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United States Senate

COMMITTEE ON HEALTH, EDUCATION,
LABOR, AND PENSIONS

WASHINGTON, DC 20510-6300

March 26, 2025

VIA ELECTRONIC TRANSMISSION

Dr. Ellen M. Granberg
President
George Washington University
1918 F Street, NW
Washington, DC 20052

Dear President Granberg:

In February, the organization Students for Justice in Palestine (SJP) reportedly posted a flier with an “ominous warning” on the door of a George Washington University (GWU) professor, accusing him of “genocide, racism, and other inflammatory claims.”¹ The flier, which was posted to an Instagram account that appears to be associated with SJP, referred to the professor’s tenure as a “pernicious symptom of the bloodthirsty Zionism permeating [GWU’s] campus.”²

This is only the most recent in a chain of concerning events at GWU involving SJP. In 2023, GWU temporarily suspended SJP after it projected images onto GWU’s campus library that included phrases you reportedly described as “antisemitic” and said “caused fear and anxiety for many members of [GWUs] Jewish and broader . . . community.”³ A GWU statement reportedly noted that SJP had “violated university policies.”⁴ In August 2024, GWU again suspended SJP for setting up an encampment that led to 33 arrests.⁵

¹ Dion J. Pierre, *Jewish Professor Threatened by Students for Justice in Palestine at George Washington University*, THE ALGEMEINER (Feb. 25, 2025), <https://www.algemeiner.com/2025/02/25/jewish-professor-threatened-students-justice-palestine-george-washington-university/>

² Students for Justice in Palestine (@sjpgwu) on Instagram, https://www.instagram.com/p/DGfv4H1xZVU/?utm_source=ig_web_copy_link&igsh=MzRIODBiNWFIZA%3D%3D&img_index=4.

³ Martin Weil and Susan Svrluga, *GWU suspends group over the projection of pro-Palestinian slogans*, THE WASHINGTON POST (Nov. 16, 2023), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2023/11/14/gwu-images-palestinian-students-for-justice/>.

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ Dan Rosenzweig-Ziff, *D.C.-area campuses brace for possible return of Israel-Gaza protests*, THE WASHINGTON POST (Sept. 2, 2024), <https://www.washingtonpost.com/education/2024/08/30/dc-area-colleges-fall-demonstrations/>.

According to reports, SJP was supported by another group, American Muslims for Palestine (AMP), which has personnel with reported ties to the Foreign Terrorist Organization Hamas.⁶ AMP leaders have engaged with college students during anti-Israel campus demonstrations, and AMP Executive Director Osama Abuirshaid has directly addressed students at GWU. Dr. Abuirshaid previously worked as editor of a newspaper for an organization that was founded with startup money from Hamas leader Mousa Abu Marzook.⁷ In addition, he “has . . . published interviews that highlight his communications with Hamas leader Abu Marzook and other Hamas leaders in Gaza . . . [and] in 2014 . . . was featured on the website of Hamas’s self-declared military wing, the al-Qassam Brigades.”⁸

Activity that threatens the safety of others is not constitutionally protected free speech, and conduct that violates campus rules should not be tolerated. Reports of individuals with ties to terrorist groups or their affiliates engaging with students on college campuses are also cause for the highest alarm.

Through its Task Force to Combat Anti-Semitism, the Trump Administration is taking critical steps to address “anti-Semitic harassment in schools and on college campuses.”⁹ In addition, the U.S. Department of Education has announced that sixty colleges and universities “are presently under investigation for Title VI violations relating to antisemitic harassment and discrimination.”¹⁰ The U.S. Senate Committee on Health, Education, Labor and Pensions (HELP) is also investigating the activities of Hamas-linked groups on college campuses to determine what, if any, additional legislative action may be required to protect students.

In order for HELP to investigate these matters further to ensure campus safety, please respond to the following, on a question-by-question basis, no later than April 9, 2025.

1. Please provide a detailed account of incidents on GWU’s campus involving SJP. Your response should include all violations of campus policy, threats to campus safety, antisemitic threats directed at GWU faculty, staff, and students, and all other records related to suspensions of SJP.

⁶ *The sources of the pro-Palestinian demonstrations*, FOX NEWS (May 11, 2024), <https://www.foxnews.com/video/6352755454112>; *Who’s really behind Students for Justice in Palestine*, FOX NEWS (Apr. 23, 2024), <https://www.foxnews.com/video/6351492889112>; *From Ivory Towers to Dark Corners: Investigating the Nexus Between Antisemitism, Tax-Exempt Universities, and Terror Financing*, Hearing before the House Ways and Means Committee, 118th Congress (2023) (statement of Dr. Jonathan Schanzer), <https://gop-waysandmeans.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Schanzer-Testimony.pdf>.

⁷ *From Ivory Towers to Dark Corners: Investigating the Nexus Between Antisemitism, Tax-Exempt Universities, and Terror Financing*, Hearing before the House Ways and Means Committee, 118th Congress (2023) (statement of Dr. Jonathan Schanzer), <https://gop-waysandmeans.house.gov/wp-content/uploads/2023/11/Schanzer-Testimony.pdf> at 9.

⁸ *Id.*

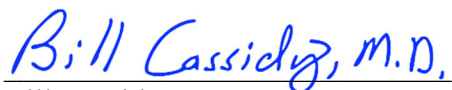
⁹ Press Release, Justice Department Announces Formation of Task Force to Combat Anti-Semitism (Feb. 3, 2025), <https://www.justice.gov/opa/pr/justice-department-announces-formation-task-force-combat-anti-semitism>

¹⁰ Press Release, “U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights Sends Letters to 60 Universities Under Investigation for Antisemitic Discrimination and Harassment” (March 10, 2025), <https://www.ed.gov/about/news/press-release/us-department-of-educations-office-civil-rights-sends-letters-60-universities-under-investigation-antisemitic-discrimination-and-harassment>.

2. Did GWU investigate reports regarding a flier posted on the door of a GWU professor in February 2025? Please provide all related records.
3. Please provide all records in the university's possession related to SJP and its on-campus activities.
4. Is the university aware of any organizing activity by AMP or its affiliates on GWU's campus? Please provide all related records.
5. Is the university aware of the connection between SJP, AMP, and the Foreign Terrorist Organization Hamas? Please explain and provide all related records.
6. Did SJP cease any of its activities on campus after being suspended, and did its suspension reduce the severity of campus protests? Please provide all information about whether members of the organization participated in campus protests in 2024 and 2025 and how the protests were organized.
7. Did SJP ever receive funding from the University? If so, how much, and what was the source of the funding?
8. Did campus policy require that SJP have a faculty representative? If so, was a faculty member assigned to this role or did one volunteer to serve as SJP's representative? Please provide all relevant information.

Thank you for your attention to this important matter.

Sincerely,



Bill Cassidy, M.D.

Chairman

U.S. Senate Committee on Health,
Education, Labor, and Pensions