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EDUCATION AND WORKFORCE
U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
2176 RAYBURN HOUSE OFFICE BUILDING

WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6100

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February 13, 2025

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The Trustees of Columbia University
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Ms. Claire Shipman, Co-Chair
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Dear Dr. Armstrong, Mr. Greenwald, and Ms. Shipman:

For more than a year, Columbia University (Columbia) leaders have made public and private promises to Jewish students, faculty and Members of Congress that the university would take the steps necessary to combat the rampant antisemitism on Columbia's campus. Yet one only has to review the past letters this Committee has sent to the university and the reports issued by both this Committee and the House of Representatives to see that Columbia has failed to uphold its commitments, both because the disciplinary process has failed and because the campus administration has refused to enforce its pre-existing rules. Columbia's continued failure to address the pervasive antisemitism that persists on campus is untenable, particularly given that the university receives billions in federal funding.

Columbia Abandoned the Time, Place, and Manner Rules it Touted Before Congress

In an April 17, 2024, Committee on Education and Workforce (Committee) hearing, then-President Minouche Shafik, Mr. Greenwald, and Ms. Shipman offered strong assurances that antisemitism would not be tolerated at Columbia. Each of these people specifically touted a set

of recently strengthened time, place, and manner rules dubbed the Interim University Policy for Safe Demonstrations as evidence of the university's supposed newfound commitment.¹

However, in September 2024, shortly after Interim President Armstrong took office, Columbia's leaders jettisoned these rules under pressure from the University Senate and its Executive Committee Chair Jeanine D'Armiento.² Columbia subsequently took the position that a September antisemitic protest, which used bullhorns inside an academic building during a course taught by former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, was no longer considered a violation of Columbia's conduct rules.³

Columbia Let Students Arrested in Hamilton Hall Off the Hook After Promising to Expel Them

On April 30, Columbia students broke into the campus administrative building, Hamilton Hall, causing extensive property damage, and even held a custodian hostage. When 22 of these student were arrested for these crimes, the university publicly stated that these students would face expulsion.⁴ At first, Columbia gave these students interim suspensions and sent them written notices that the university planned to expel them.⁵ Yet, despite the seriousness of these crimes, Columbia yielded to the University Senate, lifted nearly all the suspensions, and allowed seven of the students to graduate.⁶ Interim President Armstrong later apologized to the students arrested in Hamilton Hall and at Columbia's unlawful encampment.⁷

The remaining Hamilton Hall cases are currently before the University Judicial Board (UJB). The UJB is appointed by the University Senate's Executive Committee, which under D'Armiento's leadership has consistently worked to thwart accountability for students who violate University rules. There is reason to believe that the UJB will continue this pattern. An

¹ See endorsement of Interim University Policy for Safe Demonstrations by Task Force Report on Antisemitism at 4, <https://www.congress.gov/118/meeting/house/116973/witnesses/HHRG-118-ED00-Wstate-ShafikN-20240417.pdf>; see endorsement of Interim Demonstration Policy at 6,

<https://www.congress.gov/118/meeting/house/116973/witnesses/HHRG-118-ED00-Wstate-GreenwaldD-20240417.pdf>; see endorsement of Interim Demonstration Policy at 7,

<https://www.congress.gov/118/meeting/house/116973/witnesses/HHRG-118-ED00-Wstate-ShipmanC-20240417.pdf>; see Task Force Report on Antisemitism (endorsing Interim University Policy for Safe Demonstrations), an appendix to testimony of Professor David Schizer,

<https://www.congress.gov/118/meeting/house/116973/witnesses/HHRG-118-ED00-Wstate-SchizerD-20240417.pdf>.

² REPUBLICAN STAFF REP. OF H. COMM. ON EDUC. AND THE WORKFORCE (REPUBLICAN STAFF REP.), 118th CONG., ANTISEMITISM ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES EXPOSED, 99-102 (2024),

[10.30.24 committee on education and the workforce republican staff report - antisemitism on college campuses exposed.pdf](#).

