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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE / FRIDAY, JUNE 7, 2024

ANTISEMITISM FROM CINCINNATI SOCIALISTS AND DIVESTCINCIPRIDE LEADS CINCINNATI PRIDE BOARD TO ENCOURAGE JEWISH MEMBERS' RESIGNATION

The following statement is attributed to the Jewish Federation of Cincinnati and its public affairs arm, the Jewish Community Relations Council:

Cincinnati — Cincinnati Socialists' and DivestCinciPride's inflammatory rhetoric have created divisions within the LGBTQIA+ and the Jewish community, leading to targeted harassment of local Jews.

On Sunday, June 2, 2024, at NKY Pride, members of Cincinnati Socialists distributed literature detailing "Netanyahu's Final Solution." Language comparing Israel's fight for self-preservation to Nazi Germany's "Final Solution" is a gross manipulation that trivializes the Holocaust. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict is a complex territorial and national dispute, not an orchestrated attempt at genocide. After being removed from NKY Pride by the festival's organizers, Cincinnati Socialists and DivestCinciPride launched a public campaign against two Jewish individuals on Cincinnati Pride's board, posting pictures of them and their families. They also targeted other non-Jewish public officials and others associated with NKY Pride.

Through their words and deeds, Cincinnati Socialists and DivestCinciPride have made clear that they mean to obstruct the process of inclusive community building. Under duress from these groups, the Cincinnati Pride Board of Directors made significant missteps, capitulating to antisemitic pressure. While we recognize that they were put in an untenable position, given their historic commitment to standing up for marginalized communities, we would have expected the Cincinnati Pride Board to hold firm in the face of antisemitism, and protect the Jewish members of their board. Instead, many members of Pride's board pressured the targeted Jewish members to resign. This behavior undermines Cincinnati Pride's principles and nondiscrimination policy, and—intentionally or not—they emboldened antisemitic actors in their behavior.

We recognize the complex range of opinions held by Cincinnatians regarding the ongoing war in Gaza. We mourn the tragic, dramatic loss of life due to this war, and we want to see it end. However, the overwhelming majority of Jews worldwide have a connection with Israel that transcends current events. While critique of Israel is not innately antisemitic, anti-Zionism, when it targets individuals for having any connection to Israel, often serves as a guise for antisemitic activity. The pressure campaign seeking the Jewish board members' resignation underscores the problematic nature of any policy or position that prevents individuals with a relationship to Israel from serving in any public role, because such efforts effectively ban normative Jewish involvement therein.

This situation has surfaced serious concerns regarding the handling of anti-Zionism and antisemitism in our community. We call for an immediate end to inflammatory rhetoric and public shaming by groups like Cincinnati Socialists and DivestCinciPride. Their behavior only deepens divisions and fosters hostility. In turn, we also urge Cincinnati Pride to take meaningful steps to address issues of antisemitism and ensure their organization creates a safe environment for everyone, including Jews.

Cincinnati's Jewish community stands ready to assist Cincinnati Pride if it commits to being a partner in combating antisemitism, and we have extended an invitation to Cincinnati Pride's board in hopes of future dialogue.

About the Jewish Federation of Cincinnati

The Jewish Federation of Cincinnati envisions an exceptional Cincinnati Jewish community and, through the community-wide strategic plan Cincinnati 2030, brings diverse groups together to build it. We raise money and use a volunteer-driven, transparent process to distribute it to the local, national, and global programs that need it most. We connect our community agencies with the leaders and expertise they need to thrive. And we work to protect Jewish security by educating the community and advocating for Israel. We do all of this to help people in need, create an engaged community, assure our Jewish future, and support the Jewish people in Cincinnati, in Israel, and throughout the world. For more information, please visit jewishcincinnati.org

About the Jewish Community Relations Council

The Jewish Community Relations Council (JCRC) is the non-partisan public affairs arm of the Jewish Federation of Cincinnati. Its mission is to protect Jewish security, recognizing that Jewish security depends on a just society for all. To achieve this mission, it advocates for the local Jewish community through Israel education; fighting antisemitism, discrimination, and racism; and building understanding with other ethnic, religious, and civic organizations. For more information, please visit jewishcincinnati.org/jcrc

Learn more at jewishcincinnati.org.

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