



## **Brandeis Center and Hillel Urge UC Irvine to Respond to Anti-Semitic Incident**

### **Letter to Chancellor Voices Concern and Requests Action**

**WASHINGTON- July 12, 2016-** Hillel International, Hillel of Orange County and the Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law (LDB) wrote this week to University of California – Irvine (UCI) Chancellor Howard Gillman urging a strong response to the physical intimidation of a Jewish student, Eliana Kopley and the campus climate of intimidation aimed at Jewish and Pro-Israel students. The letter urges swift action more than six weeks after the organizations initially expressed concern and requested a response to an anti-Semitic incident that took place.

On May 18, more than 50 individuals associated with Students for Justice in Palestine aggressively confronted and threatened a group of 10 UCI students, including Kopley, who were attempting to watch and discuss a documentary film about five Israel Defense Forces soldiers. LDB represents Kopley with respect to this matter.

Hillel and LDB jointly call for Irvine to identify all students that terrorized Kopley and threatened, harassed and intimidated the Jewish and pro-Israel students.

Both organizations also called for the enforcement of UCI policy, the University of California's newly-revised *Statement of Principles Against Intolerance*, the University of California Code of Conduct and the California Penal Code in ensuring a "campus climate free from intimidation and harassment of all students, including Jewish students." "UCI must address this very troubling display of harassment and intimidation aimed at Eliana and the UCI Jewish and pro-Israel students who gathered to watch and discuss the movie about Israel," said LDB President Kenneth L. Marcus.

President and CEO of Hillel International Eric D. Fingerhut said, "Hillel is committed to vibrant Jewish life at UCI and stands ready to work with the university administration to resolve this troubling incident and protect student life on campus."

"We are concerned that what happened to Eliana was motivated by anti-Semitic bias," reads the letter. "We are committed to freedom of expression for all students, including the right to reasonably protest. However, the conduct of these protesting students was outrageous and crosses far beyond the bounds of any First Amendment protection or reasonable manner of protest. Stronger action must be taken."

#### **About Hillel International:**

Founded in 1923, Hillel has been enriching the lives of Jewish students for 90 years. Today, Hillel International is a global organization that welcomes students of all backgrounds and fosters an enduring commitment to Jewish life, learning and Israel. Hillel is dedicated to enriching the lives of Jewish students so that they may enrich the Jewish people and the world. As the largest Jewish student organization in the world, Hillel builds connections with emerging adults at more than 550 colleges and universities in 13 countries on five continents, and inspires them to direct their own path. During

their formative college years, students are challenged to explore, experience, and create vibrant Jewish lives.

**About the 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, or any of the other institutions that share the name and honor the memory of the late U.S. Supreme Court justice.

Media Contact

Matthew E. Berger

Senior Adviser for Strategic Communications, Hillel International

[mberger@hillel.org](mailto:mberger@hillel.org)

[202.449.6548](tel:202.449.6548)