Workforce
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Bobby Scott
Ranking Member
Committee on Education and Workforce
Washington, DC 20515

13 July 2025

Dear Chairman Walberg and Ranking Member Scott,

The October 7, 2023 Hamas attack caused a tectonic shift for Berkeley's Jewish students, staff and faculty, from many perspectives. In the face of a turbulent outside world, we commend the UC Berkeley administration, including the Chancellor and other campus leaders, for keeping our campus functioning: teaching and research were not hindered, protests were confined, and the UC Berkeley administration made significant and impactful efforts to ensure that Jewish students, staff, and faculty were safe on campus and felt accepted and integral to the university community.

We also commend the UC Berkeley campus leadership for listening and responding when we voiced concerns and criticisms, for negotiating a peaceful end to the encampment, for working to enforce rules while maintaining the right to free speech, for committing additional and significant resources to ensure safety and security of the Campus community including Jewish students, staff and faculty. Moreover, the UC Berkeley administration continues to support the many ways in which there has been a renewal of Jewish campus life, including through Jewish student organizations, Jewish studies, Israel studies, and antisemitism education.

Chancellor Carol Christ and her successor in July 2024, Chancellor Richard Lyons, and the campus senior leadership team continue to work closely with the members of the Chancellor's Advisory Committee on Jewish Student Life and Campus Climate. The input and guidance provided by this Committee have informed campus actions in support of the needs and interests of Jewish students, faculty, and staff. While we don't always agree with the administration's decisions, it is abundantly clear to us that, overall, the campus administration has a long-standing commitment to combat antisemitism on our campus.

This letter does not dismiss the real challenges Jewish students, staff, and faculty have faced, including moments of unease and, at times, physical threats. Incidents of hostile speech and even isolated acts of violence have occurred. However, as Jewish faculty who frequently engage with campus leadership and remain vigilant about the well-being of the Jewish campus community, we reject the claim that UC Berkeley is an antisemitic environment. We write to affirm that we feel secure on campus and support the administration's efforts to balance safety with respect for free speech.

We are aware that important areas for improvement remain. There are ongoing and productive discussions with the Chancellor and other senior administrators regarding ways to increase communication, accountability, and education about antisemitism on campus. We are committed to continuing to work in partnership with the UC Berkeley Chancellor and senior leadership to continue to ensure that UC Berkeley does not tolerate antisemitic harassment or discrimination and to continue to ensure the safety, security, engagement and productivity of UC Berkeley Jewish students, staff and faculty.

Respectfully,

Ken Goldberg, IEOR, EECS, and Art Practice

Ethan Katz, History and Jewish Studies

Ehud Isacoff, Neuroscience

Roberto Horowitz, Mechanical Engineering

Shafi Goldwasser, EECS

Erwin Chemerinsky, Law

Rena Dorph, Lawrence Hall of Science

Avishay Tal, EECS

Lewis Feldman, Plant and Microbial Biology

Gail Brager, Architecture

Daniel Feldman, Haas Business

David Vogel, Haas Business, Political Science

Claude S. Fischer, Sociology

Estelle Tarica, Spanish and Portuguese

Rebecca Golbert, Law

Arthur Reingold, Public Health

Paul Gertler, Haas School of Business

Shimon Kolkowitz, Physics

George Breslauer, Political Science

Philip B. Stark, Statistics

Isaac Bleaman, Linguistics

Michael Nachman, Integrative Biology

Jack Citrin, Political Science

Richard Kramer, Neuroscience

Scott Straus, Political Science

Robert Alter, Hebrew and Comparative Literature

Jonathan Wurtele, Physics

Steve Tadelis, Haas School of Business

Jonah Levy, Political Science

Lee Bernstein, Nuclear Engineering

Benjamin E. Hermalin, Economics

Sheldon Rothblatt, History

Thomas Lawueur, History

Ehud Altman, Physics

Sheldon Zedeck, Psychology

Elliot Turiel, Education, Psychology

Leslie Kurke, Ancient Greek & Roman Studies and Comparative Literature

Carolyn Patty Blum, Law

Victoria Kahn, English and Comparative Literature

Jason Wittenberg, Political Science

Peter Menell, Law

Robert Kayen, Civil and Environmental Engineering

Ann Swidler, Sociology

Hannah Ginsborg, Philosophy

David Stern, Education

Carla Hesse, History

Neil Gilbert, Social Welfare

Joan Bieder, Journalism

Randy Schekman, Department of Molecular and Cell Biology

Joan Heifetz Hollinger, Law

Paula S. Fass, History

Daniela Kaufer, Integrative Biology, Neuroscience

Ilan Adler, IEOR

Robert Price, Political Science

Yury Kolomensky, Physics

Daniel Pirutinsky, Industrial Engineering and Operations Research

Steven Kahn, Physics and Astronomy

Jaimie Baron, Film and Media Studies

Dan Stamper-Kurn, Physics

Michael Shapira, Integrative Biology

Karen Shuker, History

Richard Buxbaum, School of Law

Andrew Campbell, Haas School of Business

Gary Firestone, Molecular and Cell Biology

Severin Borenstein, Haas School of Business

Joseph Hellerstein, EECS

Andrew Scharlach, Professor of the Graduate School

Robert Saxton, Molecular and Cell Biology

Michael O'Hare, Public Policy

Stephen Rosenbaum, School of Law

Déborah Blocker, French

Eric Norman, Nuclear Engineering

Wayne Getz, Environmental Science, Policy and Management

Sarah Levin, Center for Jewish Studies

Corey Goodman, Neuroscience

Dan Feldman, Neuroscience

William Jagust, Neuroscience

Ellen Oliensis, Ancient Greek & Roman Studies, Comparative Literature

Dorit Hochbaum, Industrial Engineering and Operations Research

Shmuel Oren, Industrial Engineering and Operations Research

Abby Dernburg, Molecular and Cell Biology

Jeremy Thorner, Molecular and Cell Biology