



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Robert G. Ortt

## Members Of The New York State Senate Republican Conference Call On Governor To Deploy The National Guard & Demand Resignation Of Columbia University President

ROBERT G. ORTT April 26, 2024

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Immediate, decisive action is needed to protect Jewish students

**Senate Republican Leader Rob Ortt**, along with members of the **New York State Senate Republican Conference** today called on Governor Kathy Hochul to immediately deploy the National Guard to protect Jewish students at Columbia University and to join their call for the resignation of **Columbia University President Minouche Shafik**, who has shown herself to be incapable of restoring safety and order on her campus.

The letter to the Governor follows a week of pro-Hamas protests at Columbia University and neighboring campuses expressing support for violent terrorists, harassing and instilling fear into their Jewish classmates, attacking NYPD officers with bottles, and calling for the deaths of Jews. The Columbia protests follow the horrifying attacks of October 7, 2023, and subsequent months of hate-filled demonstrations on college campuses across the country. Chants heard at Columbia over the past week have included, “We are Hamas,” “Hamas, make us proud,” and “Kill another soldier now.”

“What we are seeing right now on Columbia University’s campus is Antisemitic, anti-American, and in many cases illegal. Hamas is a known terror organization with a similar world view as Al Qaeda and ISIS. The situation calls for leadership. Instead, Columbia’s administration has feebly asked Jewish students to stay home and take classes virtually. These students have done nothing wrong. They deserve to be able to attend their classes safely, and Columbia’s leaders have failed them. Governor Hochul needs to join us in demanding President Shafik’s immediate resignation and do her job as Governor, deploying the National Guard to restore safety and order where nobody else will,” **said Senate Republican Leader Rob Ort.**

**The letter reads,** “We urge you to use your authority to deploy the National Guard at Columbia University immediately. With more than \$13 billion in its endowment fund, Columbia University should be more than capable of covering any costs to the state of New York. We also request you join us in calling for the immediate resignation of the Columbia University President, who has capitulated to these extremists and their radical supporters.”

“It is high time the University administration and our State government prioritize the safety of students over an extreme left-wing mob; prioritize law and order over domestic terrorism. We all recognize the right to free expression, but this is not that- this is hate pure and simple- and has no place in our great state. It must stop and must stop now,” **said Senator Jack Martins, Chair of the Senate Republican Working Group on Antisemitism, SD 7th.**

“It is disgusting that universities like Columbia - once bastions of education - are now nothing but bastions of hatred. AND it is not surprising that the hatred of choice for these leftist organizations is hatred of Jews, America, and our very Western values. This is a direct result of the leftist, anti-

America climate propagated by the radical democrats in charge. I join Senator Ortt in calling for an immediate correction of the dangerous hate and lawlessness occurring at Columbia University and other leftist universities across New York,” **said Senate Deputy Republican Leader Andrew Lanza.**

“No one should feel unsafe because of their religion or heritage, period. Each and every day, and especially during Passover, we have to do everything possible to protect our Jewish community. Demonstrations that incite violence and spew hate speech have no place on our campuses or anywhere in our state,” **said Senator Jake Ashby, SD 43rd.**

“New York State has long been a national leader in the fight against all forms of discrimination. That is why Governor Hochul must take swift and decisive action against the antisemitic mobs that have taken over Columbia University in recent days. The rights and safety of Jewish students must be restored, and extremists must know that their hate and violence will not be tolerated. Delay or hesitation will only embolden these radicals; the governor must act now,” **said Senator George Borrello, SD 57th.**

“The targeting and harassment of Jewish students at Columbia University is deeply troubling and completely unacceptable. The NYPD needs our full support as they work to manage this ongoing crisis. Every university should be a safe and inclusive environment for all students, regardless of their background or beliefs. Such acts of discrimination and intimidation have no place in our society and must not be tolerated. We stand in solidarity with the Jewish community and all those affected, and we implore Columbia University and the Governor to take immediate and decisive action to address this issue and ensure the safety and well-being of all its students,” **said Senator Patricia Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick, SD 9th.**

