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U.S. HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
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March 27, 2025

Dr. Laura Rosenbury, President
Barnard College
219 Milbank Hall
3009 Broadway
New York, NY 10027

Ms. Cheryl Glicker Milstein, Chair
Barnard College Board of Trustees
219 Milbank Hall
3009 Broadway
New York, NY 10027

Dear Dr. Rosenbury and Ms. Milstein:

Unfortunately, incidents of campus antisemitism continue in the aftermath of the Hamas terrorist attack of October 7, 2023.¹ As the Chairman of the Committee on Education and Workforce (Committee) and the Chairman of the Subcommittee on Higher Education and Workforce Development, we write to express our concerns about two recent incidents on the campus of Barnard College (Barnard).

Before turning to the incidents, we commend Barnard's handling of a recent incident on January 21, 2025. Two masked Barnard students disrupted Professor Avi Shilon's course on the "History of Modern Israel" at Columbia University (Columbia), interfering with other students' ability to learn and casting inflammatory antisemitic flyers across the floor.² Within a few weeks, Barnard held these two students accountable by expelling them.³ We commend you for those actions.

¹ STAFF OF H. COMM. ON ED. & THE WORKFORCE, 118TH CONG., ANTISEMITISM ON COLLEGE CAMPUSES EXPOSED (Comm. Print 2024),

https://edworkforce.house.gov/uploadedfiles/10.30.24_committee_on_education_and_the_workforce_republican_staff_report_-_antisemitism_on_college_campuses_exposed.pdf.

² <https://www.algemeiner.com/2025/01/22/crush-zionism-masked-anti-israel-agitators-disrupt-israeli-history-course-columbia-university/>.

³ <https://www.algemeiner.com/2025/02/24/barnard-college-expels-students-who-stormed-israeli-history-class-sources-say/>. Press accounts indicate a third student was enrolled at Columbia University and a fourth has not yet been identified. With respect to the relationship between Barnard and Columbia, Barnard describes itself as "both an

Milbank Hall Occupation at Barnard College

Subsequent to the incident in Professor Shilon's class, on February 26th, dozens of masked agitators gathered at Barnard's Milbank Hall to protest the two student expulsions.⁴ The agitators demanded the reversal of the expulsions as well as amnesty for other anti-Israel protesters who had been disciplined.⁵ Aiming to occupy an area near the office of Dean and Vice President for Campus Life and Student Experience Leslie Grinage, the demonstrators forced their way into Milbank Hall and "physically assaulted a Barnard employee, sending them [sic] to the hospital."⁶ "There is only one solution, intifada revolution" the agitators chanted.⁷ The student agitators rejected Dean Grinage's offer to meet, which was conditioned upon the students' presentation of identification and removal of their masks.⁸ The protesters reportedly occupied the building for more than six hours and caused \$30,000 in damages.⁹

Milstein Library Disruption

Even more recently, on March 5, Barnard and Columbia activists entered Barnard's Milstein Library with the help of an accomplice holding open a back exit door.¹⁰ The agitators disrupted library operations and scattered pro-Hamas pamphlets.¹¹ Some of the pamphlets brought by the agitators included two titled "THE URBAN GUERRILLA CONCEPT: THE RED ARMY FACTION" and "COUNTER-INSURGENCY AND THE UCINTIFADA."¹² In a post on X, masked protesters can be seen carrying a poster with President Rosenbury's image and the message, "For complicity in genocide."¹³ In addition, the anti-Israel campus group Columbia University Apartheid Divest

independently accredited and incorporated educational institution as well as an official college of Columbia University," and refers to its partnership with Columbia as "unique in higher education." While Barnard "stands as an independent college for women with its own curriculum, faculty, admissions standards, graduation requirements, trustees, endowment, and physical plant," Barnard and Columbia "share resources, thereby giving students open access to the courses, facilities, and libraries of both schools." <https://catalog.barnard.edu/barnard-college/college/#:~:text=Barnard%20is%20both%20an%20independently,rich%2C%20value%2Denhancing%20partnership>.

⁴ <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/02/26/nyregion/barnard-college-student-sit-in.html#>.

