

ASSEMBLY JOINT RESOLUTION

No. 211

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

220th LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED JANUARY 19, 2023

Sponsored by:

Assemblyman GARY S. SCHAER

District 36 (Bergen and Passaic)

Assemblywoman LINDA S. CARTER

District 22 (Middlesex, Somerset and Union)

Co-Sponsored by:

Assemblymen Karabinchak, Sauickie, Assemblywomen Swain, Speight and Matsikoudis

SYNOPSIS

Establishes working definition of antisemitism for NJ.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.



(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 5/25/2023)

1 **A JOINT RESOLUTION** adopting a working definition of antisemitism
2 for the State of New Jersey.
3
4 **WHEREAS**, Antisemitism, as well as discrimination, harassment, bias,
5 and bigotry against those who are or who are perceived to be Jewish
6 or have Jewish heritage remains prevalent throughout the world,
7 including throughout the United States and in New Jersey; and
8 **WHEREAS**, Antisemitism has both historical and contemporary
9 contexts; and
10 **WHEREAS**, According to data compiled by the New Jersey State Police,
11 as of April 2022, anti-Jewish bias was cited as a motivation for 298
12 reported bias incidents in 2020 and 347 reported bias incidents in
13 2021; and
14 **WHEREAS**, According to the Anti-Defamation League, one in four Jews
15 in the United States reported having been impacted by antisemitism
16 in 2021; and
17 **WHEREAS**, In recent months, the country has witnessed a disturbing
18 trend of public figures making comments, supporting viewpoints,
19 and meeting with individuals that are widely regarded as antisemitic;
20 and
21 **WHEREAS**, Antisemitism is closely linked to other forms of bigotry and
22 hatred; and
23 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey law criminalizes acts of bias intimidation,
24 defined as certain offenses committed with the purpose to intimidate
25 or with the knowledge that the offense would intimidate an
26 individual or group of individuals because of, among other protected
27 characteristics, religion, ethnicity, or national origin; and
28 **WHEREAS**, New Jersey law prohibits discrimination and bias-based
29 harassment in employment, housing, and places of public
30 accommodation on the basis of, among other protected
31 characteristics, actual or perceived religion, ethnicity, ancestry, or
32 national origin; and
33 **WHEREAS**, Despite these prohibitions, many acts and occurrences of
34 bias and bigotry go unreported or unaddressed; and
35 **WHEREAS**, It is the responsibility of the State of New Jersey to reject
36 and speak out against bias and bigotry, including condemning
37 antisemitism in all its forms; and
38 **WHEREAS**, A critical component of combatting antisemitism is
39 understanding what antisemitism is; and
40 **WHEREAS**, The International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance
41 (“IHRA”) is a thirty five member intergovernmental organization
42 created to focus on antisemitism and Holocaust-related issues; and
43 **WHEREAS**, The IHRA has adopted a non-legally binding working
44 definition of antisemitism, illuminated by useful examples,
45 illustrations, and distinctions, to help guide and empower

1 governments to understand and address the rise in hate and
2 discrimination against Jews and those with Jewish heritage; and
3 **WHEREAS**, The working definition of antisemitism may be used as an
4 education and training tool for public officials, law enforcement
5 offices, educators, and other public and private employees so that
6 they may effectively raise awareness of and call out antisemitism and
7 understand its impact; and
8 **WHEREAS**, Thirty eight countries, including the United States, have
9 adopted or endorsed the IHRA working definition of antisemitism,
10 as have several state and local governments; and
11 **WHEREAS**, The working definition, as adopted by the IHRA on May 26,
12 2016, reads: “Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which
13 may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical
14 manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-
15 Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community
16 institutions, and religious facilities”; and
17 **WHEREAS**, The IHRA also notes, in the context of defining the concept
18 of antisemitism, that criticism of Israel similar to that leveled against
19 any other country cannot be regarded as antisemitic; and
20 **WHEREAS**, This working definition of antisemitism is intended as an
21 analytical and educational tool and is not legally binding, and thus is
22 not intended to diminish or infringe upon any right protected under
23 the First Amendment to the United States Constitution, or paragraph
24 6 of Article I of the New Jersey State Constitution; now, therefore,
25

26 **BE IT RESOLVED** *by the Senate and General Assembly of the State*
27 *of New Jersey:*
28

29 1. The State of New Jersey hereby adopts the working definition
30 of antisemitism adopted by the International Holocaust
31 Remembrance Alliance on May 26, 2016, including the International
32 Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s “contemporary examples of
33 antisemitism.”
34

35 2. This joint resolution shall take effect immediately.
36
37

38 STATEMENT

39
40 This joint resolution adopts a working definition of antisemitism for
41 the State of New Jersey.

42 Antisemitism, as well as discrimination, harassment, bias, and
43 bigotry against those who are or who are perceived to be Jewish or have
44 Jewish heritage remains prevalent throughout the world, including
45 throughout the United States and in New Jersey and has both historical

1 and contemporary contexts. According to data compiled by the New
2 Jersey State Police, as of April 2022, anti-Jewish bias was cited as a
3 motivation for 298 reported bias incidents in 2020 and 347 reported bias
4 incidents in 2021.

5 According to the Anti-Defamation League, one in four Jews in the
6 United States reported having been impacted by antisemitism in 2021.
7 In recent months, the country has witnessed a disturbing trend of public
8 figures making comments, supporting viewpoints, and meeting with
9 individuals that are widely regarded as antisemitic.

10 Antisemitism is closely linked to other forms of bigotry and hatred.
11 New Jersey law criminalizes acts of bias intimidation, defined as certain
12 offenses committed with the purpose to intimidate or with the
13 knowledge that the offense would intimidate an individual or group of
14 individuals because of, among other protected characteristics, religion,
15 ethnicity, or national origin. New Jersey law prohibits discrimination
16 and bias-based harassment in employment, housing, and places of
17 public accommodation on the basis of, among other protected
18 characteristics, actual or perceived religion, ethnicity, ancestry, or
19 national origin. Despite these prohibitions, many acts and occurrences
20 of bias and bigotry go unreported or unaddressed. It is the responsibility
21 of the State of New Jersey to reject and speak out against bias and
22 bigotry, including condemning antisemitism in all its forms.

23 A critical component of combatting antisemitism is understanding
24 what antisemitism is. The International Holocaust Remembrance
25 Alliance (“IHRA”) is a thirty five-member intergovernmental
26 organization created to focus on antisemitism and Holocaust-related
27 issues. The IHRA has adopted a non-legally binding working definition
28 of antisemitism, illuminated by useful examples, illustrations, and
29 distinctions, to help guide and empower governments to understand and
30 address the rise in hate and discrimination against Jews and those with
31 Jewish heritage. The working definition of antisemitism may be used
32 as an education and training tool for public officials, law enforcement
33 offices, educators, and other public and private employees so that they
34 may effectively raise awareness of and call out antisemitism and
35 understand its impact. 38 countries including the United States have
36 adopted or endorsed the IHRA working definition of antisemitism, as
37 have several state and local governments.

38 The working definition, as adopted by the IHRA on May 26, 2016,
39 reads: “Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be
40 expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical
41 manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-
42 Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community
43 institutions and religious facilities”. The IHRA also notes, in the
44 context of defining the concept of antisemitism, that criticism of Israel

1 similar to that leveled against any other country cannot be regarded as
2 antisemitic.

3 This working definition of antisemitism is intended as an analytical
4 and educational tool and is not legally binding, and thus is not intended
5 to diminish or infringe upon any right protected under the First
6 Amendment to the United States Constitution, or paragraph 6 of Article
7 I of the New Jersey State Constitution.