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Sent: Friday, September 18, 2020 8:41 AM
To: Ethnic Studies <EthnicStudies@cde.ca.gov>
Subject: [EXTERNAL] AB-331 ETHNIC STUDIES

To the Instructional Quality Commission:

Social responsibility and justice demands that we face the racist and ethnic hatreds which are in some ways embedded in our society. Against that background, it is shocking to me that an ethnic group which was subject to the most grotesque genocide in human history – a mass murder which took place so recently in our history that there are those alive today who witnessed it –is not currently recognized in the draft AB-331 as an ethnic group for which a lesson plan should be presented. My grandparents celebrated their wedding at home, given the prominently displayed “No Dogs or Jews Allowed” signs that hotels proudly displayed in their windows. Last year, 2019, saw the highest recorded numbers of anti-semitic criminal attacks in U.S. history. When we go to our places of worship, we are met by armed guards and pass through security screens, because the synagogue shootings in Pittsburgh and Poway show us we are not safe and our most sacred of places.

The world Jewish community comprises people from diverse races and geographical origins, yet Jewish people are seen as a monolithic whole and assumed to possess the same negative behavioral traits and the same political views by virtue of their “Jewishness,” the very definition of racism. Moral responsibility and recognition of our history demands that this bill require inclusion of lessons about antisemitism, and an accurate definition of antisemitism, such as that President Obama led the U.S. State Department to adopt in 2010.

I am requesting to request that content recognizing Jewish-Americans as a distinct minority ethnicity in the United States, and lessons on the history of this people in the U.S., and anti-semitism and bigotry, be included in AB-331.

Thank you,

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