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**Opening Statement of Rep. Aaron Bean (R-FL), Chairman  
Subcommittee on Early Childhood, Elementary, and Secondary Education  
Hearing: “Confronting Pervasive Antisemitism in K-12 Schools”  
May 8, 2024**

(As prepared for delivery)

The Holocaust ended in 1945. The hate behind it didn't.

I'd like to start by saying that I find antisemitism to be repugnant in all its forms, but I find the topic of today's hearing particularly troubling.

It is impossibly hard to grasp how antisemitism has become such a dominant force in our K-12 schools. Some kids as young as second grade are spewing Nazi propaganda, which begs the question, who has positioned these young minds to attack the Jewish people?

The very need for this hearing is a travesty. The aftermath of October 7 has revealed some of the ugliest, most depraved ideas once marginalized from polite society, and our education system has failed to stop it.

It's not just anti-Israel. It's anti-American. It's anti-democracy.

Three of the witnesses here today represent public school districts that have allowed vile antisemitism to spread unchecked. Now, thousands of Jewish students in their districts fear riding the bus in the morning, wearing their kippah to school, or just eating and breathing as a Jewish student.

You are here today to answer for your role in this national tragedy.

Beginning with Mr. Banks, New York City is home to the largest, most vibrant Jewish community in the nation, so the stories coming out of New York City Public Schools are uniquely harrowing.

At your schools, students march through halls disrupting class and chanting “Kill the Jews.” One student was caught by a security camera appearing as Hitler and performing a Nazi salute. Three swastikas were drawn on teachers’ walls in one week.

Moving to Ms. Silvestre, the antisemitism that has occurred within Montgomery County Public Schools (MCPS) under your watch hits closest to home—your school district is headquartered a mere 15 miles from here.

MCPS schools have been home to student walkouts featuring calls to “Kill the Jews” and “Bring Hitler Back.” What’s worse, the administrators approved excused absences for the walkouts in violation of district policy.

Finally, Ms. Ford Morthel, Berkley Unified School District was thrust into the national spotlight in perhaps the most public fashion of the group. The allegations are also among the most serious.

Franklin Foer penned a piece for The Atlantic titled “The Golden Age of American Jews is Ending,” which details the horrific experiences of Jewish children in your district.

While not exhaustive, the details of the piece include kids playing Nazi salute songs to their Jewish classmates, chants of “Kill Israel” and “KKK,” and telling Jews to pick up pennies.

There are many issues precipitating these events that we will discuss further, including antisemitic teachers, curriculum, and unions. But you control these things. The buck stops with you.

I’ll say one more thing, which is this: my heart goes out to these Jewish students. Middle and High school are hard enough for kids without the added fear of being Jewish. As a dad, I can hardly fathom sending one of my sons to school knowing he will be exposed to vile, hate-filled discrimination. Yet, many parents are faced with this struggle every day. But it doesn’t have to be this way.

This is the moment for all of us to take a stand against hate, against the indoctrination and radicalization of the next generation of our future leaders.