

# Testimony Submission - Kansas House Bill 2299

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## Bill Information

Bill Number: HB 2299

Position: Opponent

Date of Hearing: February 7, 2025

## Written Testimony

I strongly oppose HB. 2299 because it only violates American's right to free speech not only against our own government but a foreign government as well. Schools already have rules against discrimination such as antisemitism and this bill only seeks to silence those critical of a foreign government currently violating the Geneva Convention and violating international law.

The IHRA definition was never meant to be weaponized in a school setting. The author of Kenneth Stern said this on the IHRA definition "I wrote a definition of antisemitism. It was never meant to chill free speech on campus." The IHRA definition has been discredited by many scholars, human rights groups and academics.

Adopting this definition does not stop antisemitism, it only seeks to silence Palestinian-Americans and Pro-Palestinian advocacy. Discussing Palestine and the violent actions of the Israeli government is not in itself antisemitism. The true proponent of antisemitism is White Supremacy, yet this bill has no mention of white supremacy's role in creating hatred for not only the Jewish population but the Muslim and Arab-Americans in Kansas.

I implore you to oppose HB. 2299 and protect American's right to free speech that is currently under attack from the federal government.

Lilly Mather

Date: 02-07-2025