

ASSEMBLY, No. 3558

STATE OF NEW JERSEY

221st LEGISLATURE

INTRODUCED FEBRUARY 5, 2024

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SYNOPSIS

Establishes State definition of anti-Semitism; creates a public awareness campaign; and appropriates \$100,000.

CURRENT VERSION OF TEXT

As introduced.

(Sponsorship Updated As Of: 10/24/2024)

1 AN ACT concerning the definition of anti-Semitism, creating a bias
2 crimes reporting public awareness campaign in the State of New
3 Jersey, supplementing Title 10 of the Revised Statutes and
4 making an appropriation.

5
6 **BE IT ENACTED** by the Senate and General Assembly of the State
7 of New Jersey:

8
9 1. The Legislature finds and declares that:

10 a. Anti-Semitism, and harassment on the basis of actual or
11 perceived national origin, shared ancestry, or ethnic characteristics
12 with a religious group, remains a persistent, pervasive, and
13 disturbing problem in contemporary American society.

14 b. Data shows that Jewish people are among the most likely of
15 all minority groups to be victimized by incidents of hate, and such
16 incidents are increasing at an alarming rate.

17 c. Data also shows that the State of New Jersey ranked third in
18 the nation in anti-Semitic incidents last year.

19 d. Anti-Semitism on campus is systemic, broad and deep, with
20 recent studies showing that the number of Jewish students
21 experiencing anti-Semitism across the United States had spiked to
22 nearly 75 percent and, in 2017 alone, there were more than 204
23 reports of anti-Semitic incidents of harassment, vandalism, or
24 assault against Jewish students on campus, an 89 percent increase
25 from the previous year.

26 e. State officials and institutions, including educational
27 institutions, have a responsibility to protect citizens from hate and
28 bigotry, and must be given the tools to stem both criminal conduct
29 as well as discriminatory acts motivated by anti-Semitism.

30 f. Valid monitoring, informed analysis and investigating, and
31 effective policy-making all require uniform definitions.

32 g. The standard definition of anti-Semitism, as used by the
33 federal government, the 34 governments that are members of the
34 International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance, all 57 countries,
35 except Russia, that comprise the Organization for Security and
36 Cooperation in Europe, and the governments of the United
37 Kingdom, Romania, Austria, Germany, and Bulgaria, has been an
38 essential definitional tool used to determine contemporary
39 manifestations of anti-Semitism, and includes useful examples of
40 discriminatory anti-Israel acts that cross the line into anti-Semitism.

41 h. Awareness of this definition of anti-Semitism will increase
42 understanding of the parameters of contemporary anti-Jewish crime
43 and discrimination.

44 i. The Office of the Attorney General, through its Bias Crimes
45 Reporting unit, plays a pivotal role in combatting anti-Semitism and
46 ensuring that those responsible for bias crimes are brought to
47 justice.

1 j. Raising public awareness on how to report bias crimes,
2 particularly through the dedicated bias crime reporting hotline
3 within the Office of the Attorney General, is crucial for fostering a
4 safer environment for disadvantaged communities in New Jersey.

5
6 2. a. For purposes of subsection b. of this section, the
7 “definition of anti-Semitism” means the definition adopted by the
8 International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) on May 26,
9 2016, including the “contemporary examples of antisemitism”.

10 b. In reviewing, investigating, or deciding whether there has
11 been a violation of any policy, law, or regulation prohibiting
12 discriminatory acts, the State shall take into consideration the
13 definition of anti-Semitism adopted by the IHRA for purposes of
14 determining whether the alleged act was motivated by anti-Semitic
15 intent.

16 c. Nothing contained in this section, shall be construed to
17 diminish or infringe upon any right protected under the First
18 Amendment to the United States Constitution, or paragraph 6 of
19 Article I of the New Jersey State Constitution. Nothing in this
20 section shall be construed to conflict with local, State, or federal
21 anti-discrimination laws or regulations.

22
23 3. a. The Office of the Attorney General shall establish a
24 public awareness campaign to promote bias crime reporting in New
25 Jersey and the resources available through the New Jersey Bias
26 Crimes Reporting Unit.

27 b. The public awareness campaign shall include, but need not be
28 limited to: providing community outreach; training on how to
29 identify and report bias crimes; disseminating information to the
30 public about the resources available through the New Jersey Bias
31 Crimes Reporting Unit, including the bias crime reporting hotline.

32
33 4. There is appropriated the sum of \$100,000 from the General
34 Fund to the Office of the Attorney General to establish a public
35 awareness campaign in accordance with section 3 of P.L. ,

36 c. (C.) (pending before the Legislature as this bill), to
37 promote bias crime reporting and the resources available through
38 the New Jersey Bias Crimes Reporting Unit.

39
40 5. This act shall take effect 30 days following the date of
41 enactment.

42
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44 STATEMENT

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46 This bill establishes a State definition of anti-Semitism. Under
47 the bill, the term “definition of anti-Semitism” refers to the
48 definition adopted by the International Holocaust Remembrance

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1 Alliance on May 26, 2016, including the “contemporary examples
2 of antisemitism”.

3 The bill provides that in reviewing, investigating, or deciding
4 whether there has been a violation of any policy, law, or regulation
5 prohibiting discriminatory acts, the State must take into
6 consideration this definition of anti-Semitism adopted by the IHRA
7 for purposes of determining whether the alleged act was motivated
8 by anti-Semitic intent.

9 Nothing contained in the bill would be construed to diminish or
10 infringe upon any right protected under the First Amendment to the
11 U.S. Constitution, or paragraph 6 of Article I of the New Jersey
12 State Constitution. Nothing in the bill would be construed to
13 conflict with local, State, or federal anti-discrimination laws or
14 regulations.

15 This bill also appropriates \$100,000 to the Office of the Attorney
16 General for the creation of a public awareness campaign to promote
17 bias crime reporting. Through extensive community outreach, the
18 citizens of New Jersey will be empowered to identify and report
19 bias crimes using the existing bias crime reporting hotline within
20 the New Jersey Bias Crimes Reporting Unit. This appropriation
21 represents an investment in safety and collective action against bias
22 crimes, including acts considered anti-Semitic.