



OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR

November 13, 2023

Dear President Drake, Chancellor García, and Chancellor Christian:

I appreciated our productive conversation on November 1, 2023. It is imperative to focus on the urgent and continuing priority we discussed: student safety.

Over the past month, I have heard from hundreds of students and families who feel unsafe and unwelcome on our college campuses. This feeling of fear is, unfortunately, grounded in actual acts of hate. Here in California and across the nation, students have been physically assaulted for voicing support for Israel and targeted because of a Jewish, Arab, or Muslim identity. Property has been vandalized with threats of violence and posters of kidnapped victims torn down. Antisemitism globally and at home has proliferated at a shocking speed and scale. And some faculty have inflamed the discourse with violent rhetoric.

This is unacceptable and demands action.

First, I request that campus safety and community policies be enforced decisively and even-handedly. Several college and university leaders have led by example. Immediately after a UC Davis assistant professor made an antisemitic post online that called for violence, Chancellor May “absolutely condemn[ed]” the threat and swiftly initiated an investigation. Immediately after CSU property was vandalized with messages that made students feel unsafe, the university investigated and the perpetrator was removed from the campus community. Strong and immediate enforcement condemning hate and violence is vital.

Second, I request that you proactively cultivate spaces for affinity and dialogue. Student organizations, including Hillels and student groups in support of

Palestinians, are fearful of becoming targets of hate and violence – affinity spaces should be connected to campus safety and mental health resources. Furthermore, campuses are rightly places for critical analysis and open discourse – every opportunity to model productive dialogue and common understanding should be taken.

My Administration is confronting hate on all fronts, and your campuses are indispensable in this effort. State-funded research by universities, such as CSU San Bernardino's Center for the Study of Hate and Extremism, provides a data-centered foundation to combat hate. In turn, academic research informs educational resources to promote mutual understanding – the antidote to hate – such as the statewide *CA vs. Hate* Campaign and the Governor's Council for Holocaust and Genocide Education. Notwithstanding education efforts, hate will inevitably manifest, so my Administration and the Legislature doubled funding to \$40 million available for security grants to prevent and mitigate community loss and grief. And finally, to support those unfortunately impacted by hate directly and indirectly, my Administration and the Legislature invested \$150 million to support survivors of hate crimes and \$4.7 billion to meet the mental health needs of all young people as part of the Master Plan for Kids' Mental Health.

I appreciate the efforts you have already taken to foster safe and inclusive environments on your campuses and I look forward to being updated on the state of your renewed efforts to further advance safety and belonging. The safety of our college and university communities is of top importance — please call on me when my assistance would be helpful.

Sincerely,

Gavin Newsom
Governor of California