⁵ *Id.*

⁶ <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/02/26/nyregion/barnard-college-student-sit-in.html>.

⁷ <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/02/26/nyregion/barnard-college-student-sit-in.html#>.

⁸ <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/02/26/nyregion/barnard-college-student-sit-in.html#>.

⁹ <https://freebeacon.com/campus/barnard-students-hoist-effigy-of-college-president-disseminate-hamas-pamphlets-as-they-occupy-library/>.

¹⁰ <https://freebeacon.com/campus/barnard-students-hoist-effigy-of-college-president-disseminate-hamas-pamphlets-as-they-occupy-library/>.

¹¹ <https://freebeacon.com/campus/barnard-students-hoist-effigy-of-college-president-disseminate-hamas-pamphlets-as-they-occupy-library/>.

¹² <https://freebeacon.com/campus/barnard-students-hoist-effigy-of-college-president-disseminate-hamas-pamphlets-as-they-occupy-library/>.

¹³ <https://x.com/CUJewsIsraelis/status/1897369646040539503>

posted an Instagram message: “PUPPET PRESIDENT ROSENBURY, are the Zionist donors pulling the strings? You’re committing genocide!”¹⁴ A little later, at approximately 4:35 p.m., a bomb threat prompted an evacuation of the library, requiring the response of dozens of New York City Police officers who spent nearly two hours clearing students from the scene.¹⁵ As police worked to restore the peace, some Barnard and Columbia students chanted in solidarity, “NYPD, KKK, they are all the same.”¹⁶ Several protesters who refused the orders of police officers were arrested.¹⁷

As you know, postsecondary institutions that receive federal funds must maintain a safe learning environment and fulfill all obligations under Title VI of the *Civil Rights Act* and its accompanying regulations. This includes the obligation to promptly address discrimination, harassment, and any hostile environment, wherever such circumstances may be found to exist.

To help the Committee better understand these two incidents, please provide a briefing to Committee staff **no later than April 10, 2025**. We expect those providing the briefing to be prepared to respond to all questions about these incidents, including but not limited to where the university is in its investigation into these incidents and what disciplinary action is being taken, and to provide any material requested in a timely manner.

Finally, we note that Congress’ oversight power derives from Article I of the U.S. Constitution and has been repeatedly affirmed by the United States Supreme Court.¹⁸ Under House Rule X, the Committee’s legislative and oversight jurisdiction is broad, extending to “education . . . generally” and “laws, programs, and Government activities relating to domestic educational programs and institutions and programs of student assistance within the jurisdiction of other committees.”¹⁹

¹⁴ https://www.instagram.com/p/DG1IZ2oJmwc/?img_index=2&igsh=MTd5dnIudWslMHRobQ%3D%3D

¹⁵ <https://freebeacon.com/campus/barnard-students-hoist-effigy-of-college-president-disseminate-hamas-pamphlets-as-they-occupy-library/>; <https://nypost.com/2025/03/05/us-news/barnard-college-bomb-threat-prompts-evacuation-as-anti-israel-protesters-occupy-campus-building/>

¹⁶ <https://nypost.com/2025/03/05/us-news/barnard-college-bomb-threat-prompts-evacuation-as-anti-israel-protesters-occupy-campus-building/>

¹⁷ <https://www.cbsnews.com/newyork/news/pro-palestinian-demonstrators-occupy-barnard-college-library/>

¹⁸ 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.”).

¹⁹ RULES OF THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES, 119th Cong. at 7, 10 (Jan. 16, 2025), <https://rules.house.gov/sites/evo-subsites/rules.house.gov/files/documents/houserules119thupdated.pdf>.

Dr. Rosenbury and Ms. Milstein

March 27, 2025

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Should you have any questions, please contact Kent Talbert at kent.talbert@mail.house.gov or 202-225-4527.

Sincerely,



Tim Walberg
Chairman
Committee on Education and Workforce



Burgess Owens
Chairman
Subcommittee on Higher Education and
Workforce Development

Enclosure (Instructions)

CC: Dr. Katrina Armstrong, Interim President, Columbia University
The Hon. Linda McMahon, Secretary of Education
The Hon. Pamela Bondi, Attorney General