

Help us Protect Free Speech in Montgomery County



Speech criticizing the Israeli government, or any government, is political speech protected under the First Amendment, and cannot be suppressed.

American Civil Liberties Union

Montgomery County Council is considering a resolution that will adopt a re-definition of antisemitism. The IHRA definition **threatens free speech and civil liberties by wrongfully and harmfully conflating criticism of Israel as being anti-Semitic.**

Adoption of the “IHRA definition” is divisive and built upon a longstanding campaign to censor Palestinians and human rights activists, often led by right-wing groups. Controversial definitions do more to divide us than bring us together. The Trump Administration utilized this tactic through a 2019 Executive Order directing government agencies, including the Department of Education, to use the distorted IHRA definition to censor free speech about Palestine on college campuses. There was intense criticism by several prominent national human rights and civil liberties groups.

Whether it is Florida’s “**Don’t say Gay**,” Montgomery, Alabama’s resolution against **Critical Race Theory** or Montgomery County efforts to **silence criticism of Israel’s human rights abuses**, people of conscience need to take a stand against government efforts to silence dissent or political beliefs, and stand up for human rights.

How you can help

You can help us **reject the false choice between standing up against anti-Palestinian racism and antisemitism.** Creating such a false choice threatens all of our collective safety.

Use the QR code or visit linktr.ee/freespeechmoco to

1. Send an email to the Council
2. Sign our community petition
3. Learn more about the harmful impacts of the IHRA definition



Local and national organizations, including places of worship, are also invited to sign our organizational letter and join our growing coalition



What Organizations have Said about the IHRA Re-Definition

Proponents of overly broad definitions of antisemitism and proponents of eliminating teaching about the history of racial and other violence [critical race theory] share a desire to mobilize the government to enforce particular, emaciated accounts of history, harm, and injury.

American Association of University Professors

If criticism of Israeli policies is reflexively conflated with anti-Semitism, then robust debate and academic freedom will suffer.

Washington Post Editorial Board

Only bold action will build real safety for all of our communities. Make no mistake: Legislating the IHRA definition is not about Jewish safety. The only thing it secures is impunity for decades of violating international law and trampling on Palestinian human rights... We know that freedom and safety for any of us relies on freedom and safety for all of us.

Jewish Voice for Peace

Harsh criticism of Israel — even if it involves questioning the existence of a Jewish state — is speech protected by the 1st Amendment. Students have a right to be protected from harassment and discrimination, but they don't need to be shielded from opinions they find objectionable or offensive.

LA Times Editorial Board

I promise to protect and defend the Constitution of the United States.

All Montgomery County Councilmembers (in their oath of office)

A few of the organizations who oppose MoCo's adoption of the IHRA re-definition:

