Resolution

WHEREAS, antisemitism is the centuries-old bigotry and form of racism faced by Jewish people simply because they are Jews; and

WHEREAS, in 2019 the Federal Bureau of Investigation reported a 14 percent increase in hate crimes against Jews or Jewish institutions and found that attacks against Jews or Jewish institutions made up 60.3 percent of all religious-based hate crimes; and

WHEREAS, on October 27, 2021, it was the third anniversary of the grievous terrorist act at the Tree of Life Synagogue in Pittsburgh, where eleven Jews were killed while immersed in Sabbath prayer; becoming the deadliest act of antisemitism in our nation’s history; and

WHEREAS, in the past week, we have witnessed acts of antisemitism in Austin-Travis County that worry and concern us; and

WHEREAS, there is an urgent need to ensure the safety and security of Jewish communities, including synagogues, schools, cemeteries, and other institutions; and

WHEREAS, antisemitism includes blaming Jews as Jews when things go wrong; calling for, aiding, or justifying the killing or harming of Jews in the name of a radical ideology or extremist view of religion; or making mendacious, dehumanizing, demonizing, or stereotyped allegations about Jews; and

WHEREAS, antisemitism also includes denying the Jewish people their right to self-determination; and

WHEREAS, Travis County is fully committed to the safety, security, and equal treatment of its residents; and

WHEREAS, hate crimes and hate incidents can affect members of our community of various religions, ancestry, ages, sexual orientation, genders, ages, national origins, ethnicity, or abilities or disabilities and can leave entire communities feeling fearful and concerned for their safety; and

WHEREAS, Travis County is fully committed to the safety, security, and equal treatment of all of its residents regardless of religion, ancestry, age, sexual orientation, gender, age, national origin, ethnicity, or disability; and

WHEREAS, each individual has the ability to promote inclusiveness, celebrate diversity, support all fellow community members, and reject hate and bias in all forms; and

WHEREAS, it is critical that Travis County take leadership and stand in solidarity with its Jewish communities to send a message that discriminatory and hate-motivated behavior or violence will not be tolerated; and
WHEREAS, all persons are encouraged to report any such antisemitic, incidents to the proper authorities for investigation; and

WHEREAS, Travis County affirms its commitment to the well-being and safety of its Jewish community members and ensure they know they are not alone and that the county is committed to ending the spread of all forms of hate and bigotry.

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED by the Travis County Commissioners Court that:

1. Travis County condemns antisemitic acts and statements as hateful expressions of intolerance that are contradictory to the values that define the people of Travis County.

2. Travis County denounces antisemitism and all hateful speech and violent action that casts blame, promotes racism or discrimination, or harms the Travis County Jewish community.

3. Travis County joins cities, counties, and states across the country in affirming its commitment to the safety and well-being of all community members, including the Jewish communities, and in combatting hate crimes targeting Jews.

4. Travis County Commissioners Court will continue its efforts to protect residents and targets and victims of hate, and to prosecute and curb hate acts in partnership with the Austin/Travis County Hate Crimes Task Force, which includes the Travis County District Attorney’s Office, Travis County Attorney’s Office, Travis County Sheriff’s Office, Constables’ Offices, Travis County Justice Planning, Juvenile Probation, among others.

5. Travis County pledges to support the inalienable rights of all people in our community, who should be treated with respect. We call upon all our residents to treat each other with respect.

6. Travis County urges residents to join us in calling attention to these harms and denouncing antisemitism.