

LDB Praises South Carolina Governor for Strong Stance Against Anti-Semitism

Washington, D.C., January 10, 2018: The Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law (LDB) applauds South Carolina Governor Henry McMaster for calling on the South Carolina Senate to immediately pass H.3643, in time for the bill to be signed on International Holocaust Remembrance Day, on January 27, and reiterating his support for this important piece of legislation, which aims to combat anti-Semitism in South Carolina. LDB is a national non-profit civil rights organization focused on combating anti-Semitism in higher education.

Alyza Lewin, LDB's COO and Director of Policy, lauded Governor McMaster's announcement, saying: "As we see anti-Semitism rise on both far ends of the political spectrum, it is heartening to hear South Carolina's Governor provide such a strong endorsement of South Carolina's Anti-Semitism Awareness Act. The proposed legislation is a significant step in combating this age-old, pernicious form of hate. It will help deter anti-Semitic activity and ensure university campuses are safe environments for all. Pairing its passage with International Holocaust Remembrance Day sets an example for other states to follow by reminding us of the need to take action to combat anti-Semitism now to ensure that 'never again' really means 'never again.'"

In March 2017, H. 3643 received unanimous support from South Carolina's Senate Education Committee, and overwhelmingly passed the S.C. House of Representatives, by a vote of 103 - 3. LDB President & General Counsel Kenneth L. Marcus testified regarding the legislation before both the South Carolina Senate and its House of Representatives.

H. 3643 seeks to provide South Carolina's public post-secondary institutions with a uniform definition of anti-Semitism in determining whether harassment, intimidation, assaults, vandalism or other discriminatory behavior is motivated by anti-Semitic intent and should be investigated and addressed appropriately. It will help address growing anti-Semitism on campus and protect students' rights to a learning environment free of unlawful discrimination. Importantly, H. 3643 is careful to protect First Amendment rights of all students on campus, and will not curb or restrict free speech or academic freedom.

The definition of anti-Semitism in H. 3643 is a global standard, used by the U.S. Department of State to assess anti-Semitic incidents that occur abroad. It is a substantially similar definition to that of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA), supported by the 31 IHRA member states, and all 50 countries that make up the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE) other than Russia. Various other countries have recently adopted a working definition of anti-Semitism, including the U.K., Germany, Romania, Scotland, Austria, and Bulgaria.

Furthermore, in December, the municipality of Bal Harbour, Florida, under the leadership of Mayor Gabriel Groisman, became the first U.S. government body to adopt the U.S. State Department's definition of anti-Semitism into their laws, as a tool for law enforcement. If South Carolina passes H. 3643, it will be the first U.S. state to pass such a bill.

In a press release, Governor McMaster stated: "Anti-Semitism has no place in South Carolina, and the passage of this bill would go a long way towards ensuring that our state and its college

campuses provide a welcoming environment for those from all walks of life." The Governor continued, "I'm proud that South Carolina continues to lead the fight against anti-Semitic discrimination and would ask that the Senate immediately bring the bill to the floor for a final vote, so that we may send the strongest possible message to the world this January 27th on International Holocaust Remembrance Day."