Senate of the Associated Students of the University of Nevada

88th Session, 2020-2021

A RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF RECOGNIZING JEWISH HOLIDAYS

Resolution Number: 90

Authored By: Senator Supple, Senator Ribeiro, and Senator Taylor

Sponsored By: The Committee on Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion

Whereas, Senate Resolution 87-121, A Resolution Against Anti-Semitism on Campus and in Nevada, calls for action to be taken to protect the Jewish population;[1]

Whereas, important Christian and Catholic holidays are recognized by the University of Nevada, Reno and some are granted time off for students and staff;[2]

Whereas, important Jewish holidays are not recognized by the University of Nevada, Reno;

Whereas, the Nevada System of Higher education has a policy that instructors must allow students time off to observe religious holidays but must be submitted in writing;[3]

Whereas, instructors may not be accommodating with assignments and due dates although time off is allowed to observe a religious holiday;

Whereas, the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) believes that in order to facilitate the creation of a respectful and inclusive school or workplace, "diligent efforts should be made to accommodate observance of the High Holidays and other religious practices;"[4]

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[1] http://de5u0yfu98nbk.cloudfront.net/wp-content/uploads/2020/08/28122029/87-121_S.Res_AResolutionAgainstAntiSemitismOnCampusAndInNevada.pdf

[2] https://www.unr.edu/provost/faculty-affairs/instructional-resources/syllabus

[3] https://www.unr.edu/administrative-manual/3000-3999-students/3020-class-absence-policy

[4] https://www.adl.org/education/resources/tools-and-strategies/school-workplace-accommodations-for-jewish-high-holidays

Whereas, the United States Bill of Rights' first amendment, through the Free Exercise Clause, allows for the freedom to practice religion;

Whereas, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 outlaws discrimination on the basis of religion;[5]

Whereas, the Religious Freedom Restoration Act of 1993 prohibits "any agency, department or official of the United States or any State from substantially burdening a person's exercise of religion[…];"[6]

Whereas, the Universal Declaration of Human Rights states that all humans are granted the right to practice religion;[7]

Whereas, Jewish students at the University of Nevada, Reno face anti-Semitism more than on other university campuses around the United States;[8]

Whereas, Jewish students on campus may not feel safe disclosing their religious practices to faculty or staff in order to receive a day off of school to observe a religious holiday—especially if the instructor may not accommodate assignments, tests, etc.;

Whereas, the Supreme Court in 2003 did not meet because the Supreme Court was meant to commence on the date of Yom Kippur and set a precedent to not meet on Yom Kippur;[9]

Whereas, acknowledging Jewish holidays on campus would show University support for Jewish students;

Whereas, instructors at all NSHE institutions should be accommodating to the religious practices of their students whose holidays are not accommodated in the NSHE calendar;

Be it resolved that, the Nevada System of Higher Education include Jewish holidays on its calendars;

Be it further resolved that, the Nevada System of High Education discuss allowing time off to celebrate Yom Kippur and the first two days of Sukkot;

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[5] https://www.eeoc.gov/statutes/title-vii-civil-rights-act-1964
[6] https://www.congress.gov/bill/103rd-congress/house-bill/1308
[7] https://www.un.org/en/universal-declaration-human-rights/
[8] http://nevadasagebrush.com/blog/2019/05/07/unr-named-in-top-neo-nazi-incidents/
[9] https://www.jta.org/2003/09/05/archive/in-deference-to-jewish-justices-supreme-court-to-delay-opening

Be it further resolved that, the Nevada System of Higher Education and its institutions discuss a new system of allowing time off for all holidays in respect to all religious and cultural practices for students, faculty, and staff;

Be it further resolved that, this resolution be sent to the President of the University of Nevada, Reno, Brain Sandoval, Chair of the NSHE Board of Regents, Mark Doubrava, Director of Hillel of Northern Nevada, Addy Garfinkel-Berry, Chair of NSHE Board of Regents Cultural Diversity Committee, Laura Perkins.

Adopted in Senate on October 7th, 2020

Attest:

Hope Cronan, Senate Secretary

Keegan Murphy, Speaker of the Senate