

Jewish orgs. respond with grave alarm to UVM Pres' denial of antisemitism allegations

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 16, 2022

We, the undersigned Jewish organizations, are alarmed, disappointed and troubled by the response issued yesterday by the President of the University of Vermont to the Title VI [complaint](#) filed on behalf of a number of UVM students by the Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law and Jewish on Campus.

Simply put, President Garimella fails to condemn the existence of significant antisemitism on UVM's campus. And instead of summoning the courage that other university leaders across the country have shown in acknowledging the problem or offering support for Jewish students who are fearful about identifying publicly as Jewish, the UVM President's statement doubles down and refuses to take responsibility. The statement only offers inadequate excuses while failing to denounce those who have created a climate of intolerance for Jews, especially those who choose to openly express their Jewish identity through their deeply felt ancestral and ethnic connection to Israel. All the more concerning is the inference that aggrieved Jewish students should not have sought recourse through a regular legal process that exists for the very purpose of investigating civil rights complaints, including those pertaining to antisemitism. As a consequence, the concerns of antisemitism are further delegitimized.

The university has denied support to a targeted community, and, in suggesting that Jewish students need to learn how to better protect themselves, has essentially chosen to blame the victims. The students who filed the complaint raised awareness of a form of antisemitism that students at UVM have been experiencing for years, and gave a voice to students who felt unheard. Even now, the UVM President apparently has not really heard their voices of concern and anguish.

We support these Jewish students at UVM and elsewhere who have the right to openly express their identification with Israel without being shunned, marginalized and excluded from campus opportunities. Every student at UVM is entitled to a college experience free from antisemitism and all other forms of discrimination. It is time for UVM to frankly acknowledge the serious concerns that have been raised and take concrete steps to address them.

ADL
AJC

Alums for Campus Fairness
CAMERA on Campus
Chabad on Campus at the University of Vermont
Club Z
Conference of Presidents of Major American Jewish Organizations
Hasbara Fellowships
Hillel International
ICC
Israel Peace Initiative
JewBelong
Jewish Federations of North America
Jewish National Fund - USA
Jewish on Campus
The Louis D Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law
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