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July 15, 2020

DNC Platform Committee
Democratic National Committee
430 South Capitol Street SE
Washington, D.C. 20003

Dear Platform Committee:

ADL (the Anti-Defamation League) was founded in 1913 “to stop the defamation of the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment to all.”

As a Section 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization, ADL is a nonpartisan organization that neither supports nor opposes any candidate for political office. Still, we write to both you and to the Republican Party to offer our recommendations for how to further the fight against antisemitism and all forms of hate and extremism.

Antisemitism is a primary concern for ADL – not just because we are a Jewish community organization, but because antisemitism, the oldest and most persistent form of prejudice, threatens security and democracy, and poisons the health of a society as a whole. In 2019, ADL documented 2,107 antisemitic incidents throughout the United States. This number is the highest on record since we began tracking antisemitic incidents four decades ago.

This comes on the heels of a series of violent terror attacks against Jewish people and Jewish institutions in the United States, including the shootings in Pittsburgh, PA (2018), Poway, CA (2019), Jersey City, NJ (2019), Monsey, NY (2019) and a rash of assaults in New York City. Moreover, the rise of white supremacy in our country, the normalization of antisemitism in the political discourse and the spread of antisemitism in Europe and around the world has created a widespread sense of anxiety among the Jewish community, one with no precedent in the United States.

For over a century, we have been at the forefront of campaigns to secure historic civil rights achievements, pioneered the development of model hate crimes laws, and developed anti-bias education models to address all forms of prejudice and to prepare each succeeding generation to live in an increasingly diverse society. As ADL has learned: where antisemitism flourishes, no minority group is safe.

To combat antisemitism and all forms of hate and extremism, we urge you to formally indicate support for the following recommended policies:

- Explicitly calling out antisemitism as a threat to the unity of the country, and declaring that the U.S. Government should make fighting and preventing antisemitism a priority while taking into account important guidelines for doing so, most notably the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's Working Definition of Antisemitism.
- Advocating increased funding for security hardening and enhancements, as well as security training and outreach, for at-risk houses of worship, schools, community centers, and other non-profit institutions. This impacts the Jewish community and all marginalized groups. Such grants should be provided based strictly on need and without favoritism.
- We also urge you to underscore the importance of the separation of church and state, which has enabled all religions to flourish in this country free from government interference. Religious freedom should be used as a shield to protect the rights of individuals to worship as they choose, but it should not be a sword that enables discrimination against marginalized communities.
- Calling for comprehensive and inclusive hate crime laws in every state, as well as hate crime data reporting from every jurisdiction. We also urge you to support efforts to provide law enforcement officials with the tools and training they need to prevent and effectively respond to hate crimes, including crimes that occur in part or in whole online, while prioritizing efforts to better address systemic racism and occurrences of police brutality.
- As social media companies including Facebook have caused tremendous harm by allowing some of the worst elements of society into our homes and our lives, we call on you to urge social media companies to take meaningful, measurable action to make their platforms safer. The possibility of regulation must be considered in light of the failure of firms to take consequential action on their own.
- As many forms of severe online misconduct are not consistently covered by cybercrime, harassment, stalking or hate crime laws, we urge you to recommend

closing these gaps both in state and federal law, while working with the affected communities and safeguarding civil rights.

- In our increasingly diverse world, students need to be taught values like respect and understanding to combat systemic racism. We urge you to support anti-racist, anti-hate education programs in all of our nation's schools, including teaching the universal lessons of the Holocaust and other examples of genocide.

- Supporting vigorous efforts to combat discrimination on college campuses and judiciously implement the recent executive order to ensure administrators effectively fight antisemitism along with all forms of hate while protecting freedom of speech.

- Taking a strong stance against violent extremism, both in the United States and abroad. As ADL research has consistently noted, most domestic extremist murders over the last decade have been perpetrated by white supremacists. The U.S. Government should explicitly acknowledge the threat of violent white supremacy and provide increasing resources to combat such threats, including investing in prevention and supporting local entities involved in addressing hate and violence, and preventing known perpetrators of hate crimes from accessing firearms.

- Committing to fighting all forms of voter suppression, to ensuring access to the ballot for all and to safe and fair elections, including in light of both longstanding systemic inequities as well as the crisis conditions of the current pandemic.

- Reiterating America's strong commitment to the Jewish State of Israel and its fundamental right to protect its citizens from terrorism, violence and harm, while promoting a peaceful resolution of the Arab-Israeli conflict. We urge you to continue in the longstanding bipartisan tradition of supporting a peace process between Israelis and Palestinians that would bring about a mutually agreed two-state solution.

- Israel is a top ally of the United States in a critical region of the world. We urge you to continue the policy of the U.S. Government of ensuring that Israel retains its qualitative military edge, and to explicitly commit to providing the full amount of U.S. defense assistance that was pledged as part of the ten-year memorandum of understanding signed between the United States and Israel in 2016.

- Pledging to stand with Israel against all efforts to delegitimize it and to push back against the unfair treatment of Israel at such venues as the United Nations. In this regard, we also urge you to explicitly take a principled stand in opposition to the international Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions movement that is targeted against Israel.

- Committing to an engaged U.S. leadership role around the world, including the fight against terrorist groups and state sponsors of terrorism. This should include strong economic sanctions, intensive diplomacy, and other efforts to stand up against the Government of Iran's sponsorship of terrorism, its incitement of antisemitism both at home and abroad, and its efforts to acquire nuclear weapons. Such a policy should also include robust efforts to combat violent antisemitic terrorist groups such as Hamas, Hezbollah, al-Qaeda, and the Islamic State.

- Standing with immigrants against efforts to demonize or scapegoat them, and restoring America's Refugee Admissions Program to meet our historic responsibilities amidst the world's largest refugee crisis since World War II. We also urge you to stand by our government's promises to dreamers, who know no country other than America, and to repeal the discriminatory Muslim Ban.

America's ability to exert moral leadership also requires us to pursue a more just society here at home. From expanding equal rights for all to ensuring that religious liberty is not used as an excuse for discrimination against vulnerable groups to dismantling systemic racism to reinstating a humane U.S. immigration policy, there is much that needs to be done in order to ensure that we live up to America's stated principles, as well as ADL's founding mission.

Thank you for your consideration of our views.

Sincerely,



Jonathan Greenblatt
CEO and National Director