

January 5th, 2024

Dear Supervisor,

Bay Area Jews of Conscience express wholehearted support for the San Francisco Board of Supervisors' ceasefire resolution, standing in solidarity with Palestinians in Gaza and our Bay Area community also impacted. We extend appreciation to the Supervisors who represent Jewish individuals rejecting the manipulation of our grief to justify genocide against Palestinians.

We write to urge great concern regarding the JCRC, as it has a known track record of not only attacking communities of color in the Bay Area, but also targeting teachers, school districts, non-profits, educational initiatives, and city councils. JCRC-BA attempts to limit criticism of any kind of Israel and minimizes or completely erases anything related to Palestinian history, culture or advocacy. **JCRC-BA punishes people and organizations with whom it disagrees** by using its influence to cut funding, publicly denounce individuals, pass legislation limiting free speech, and wage lawsuits against [academic institutions](#).

JCRC-Bay Area's (JCRC-BA) actions diverge from the diverse voices within the Jewish community. Judaism and Zionism are not the same, nor is Jewish identity linked to support for Israel. Institutions like the JCRC want to silence individuals, organizations and institutions, as well as influence leaders who question or critique Israel. During this heightened period of detention, bombing, displacement and killing of civilians, with intent to "[clear out Gaza](#)", critiquing Israel is a right to express our outrage at the detention and murder of children, the killing of civilians en masse, and now, genocide.

It is crucial to recognize that JCRC-BA does not authentically represent Jews, let alone represent all Jews in the Bay Area. **Less than one third of Bay Area synagogues are members of JCRC** – the majority of synagogues in the Bay Area are not members. JCRC-BA's primary focus is defending Israel and attacking those advocating for Palestinian human rights and liberation. This includes limiting discourse, negatively influencing funding decisions, and supporting legislation that restricts free speech. Recent remarks by JCRC-BA's CEO, calling the Arab Resource Organizing Center "pro-terrorist", are not only slanderous but also potentially incite harm, putting members of San Francisco's Arab and Muslim communities at risk.

JCRC-BA opposes a permanent ceasefire, aligning itself with the far-right Israeli government's mission against Gaza. Despite widespread public support for ceasefires, JCRC-BA actively campaigns against city resolutions, contradicting the majority sentiment, including that of the Jewish community.

Additionally, JCRC's-BA's current and past campaigns have been focused on everything from suppressing Palestinian art and youth programs to threatening funding for organizations opposing Zionism.

To provide more context on the noted track record, here is a summary of JCRC-BA's actions:

- **2003:** Threatened [SF Women Against Rape's funding](#) for opposing Zionism.
- **2006:** Censored a mural at SF State University, equating a key symbol of Palestinian refugees' right of return, *a right which is codified in international law*, to the KKK.
- **2007:** [Lobbied against Homey Mural](#) for including a Keffiyeh; the group lost public and private funding
- **2010:** Threatened the [Museum of Children's Art's](#) funding for exhibiting art from Gazan children by the Middle East Children's Alliance, requiring the exhibit to relocate to a local private space.
- **2015:** attacked AROC by working to cut Arab youth programming from the SF school district, lobbying against [Arabic-language](#) initiatives, and opposing recognizing Eid as a school holiday.
- **2018:** Stated that [BDS](#), a form of non-violence action modeled after the South African Anti-Apartheid movement, is not a legitimate form of protest and is anti-semitic
- **2019:** Pressured Newsom to withdraw support and change the Ethnic Studies course requirement and against the adoption of the [Original Model Ethnic Studies curriculum](#), claiming it should include Jewish History, and exclude lessons about solidarity referencing BLM and BDS resulting in the original writers withdrawing their names due to changes.
- **2022:** For a second time, lobbied against recognizing Eid as a school holiday in SF Unified.
- **2023:** [Urged SFUSD to cut AROC's MOU](#) and coordinated with political operatives to direct the SF Guardians to launch a baseless investigation against AROC for [a student-led](#) and organized walkout protesting the bombing and siege of Gaza.

By targeting teachers, school districts, nonprofits, educational initiatives, and city councils, JCRC-BA attempts to limit what can be said when it comes to Israel and Palestine. **JCRC-BA uses economic coercion to punish people and organizations with whom it disagrees.** It uses its influence to attempt cuts to funding, publicly denounce individuals, pass legislation limiting free speech, and wage lawsuits against students, faculty and community-based organizations.

Please stand with Bay Area Jews dedicated to advocating for civil and human rights. Refrain from collaboration with JCRC-BA as they do not represent Jewish community, and they have caused great harm in the Bay Area to communities of color, in particular.