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April 21, 2024

President Minouche Shafik  
202 Low Library  
535 W 116th St.  
New York, NY 10027

President Shafik,

We were heartened to hear your commitment to enforcing rules surrounding protests during Wednesday's congressional hearing and to ensuring that those who fail to abide by the university's regulations are disciplined. However, the protests that have ensued in the days since that hearing have once again tested every limit, strained every restriction, and broken every regulation put in place by your administration. Students and agitators currently stand outside and inside the gates of Columbia waving Hamas flags, spewing hate-filled slogans, including anti-Jewish slurs urging Jews to "go back to Poland" and signs labeling Jews the next targets of Hamas.

The situation has grown urgent, with threats of violence being hurled against Jewish students as well as calls inciting and glorifying violence against Jews and endorsing terrorism. The atmosphere on campus has already spiraled past any reasonable measure of allowable political protest and risks devolving into the kind of violence that makes good on these activists' terrifying promises. This is not the environment free of discrimination and harassment you championed before Congress and not an environment where Jewish students could possibly be free to learn, walk safely, or focus on their studies for the final weeks of the semester. It is an environment in which many Jews at Columbia feel vulnerable, targeted, and terrified as they prepare for the upcoming holiday of Passover, which begins tomorrow evening.

We call on you to fulfill your stated commitment before Congress this week and act on your promise to confront antisemitism at Columbia. You must offer more than just words; you must follow through with action. We call on you to exercise your leadership now in this moment of crisis on campus, enforce Columbia's rules, and shut these protests down as they have called for violence and do not comport with any time, place, or manner restrictions the university has put into place. We call on you to speak to the campus community and state clearly what disciplinary action has and will be taken against those who have broken the university's rules. Your campus needs to hear from you, now. These protests have turned Columbia into a place where Jewish students have reason to fear for their safety and from which many are fleeing, actually fleeing, in fear.

We note that the White House has issued a [statement](#) condemning the protesters' antisemitic and violent rhetoric on Columbia's campus. We are sharing this letter with city, state, and federal officials, and we urge their cooperation and action to uphold the law.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Ted Deutch".

Congressman Ted Deutch  
AJC Chief Executive Officer  
Edward and Sandra Meyer Office of the CEO  
*Member of Congress (2010-22)*

CC: Columbia Board of Trustees  
Chairs, Columbia Task Force on Antisemitism  
Members of the House Committee on Education and the Workforce  
New York Governor Kathy Hochul  
New York Attorney General Letitia James  
New York City Mayor Eric Adams  
New York City Police Commissioner Edward Caban  
Manhattan District Attorney Alvin Bragg