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**ADL Foundation**

Michael Sheetz, President

February 24, 2023

Dear Chairman Rogers and Ranking Member Smith,

As you work to develop the Fiscal Year 2024 National Defense Authorization Act (FY 2024 NDAA), we strongly urge you to include provisions aimed at protecting our armed forces and uniformed services from the national security threat posed by antisemitism and extremism.

Our research has shown a continuous rise in antisemitism and extremism – threatening not only individual Americans and communities but our national security as a whole. ADL’s most recent [Audit of Antisemitic Incidents in the United States](#) found that antisemitic incidents reached an all-time high in the United States in 2021, with a total of 2,717 incidents of assault, harassment and vandalism. At the same time, domestic violent extremism has been on the rise in recent years. The Jewish community continues to be a primary target of extremists, regardless of ideology, alongside other targeted communities. Unchecked extremism damages our social fabric and undermines our democratic norms and institutions.

In light of this threat, ADL remains deeply concerned by violent extremists’ attempted recruitment from and targeting of government institutions, and the danger posed to our servicemembers. Even a small number of members harboring unchecked antisemitism and extremism in the ranks undermines America’s armed forces and can cause harm far disproportionate to their number. According to [ADL research](#), there is significant evidence that servicemembers today are encountering antisemitic and extremist personnel, and that this extremist threat to the ranks has been harmful to the effectiveness and security of the force in multiple ways, leading to: physical harm to servicemembers; theft of military equipment; security breaches; harm to morale, mental health, unit cohesion and personnel retention; harm to recruiting efforts; and harm to mission success.

We must effectively protect our servicemembers and institutions from rising antisemitism and extremism and ensure that the FY 2024 NDAA sufficiently addresses this serious threat to national security.

The threat of antisemitism and extremism to the armed forces and uniformed services is too important to be left unaddressed. We urge you to ensure that these key provisions are included in the FY2024 NDAA legislation:

## Reports

1. Instances of Antisemitism
  - Requires each military service branch to report on all substantiated administrative investigations or instances of antisemitism within the Equal Opportunity Program.
2. The Role of Antisemitism in Violent Extremist Movements and the Threat Posed to the U.S. Armed Forces
  - Requires the Secretary of Defense to report to Congress on the role of antisemitism in violent extremist movements, and the threat that global antisemitism and violent extremist movements pose to United States Armed Forces and national security.
3. Update Existing Reporting
  - Requires Department of Defense to update the recommendations in its December 2021 Report on Countering Extremist Threats Within the Department of Defense.
4. Intelligence Assessment of Antisemitism and National Security Threats
  - No later than 180 days following this Act, the Office of the Director of National Intelligence, working with intelligence components, will produce an assessment of the relationship between antisemitism and national security threats.
5. Involvement of Contractors in the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) Movement Against Israel
  - Requires that Department of Defense issue an annual report confirming that none of their contractors participate in or are engaged with the BDS movement.
6. National Strategy Compliance
  - No later than 180 days following this Act, the Secretary of Defense will release a public report detailing how the Department has implemented, and plans to implement, the National Strategy to Counter Domestic Terrorism and the National Strategy to Combat Antisemitism.
7. Global Strategy Transparency
  - The 2021 NDAA required the Department of State to establish a strategy to counter global white supremacy. No later than 180 days following this Act, the State Department shall:
    1. Release a public version of the strategy.
    2. Report to Congress on the progress to-date in implementing the strategy and any authorities and resources needed to provide for robust implementation.

#### 8. Spread of Malign Disinformation

- Requests that the Department of Defense produce a report on the spread of malign disinformation within the ranks and ways in which the Department is currently working to mitigate the spread of – and impact of – malign disinformation.

#### 9. Security Clearance Process

- Requests that the Department of Defense report on its progress in developing improved security clearance policies, procedures, and trainings to ensure that individuals who adhere to extremist ideologies do not have security clearances. The review should include screening for extremist sympathies in the security clearance process, including efforts to ensure that those who are granted clearances do not harbor antisemitic views. This review should also ensure that Jewish Americans are not unduly targeted with accusations of dual loyalty towards Israel, or any other country, when undergoing this process.

### **Training**

#### 10. Report on Extremism-Related Training and Education Programs for Servicemembers to Protect the U.S. Armed Forces

- Requires the Secretary of Defense to develop a training and education plan for Department of Defense members and civilian personnel to protect the military from extremist recruitment and activity.

### **Office and Funding**

#### 11. Establish an Office to Counter Violent Extremism as a Threat to the U.S. Armed Forces

- Establishes within the Office of the Secretary of Defense an Office to Counter Violent Extremism to identify and coordinate activities to mitigate extremist threats to the military.

#### 12. Authorize Public Diplomacy Funds for the State Department's Counterterrorism Bureau

- Authorizes the Department of Defense and Department of State to transfer specific funds for the purposes of combatting Racially or Ethnically Motivated Violent Extremism (REMVE) as defined by existing law.

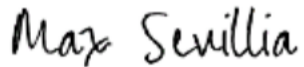
#### 13. Establish a Media Literacy Program

- Within 180 days of this Act, the Secretary shall establish a program to provide digital literacy skills to members of the armed services and submit a report to Congress outlining the approach. This program should include strategies for improving servicemembers' ability to locate, evaluate, and effectively use

information online to effectively confront online threats such as antisemitic or white supremacist conspiracy theories.

These provisions can ensure the NDAA effectively addresses threats to our military institutions and protects all servicemembers, especially members of the Jewish and other minority communities. ADL stands ready to work closely with your offices on these issues. We know you share our concerns and steadfast commitment to continuing to support our Armed Forces in countering the rising threat of antisemitism and extremism.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Max Sevilla". The script is cursive and fluid, with the first letters of each word being capitalized and prominent.

Max Sevilla  
Vice President for Government Relations,  
Advocacy and Community Engagement