

# [***These Are The Billionaires Pressing Universities Over Claims Of Surging Antisemitism***](https://advance.lexis.com/api/document?collection=news&id=urn:contentItem:69VS-TNM1-DXVP-51XR-00000-00&context=1516831)

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**Highlight:** Billionaires Bill Ackman, Elon Musk and Ronald Lauder have piled on prestigious universities over their responses to reports of rising antisemitism on campus.

**Body**

**Topline**

As university leaders at Harvard, the University of Pennsylvania and the Massachusetts Institute of Technology come under fire over their responses to reports of rising antisemitism on campus, a group of high-profile billionaires, from hedge fund manager Bill Ackman to X owner Elon Musk, have asserted their influence, calling for school presidents to resign with some billionaires threatening to withhold donations.

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Billionaire Pershing Square Capital Management CEO Bill Ackman, and these other billionaires, have pushed universities to address antisemitism on campus.

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**Key Facts**

, (worth $3.9 billion according to Forbesreal-time ranking) the CEO of Pershing Square Capital Management, has led a torrent of criticisms over Harvard leadership and students involved in pro-Palestinian protests, calling on university officials in October torelease the namesof students who signed a statement putting sole blame on Israel for Hamas Oct. 7 attack, andurgingthe Ivy League to suspend students who he claimed physically removed a Jewish student from a pro-Palestinian protest (protest organizers told Forbes at the time organizers did not touch the student in question).

In recent weeks, Ackman hasdirectedhis criticism at Harvard President Claudine Gay,calling onthe recently appointed president to resign in disgrace over her response to a line of questioning at acongressional hearingon antisemitism earlier this month, in which Gay said calls for the genocide of Jewish people would violate Harvard s policies on harassment depending on the context (Gay laterapologizedfor her response).

, the world s richest person (at$241 billion, according to Forbes), echoed Ackman s calls for Gay as well as Penn president Liz Magill and MIT president Sally Kornbluth to resign, with the billionaire owner of SpaceX, Texla and X saying in aposton his social media platform: Calling for the genocide [death] of anyone obviously constitutes harassment.

, the chairman of cosmetics giant Clinique Laboratories and youngest son of late makeup mogul Estée Lauder (worth $4.6 billion), threatened in October to suspend his donations to Penn, CNNreported,writing a letter to then-president Magill arguing school leadership had forced him to reexamine my financial support absent satisfactory measures to address antisemitism at the university.

In his letter, Lauder pointed to aPalestine Writes Literature Festivalthe Ivy League school held in September, an event that sparkedwidespread backlashand calls for Magill and university board chair Scott Bok to resign over claims the university was fostering an atmosphere of antisemitism while university leadership initiallydefendedBok and Magill, the duo resigned within hours of each other amid renewed calls for Magill s resignation following her congressional testimony earlier this month.

Apollo Global Management CEO($5.9 billion) alsopushed backagainst Penn leadership in an Oct. 11op-edin The Free Press, taking issue with the Palestine Writes Literature Festival.

Rowan, in his op-ed, called on donors to close their checkbooks until Magill and Bok resign.

Hedge fund founder **(**$2.8 billion)threatened to pullhis donations to Columbia in October over pro-Palestinian protests on campus,tellingFox Business The Claman Countdown those students have sh\*\* for brains.

Cooperman also called for university officials to fire modern Arab ***politics*** professor Joseph Massad, citing anOct. 8 articlein which the professor called Hamas attack on Israel awesome (Massad also faced calls to resign in anonline petition signed bynearly 79,000 people).

($1.9 billion), the founder of Talpion Fund Management who received his masters of business administration from Columbia, abruptlyleft the boardof the Columbia Business School last month, claiming blatantly anti-Jewish student groups and professors are allowed to operate with complete impunity at the Manhattan Ivy League, and that the school s integrity and reputation have been significantly compromised by a moral cowardice that appears beyond repair.

Swieca cited rhetoric used at pro-Palestinian protests on campus, including the use of the phrase from the river to the sea, a pro-Palestinian chant whose meaning has long been mired in controversy, with the Anti-Defamation League deeming it antisemitic, and Rep. Rashida Tlaib (D-Mich.) who wascensuredfor using the phrase labeling it an aspirational call for freedom, human rights and peaceful coexistence.

Stone Ridge Asset Management CEO**Ross Stevens**, a Penn alum (though not listed as a billionaire by Forbes),threatenedlast week to withdraw a $100 million donation in Stone Ridge shares, arguing the school violated an agreement for the major contribution, saying the Ivy League kept a permissive approach to hate speech calling for violence against Jews and a laissez faire attitude toward harassment and discrimination against Jewish students (Magill resigned two days after the Stevens sent the letter).

**News Peg**

Amid mounting calls for Gay s resignation, Harvard s governing body the Harvard Corporation announced Tuesday morning Gay willkeep her job, defending Gay as the right leader to help our community heal and to address the very serious societal issues we are facing. The announcement comes three days after Magillannounced her resignationfrom Penn.

**Further Reading**

Harvard Governing Body Unanimously Backs Claudine Gay As President(Forbes)

Words Matter : Harvard President Apologizes Amid Antisemitism Testimony Backlash(Forbes)

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