³ *Id.* at 102, [10.30.24 committee on education and the workforce republican staff report - antisemitism on college campuses exposed.pdf](#).

⁴ <https://thehill.com/homenews/education/4633548-columbia-threat-expel-students-occupying-hinds-hall/>.

⁵ REPUBLICAN STAFF REP. at 89, [10.30.24 committee on education and the workforce republican staff report - antisemitism on college campuses exposed.pdf](#).

⁶ *Id.* at 93-99, [10.30.24 committee on education and the workforce republican staff report - antisemitism on college campuses exposed.pdf](#).

⁷ <https://www.columbiaspectator.com/news/2024/09/19/im-really-sorry-armstrong-apologizes-to-those-hurt-by-nypd-sweeps/> (last visited Feb. 11, 2025).

analysis by a member of the University Senate observed that “[o]ur campus culture now has a ‘default expectation’ that rules are not enforced and actions no longer have consequences” and that “[p]rivately, many will admit that the system is broken because there are severe social repercussions for faculty members who vote in favor of suspending or expelling a student.”⁸ The lack of accountability for the students arrested in Hamilton Hall is part of a broader pattern of permissiveness toward antisemitic conduct.

Numerous Antisemitic Incidents Have Taken Place at Columbia Since the Fall 2024 Semester Began

Despite promises and commitments to end or curb antisemitism on campus, numerous disturbing antisemitic incidents took place over the course of the fall and have continued into 2025. On September 3, 2024, a group of students obstructed the main entrance to campus, vandalized Columbia’s iconic “Alma Mater” statue, and released a statement lionizing Hamas.⁹ On October 7, 2024, pro-Hamas students held a large rally on campus exalting the October 7, 2023, terrorist attack, chanted “Intifada! Intifada!,” and harassed Jewish students who set up an art installation that honored victims of the attack and called for the release of American hostages.¹⁰

On November 9 and 10, the antisemitic, pro-Hamas student group Columbia University Apartheid Divest (CUAD) staged an “Hind’s House” exhibition glorifying terrorism and the Hamilton Hall break in. The exhibition displayed antisemitic images including a blood-spattered Star of David above the words “Ceasefire Now,” instructed attendees on how to break Columbia rules while evading accountability, and featured remarks calling for a “Zionist-free NYC.”¹¹

On November 11, CUAD protested Veteran’s Day with an anti-American “Martyr’s Day” rally that promoted terrorism and vilified the U.S. military.¹² On November 21, students marched on Columbia’s Hillel, the school’s center for Jewish life, harassed Jewish students entering the building, chanted “long live the Intifada,” and called on Columbia to sever ties with Hillel.¹³ On December 9, an anti-Israel agitator punched a Jewish Columbia student in the face and stole an Israeli flag the Jewish student was carrying at a CUAD-sponsored protest immediately outside campus.¹⁴ On or about December 15, a wall at Columbia-affiliated Barnard College was vandalized with an inverted red triangle, a symbol used by Hamas to indicate targets, above a “Wanted” poster of Columbia Trustee and former Secretary of Homeland Security Jeh Johnson.¹⁵

⁸ REPUBLICAN STAFF REP. at 92, [10.30.24 committee on education and the workforce republican staff report - antisemitism on college campuses exposed.pdf](https://www.congress.gov/118/records/2024/10/30/committee-on-education-and-the-workforce-republican-staff-report-antisemitism-on-college-campuses-exposed.pdf).

⁹ <https://freebeacon.com/campus/chaos-at-columbia-pro-hamas-students-block-entry-to-campus-vandalize-statue-on-first-day-of-classes/> (last visited Feb. 11, 2025).

¹⁰ <https://www.campusreform.org/article/protests-rock-columbia-one-year-anniversary-oct-7-/26514> (last visited Feb. 11, 2025).

¹¹ <https://www.thefp.com/p/a-museum-of-terror-at-columbia-plus> (last visited Feb. 11, 2025).

