

April 2, 2025



Statement on Department of Education Investigation of Indiana University

The U.S. Department of Education has announced that Indiana University is among the sixty colleges and universities whose actions in response to antisemitic discrimination and harassment are under investigation. We do not know the specific charges that have been made, but the Alliance is open to cooperation with the investigation.

We are encouraged by the fact that Indiana University has made considerable effort to address antisemitism during the past year. Among the steps IU's Board and administration have taken are:

1. Creation of a new Expressive Activity Policy, as recommended by the Cooley Law Firm report
2. Increased police patrols and protection focused on safeguarding Jewish groups
3. Antisemitism training for university leadership, provided by the Anti-Defamation League and the Academic Engagement Network
4. Increased utilization of the Antisemitism Advisory Board for the Provost and adoption of several of its recommendations
5. Improved collaboration and communication with Jewish campus and community groups, including for the October 7th Memorial observance
6. Support for special initiatives, such as the Mezuzah Project and a Kosher dining option

The selection of David Reingold as IU's next Chancellor also signals, to those of us who know him well, that the university will continue to be sensitive to campus culture issues and especially resolute in its efforts against antisemitism.

To be sure, much remains to be done. IU's Expressive Activity Policy and its Code of Conduct recognize the need to restrain overtly hostile activity, including antisemitism. These policies need to be enforced consistently. Such hostility, some of which continues to be directed against Jewish students and faculty, needs to be dealt with appropriately. Official sponsorship of programs that are clearly biased, such as a recent series of teach-ins and lectures under the auspices of the College's Office of Diversity and Inclusion, needs to be rethought and properly balanced.

These problems require ongoing attention, but they should be viewed in the context of the constructive steps IU has taken, as noted above.

We acknowledge that the Department of Education's investigation involves significant risks, potentially including the loss of Federal grants and contracts. And we also note the concerns expressed by several of our colleagues that complying with the recommendations of the Federal investigation, as well as some of the efforts that IU authorities have made against antisemitism, could be at odds with the university's commitment to academic freedom and free expression.

However, we are confident that IU can fulfill its responsibilities under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act (which deals with antisemitism) without compromising its values and mission. In our view, the progress it has made in the past year demonstrates that. The university should work with the Department of Education to identify additional measures it can adopt to ensure that there is no discrimination and harassment against any of its faculty, students and staff, including its Jewish ones.