

Press Release: Brandeis Center Applauds Miami-Dade Police Chiefs for Anti-Semitism Resolution

Washington, D.C., March 14, 2018: The Miami-Dade County Association of Chiefs of Police have unanimously adopted a resolution recognizing the U.S. State Department's definition of anti-Semitism when investigating crimes. This important resolution follows the Village of [Bal Harbour, Florida](#) – a municipality within the county - becoming the first government body in the country to adopt a definition of anti-Semitism into their laws, for which the Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law (LDB) had [testified in its support](#). LDB (www.brandeiscenter.com) is a national, non-profit civil rights organization committed to combating anti-Semitism.

“The Miami-Dade Police Chiefs’ resolution marks an important “next step” following Bal Harbour’s adoption of the U.S. State Department definition of anti-Semitism in in December. These steps taken in Florida should serve as a model for community leaders throughout the country who seek to curb the current resurgence of anti-Semitism,” stated LDB’s COO & Director of Policy, Alyza Lewin.

“Such resolutions are necessary as anti-Semitism continues to rise, on and off college campuses. Various studies are finding anti-Semitic incidents on the rise. In 2015, LDB and Trinity College issued a joint report finding that over 50% of self-identified Jewish college and university students had witnessed or experienced anti-Semitism on campus. (link: <http://brandeiscenter.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/trinity-Anti-Semitism.pdf>) In February, the Anti-Defamation League released their “2017 Audit of Anti-Semitic Incidents,” (link: <https://www.adl.org/education/resources/reports/2017-audit-of-anti-semitic-incidents#major-findings>) demonstrating a jarring 57% increase in anti-Semitic incidents overall from 2016 to 2017, and an 89% increase specifically on college campuses. Our hope is that additional Police Associations will follow the lead of Miami-Dade County, and that additional municipalities will follow the lead of Bal Harbour,” continued Lewin. “Resolutions defining anti-Semitism properly in order to effectively combat it are necessary now more than ever before.”

In December, Bal Harbour unanimously passed an Anti-Semitism Definition Ordinance, to provide Bal Harbour’s law enforcement officials with a uniform definition of anti-Semitism. In her testimony in support of the bill, LDB’S Director of Legal Initiatives Aviva Vogelstein explained how law enforcement is central to the project of defining anti-Semitism, and how such concerns were crucial to the initial efforts to develop a definition of anti-Semitism. Many recent efforts to define anti-Semitism have also focused on law enforcement: for example, in 2017 the European Commission added the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s working definition of anti-Semitism – a definition that is substantially the same to that of the U.S. Department of State - to its website, referring to it as a “useful tool for civil society, law enforcement authorities and education facilities to effectively recognise and fight all forms of anti-Semitism,” and the European Parliament approved a Resolution calling on EU member states and institutions to adopt and apply the definition to support law enforcement “in their efforts to identify

and prosecute anti-Semitic attacks more efficiently and effectively. . . .”

Uniform definitions are especially important for anti-Semitism, because so much confusion surrounds the line between anti-Semitism and legitimate criticism of the State of Israel. The State Department has stated that, “it is especially important to define anti-Semitism clearly to more effectively combat it.” (See U.S. Department of State, Special Envoy to Monitor & Combat Anti-Semitism Ira Forman, “Combating Global Anti-Semitism in 2016,” Berlin, Germany, March 2016.) And this is exactly what both the Bal Harbour ordinance and the Miami-Dade resolution seek to achieve.

Bal Harbour Mayor Gabriel Groisman - who led his municipality in passing its resolution defining anti-Semitism as a tool for law enforcement in December - stated on Friday: “I applaud the Miami-Dade County Chiefs of Police Association for standing against anti-Semitism and passing this historic resolution. The use of a uniform definition of anti-Semitism protects the interests of our citizens by providing our law enforcement officers a critical tool needed to ascertain the intent of persons who engage in unlawful activities, such as assault or vandalism.”

Mayor Groisman continued: “Particular thanks is due to South Carolina Representative Alan Clemmons, and leading subject matter experts Joseph Sabag from Israel Allies Foundation (IAF), and Kenneth Marcus from the Louis D. Brandeis Center (LDB), for lending their expertise and policy resources in support.”

President of the Miami-Dade County Association of Chiefs of Police, Captain Raleigh Flowers, stated, “The Miami Dade County Association of Chiefs of Police supports initiatives and laws that protects the rights of all individuals in Miami Dade County. The Anti-Semitism ordinance enacted by Bal Harbour and other municipalities in Miami Dade provides a guide for law enforcement officers to use when responding investigating and potential Anti-Semitic offenses. Bal Harbour Mayor Groisman spoke to the police leaders of Miami Dade County and without hesitation, the association unanimously agreed to prepare a resolution encouraging all Miami Dade law enforcement agencies to consider the Anti-Semitism definition by the Department of State and establish protocols for each agency to follow when investigating and combating anti-Semitic and Hate Crimes.”

The Miami-Dade resolution states, “be it resolved that the Miami-Dade Chiefs of Police Encourages all Police agencies to establish specific protocols to be followed for those investigations surrounding potential anti-Semitic motivations for criminal offenses.”

Similar efforts to combat anti-Semitism have been underway federally and in the states, and such other government bodies are expected to follow the good example of those in South Florida. South Carolina is expected to become the first state to adopt a definition of anti-Semitism into its laws.

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ABOUT THE LOUIS D. BRANDEIS CENTER

The Louis D. Brandeis Center, Inc., or LDB, is an independent, nonprofit organization established to advance the civil and human rights of the Jewish people and promote justice for all. The Brandeis Center conducts research, education and advocacy to combat the resurgence of anti-Semitism on college and university campuses. It is not affiliated with the Massachusetts University, the Kentucky law school, nor any of the other institutions that share the name and honor the memory of the late U.S. Supreme Court justice.