# Biden Condemns Jewish Student Harassment and Enacts Antisemitism Legislation



### Biden Addresses Jewish Student Harassment and Antisemitism Legislation

President Joe Biden spoke at the U.S. Holocaust Memorial Museum’s Annual Days of Remembrance ceremony at the U.S. Capitol on May 7, denouncing incidents where Jewish students were harassed on campuses amid protests against the war in Gaza.

On the same day, the U.S. Department of Education released updated guidance for educational institutions concerning Title VI of the Civil Rights Act, which bars discrimination based on race, color, or national origin in federally funded programs. The department's guidance was tailored to include the protection of Jews, Muslims, and Sikhs, citing examples such as the defacement of dormitory doors with swastikas as discriminatory acts.

Additionally, the House overwhelmingly passed the Antisemitism Awareness Act, which directs the Education Department to consider the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's definition of antisemitism when assessing potential Title VI violations. Critics, including Rep. Jerrold Nadler (D-N.Y.) and the American Civil Liberties Union, argue that the bill could suppress political speech, particularly criticisms of Israel, and lead to self-censorship in academic settings.

The Education Department already takes the IHRA definition into account in some investigations but emphasizes that merely reflecting the IHRA's examples of antisemitism in an act does not automatically constitute a Title VI violation. The department seeks to determine whether there is pervasive conduct that creates a hostile environment.