¹² <https://www.columbiaspectator.com/news/2024/11/12/cuad-holds-martyrs-day-protest-to-reclaim-veterans-day/#:~:text=Share&text=Columbia%20University%20Apartheid%20Divest%20hosted,paper%20poppies%20and%20read%20speeches> (last visited Feb. 11, 2025).

¹³ <https://www.columbiaspectator.com/news/2024/11/22/pro-palestinian-protesters-call-to-sever-all-ties-with-hillel-outside-kraft-center/> (last visited Feb. 11, 2025).

¹⁴ <https://www.jns.org/nypd-investigating-attack-on-jewish-columbia-student-as-hate-crime/> (last visited Feb. 11, 2025).

¹⁵ https://x.com/Eliana_Goldin/status/1868290728272761302 (last visited Feb. 11, 2025).

In the January 21 classroom disruption incident, students masked with keffiyehs disrupted a course on Israeli history and distributed antisemitic flyers calling for violence. One flyer depicted armed Hamas terrorists with the slogan “THE ENEMY WILL NOT SEE TOMORROW,” featuring the inverted red triangle symbol that Hamas uses to mark targets.¹⁶ Another flyer featured a boot stepping on a Star of David with the caption “CRUSH ZIONISM.”¹⁷ A third showed a terrorist holding a burning Israeli flag with the caption “BURN ZIONISM TO THE GROUND.”¹⁸ Since this incident targeted a class on Israeli history taught by an Israeli professor, this conduct must be recognized as targeting, threatening, and inciting terrorism and murder against Jews. Following the January 21 incident, another series of antisemitic activities occurred on January 29, including graffiti targeting Jewish Columbia faculty and damaging a campus sewage system with cement.¹⁹

The fact that Columbia has allowed these activities to continue to take place on campus is of deep concern to the Committee. Columbia’s Charters and Statutes endow the University’s Board of Trustees, president, and deans with the authority and responsibility to administer discipline. Specifically, the Trustees “have full power and authority to direct and prescribe ... the discipline to be observed in the said college,”²⁰ the President holds the authority to “administer discipline in accordance with the Statutes of the University and the rules promulgated pursuant thereto,”²¹ and each school’s dean is empowered “to administer discipline in the school or college of which he or she is dean.”²² Unfortunately, Columbia’s Trustees, interim president, and deans have not met their promises or commitments. Their negligence has created a hostile environment for members of Columbia’s Jewish communities and resulted in severe disruptions to the university’s learning environment.

¹⁶ <https://freebeacon.com/campus/mayhem-at-columbia-pro-hamas-students-storm-classroom-target-jewish-students-with-anti-semitic-flyers-on-first-day-of-spring-semester/> (last visited Feb. 11, 2025).

¹⁷ *Id.*

¹⁸ *Id.*

¹⁹ <https://www.foxnews.com/us/anti-israel-groups-spray-paint-columbia-university-building-cemented-sewage-system> (last visited Feb. 11, 2025).

²⁰ CHARTERS AND STATUTES, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK, AN ACT RELATIVE TO COLUMBIA COLLEGE I THE CITY OF NEW YORK [LAWS OF 1810-CHAPTER 85], § II, at 5 (With Amendments as of May 2024), chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://secretary.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/content/University%20Charter_Statutes_May2024.pdf.

²¹ CHARTERS AND STATUTES, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK, PART TWO – STATUTES, I - THE PRESIDENT, § 2d, at 13 (With Amendments as of May 2024) (duties of the president), chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://secretary.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/content/University%20Charter_Statutes_May2024.pdf.

²² CHARTERS AND STATUTES, COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK, PART TWO – STATUTES, V-OFFICERS OF THE ADMINISTRATION, § 57b, at 38 (With Amendments as of May 2024) (deans), chrome-extension://efaidnbmnnnibpcajpcglclefindmkaj/https://secretary.columbia.edu/sites/default/files/content/University%20Charter_Statutes_May2024.pdf.

