

**From:** Natalie Arbatman

**Sent:** Monday, August 10, 2020 4:02 PM

**To:** Ethnic Studies

**Subject:** [EXTERNAL] Comment on Ethnic Studies Model Curriculum

Hello,

My name is Natalie Arbatman and I am a Jew from the former Soviet Union. Recently, at a conference for teens who are passionate about Israel and combating antisemitism, I sat at my desk and listened to over 120 Jewish students all around the country recount their experiences with anti-Semitism. From New York to Florida to California and up to Canada, teenagers are forced to confront people who believe not only that they have no right to live in their ancestral homeland of Israel, but that because of their religion, they deserve to be ridiculed and threatened. Whether it be their synagogues vandalized with graffiti swastikas, their friends being called "dirty pigs" because they chose to display their Judaism through a Star of David necklace, or having their lives threatened online for posting about their family's safety as rockets fly from Gaza into their neighborhoods, Jewish students face blatant racism everyday. As a daughter of Soviet Jews, I am beyond grateful to live in America, a place where I can freely express my culture, opinions, and faith... at least I was. The proposed ethnic studies curriculum not only mandates California schools to normalize anti-Semitism and leave room for teachers to teach about antisemitic movements, but it instills in young, impressionable minds the same values that drove the Nazis to exterminate 6 million Jews, including much of my family, in WW2. I urge you all to consider the impact this clearly biased and discriminatory curriculum will have on Jewish students like myself. Please do let our history be erased, and our present be threatened. Thank you.