

Texas Right to Know: "Claims of Jews Killing Jesus" Punishable as Antisemitism Under Current Texas Law

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Texas Right to Know →
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BRADY, Texas, April 11, 2025 /PRNewswire/ -- Members of the Texas Senate Education K-16 Committee, chaired by Brandon Creighton (Conroe), and the House State Affairs Committee, chaired by Ken King (Canadian), unanimously voted for antisemitism bills after being informed that citizens would be judged based upon vague definitions in TX Government Code Sec. 448.001(2) which states "Antisemitism means a certain perception of Jews that may be expressed as hatred toward Jews." ... "Examples of antisemitism are included with the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) 'Working Definition of Antisemitism' adopted on May 26, 2016" (IHRA).

"These bills establish 'thought crimes' and create a protected class, violating equal protection under law designed to safeguard all citizens. They are discriminatory and must be repealed. Section 448.001 of the Texas Government Code should be expunged due to its vague definitions and its infringement on 1st Amendment rights. Today's restrictions impose administrative penalties on students; tomorrow, they could lead to civil or even criminal charges for alleged antisemitism that currently results in imprisonment in 13 EU countries," warns Sheila Hemphill, CEO of Texas Right to Know.

"The authors of the bills were unaware that the law includes the 'Working Definitions of Antisemitism,' which is a list of 11 examples that are defined and controlled by a foreign entity. Thirty-seven states have adopted this same extraordinarily vague IHRA definition and list of examples that directly violate 1st Amendment protected speech.



After speaking before the committee hearings, directly with many members, I personally contacted their offices who did not object to example 9 in the IHRA that would prosecute 'claims of Jews killing Jesus,' as antisemitism, despite the Jews intent to kill Jesus repeatedly referenced throughout the Bible. Disturbingly, they have no objections to vague and ambiguous terms like 'a certain perception' for adjudication or restricting protected, non-violent speech that expresses emotions.

Two companion bills, **SB 326 (Phil King/Weatherford)** and **HB 2391, (Giovanni Capriglione/Southlake)** would determine if a violation of a public school and university students' code of conduct was motivated by antisemitism. Two other bills, **SB 695 (Judith Zaffirini/Laredo)** and **HB 295 (Matt Shaheen/Prosper)**, propose to add the word "antisemitism" to the definition of bullying. These proposed additions are unnecessary since bullying and violations of code of conduct are clearly defined and punishable regardless of motivations, race, religion, or nationality.

Questions Raised:

1. How is "a certain perception" to be judged?
2. Do these laws violate current Supreme Court rulings regarding free speech, such as:
 - *Moody v. NetChoice, LLC (2024)*, which held that *a state may not interfere with private actors' speech to advance its own vision of ideological balance?*
 - *National Rifle Association of America v. Vullo (2024)*, which *prohibits government officials from selectively punishing or suppressing speech?*
3. Do laws that reference the IHRA definition and examples establish a protected class of citizens based on race, religion, and nationality, violating the 14th Amendment?
"No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; ... nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws."

There were more Jewish witnesses against these bills than there were Jewish witnesses testifying for the bills. If these bills were to establish a protected class for Christians, as a Christian, I would oppose them," concludes Hemphill.

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