Please produce the following items **no later than 12:00 p.m. ET on February 27, 2025:**

1. All disciplinary records, including the complete case files and all UJB records, relating to the following incidents. Please also detail all past disciplinary charges, proposed sanctions, and enacted sanctions for individuals implicated in the incidents below:
 - a. The April 30, 2024, takeover and occupation of Hamilton Hall;
 - b. The September 3, 2024, obstruction of Columbia's entrance, harassment of Jewish students, and related acts of vandalism;
 - c. The September 4, 2024, indoor protest of a class taught by former Secretary Hillary Clinton;
 - d. The October 7, 2024, protest, at which students explicitly called for terrorism, glorified Hamas, and harassed Jewish students;
 - e. The November 9-10, 2024, "Hind's House" exhibition, which instructed attendees on how to violate Columbia rules and promoted terrorism and the exclusion of Jews;
 - f. The November 21, 2024, incident in which students marched on Columbia's Hillel harassed Jewish students, and called for terrorism and for the exclusion of Jews;
 - g. The December 9, 2024, assault on a Columbia University student at an unauthorized protest sponsored by CUAD;
 - h. Threats and incitement directed at Columbia University trustees, including the December 15, 2024, graffiti targeting former Secretary Jeh Johnson with a Hamas inverted red triangle symbol;
 - i. The January 21, 2025, disruption of a History of Modern Israel class in which flyers were distributed threatening and inciting violence toward, including murder of, Jews;
 - j. The January 21, 2025, outdoor protest in which flyers threatening and inciting violence toward, including murder of, Jews were distributed and statements calling for terrorism were made; and
 - k. The January 29, 2025, antisemitic acts of vandalism at the School of International and Public Affairs and Columbia Business School.

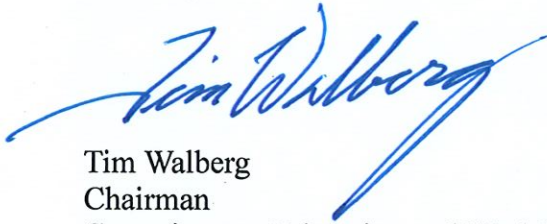
Dr. Katrina Armstrong, Mr. David Greenwald, and Ms. Claire Shipman

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Congress' oversight powers are derived from the U.S. Constitution and have been repeatedly affirmed by the United States Supreme Court.²³ Under House Rule X, the Committee has legislative and oversight jurisdiction over "education or labor generally."²⁴

Sincerely,



Tim Walberg
Chairman
Committee on Education and Workforce

CC:

Abigail Black Elbaum, Vice Chair, The Trustees of Columbia University
Mark Gallogly, Vice Chair, The Trustees of Columbia University
Victor Mendelson, Vice Chair, The Trustees of Columbia University
Dean Dakolias, Vice Chair, The Trustees of Columbia University
Kathy Surace-Smith, Vice Chair, The Trustees of Columbia University
Andrew F. Barth, Member, The Trustees of Columbia University
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Kikka Hanazawa, Member, The Trustees of Columbia University
The Hon. Jeh Johnson, Member, The Trustees of Columbia University
Adam Pritzker, Member, The Trustees of Columbia University
Jonathan Rosand, Member, The Trustees of Columbia University
Shoshana Shendelman, Member, The Trustees of Columbia University
Fermi Wang, Member, The Trustees of Columbia University
Shirley Wang, Member, The Trustees of Columbia University
Alisa Amarosa Wood, Member, The Trustees of Columbia University

²³ See generally U.S. CONST. art. I, § 8, cl. 8; *McGrain v. Daugherty*, 273 U.S. 135, 174 (1927) (holding that "the power of inquiry—with process to enforce it—is an essential and appropriate auxiliary to the legislative function"); *Eastland v. U.S. Servicemen's Fund*, 421 U.S. 491, 504 (1975) (holding that "the power to investigate is inherent in the power to make laws"); *Barenblatt v. United States*, 360 U.S. 109, 111 (1959) (holding that "the scope of power of inquiry ... is as penetrating and far-reaching as the potential power to enact and appropriate under the Constitution.").

²⁴ RULES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, 119th Cong. at 7 (Jan. 16, 2025), <https://rules.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/rules.house.gov/files/documents/houserules119thupdated.pdf>.