“Like so many New Yorkers and others across the nation, I am troubled by the pro-Hamas protests occurring on the campus of Columbia University and the rise of antisemitism in the state. The safety of students - especially those of the Jewish faith - has been compromised and the university’s administration has not done enough to address this issue. Action must be taken by to ensure that Jewish students and faculty are protected from harassment and violence,” **said Senator Joseph Griffo, SD 53rd.**

“It is truly concerning to witness a prestigious institution like Columbia University permitting an anti-Israel protest that causes significant disruption and threatens the safety and futures of Jewish students. Governor Hochul needs to intervene, as Columbia’s administration appears unable or unwilling to do so. Every student in our state has rights, not only those protesting in support of Hamas, and it is New York State's duty to uphold these rights when they are infringed upon,” **said Senator Mario R. Mattera, SD 2nd.**

“College campuses should be safe havens for students and faculty, yet that is not the case at Columbia University and other schools. Rather than taking steps to protect Jewish individuals, the university is forcing students to go home and take classes from a dorm room – it is unthinkable that this is their solution. Those who are committing these antisemitic acts need to be punished and the backward logic being implemented at Columbia University needs to be reversed immediately,” **said Senator Peter Oberacker, SD 51st.**

“New York State cannot stand for the anti-Jewish, anti-American hatred and violence that we are witnessing at universities and in many other places. We cannot tolerate this growing antisemitism putting Jewish students and faculty, and all of our Jewish citizens and families, in danger. There should be no place for it here in this state. Governor Hochul must take immediate, unequivocal, and strong action against these radical extremists,” **said Senator Tom O’Mara, SD 58th.**

“Governor Hochul's administration has both a constitutional and humanitarian obligation to ensure the safety of Jewish students and protect their civil rights. I implore the Governor to take swift action to protect these students and put an end to institutional discrimination and harassment of Jewish students on campuses throughout New York,” **said Senator Anthony Palumbo, SD 1st.**

“As further evidence of the recent surge in antisemitism across our state, sympathizers of Hamas, a Federally-recognized terrorist organization, have overtaken Columbia University’s campus; forced the suspension of in person classes and have generated fear for the safety of Jewish students and all New Yorkers. Columbia University’s failure to take swift and decisive action to protect the safety of its own students and campus is abhorrent and unacceptable. Columbia was once known as a beacon of educational prowess, but now it’s become a harbor of hate against

the Jewish people and all Americans. While I respect the rights of everyone to peacefully protest, what you are seeing take place on Columbia's campus is far from peaceful. Columbia University has a responsibility to protect the safety of ALL of its students and provide a campus free from discrimination and harassment. It has failed to do so and it is time for the State to take action to restore order," **said Senator Steven Rhoads, SD 5th.**

"There's no place for antisemitism, anywhere. The behavior of the students at Columbia University goes beyond the pale and there must be an end to this extremism. I'm proud to join my Senate Republican colleagues in calling for swift action to bring an end to this appalling, unacceptable behavior," **said Senator Dan Stec, SD 45th.**

"What's going on at Columbia University and NYU of pro-Hamas protesters targeting Jewish students with vile hate-filled threats to intimidate them is despicable and should be a wake-up call for the Governor to take immediate action and call-in the New York State National Guard to restore order and protect the safety of Jewish students and stop these antisemitic protests from infecting more college campuses across the state spreading more hate and creating further chaos," **said Senator Jim Tedisco, SD 44th.**

"The president of Columbia University has a responsibility to ensure a constructive academic environment and has failed by allowing unruly, hostile, antisemitic protestors to gather on campus. I am calling for the Columbia University President Shafik to resign for failing to protect her students in the face of rising antisemitism on her campus," **said Senator Alexis Weik, SD 8th.**

"What are these students getting in exchange for sky-high tuition Columbia is charging them and the multiple billions of dollars in its endowment fund? They clearly aren't getting a quality education when they can't safely step foot on campus. It's time to stop submitting to political extremists who sympathize with violent terrorists, put people on this campus who know how to resolve this situation quickly, and get back to the business of education. Governor Hochul can do this today, and we demand she do so," **concluded Senator Ortt.**

A copy of the letter is attached.