

# Pro-Zionist organization files discrimination charges against National Education Association

Marc Wells  
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In April, the pro-Zionist Louis D. Brandeis Center for Human Rights Under Law filed charges with the Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) last April against the National Education Association (NEA), claiming the teachers' union created a "hostile environment" for Jewish and Israeli members, particularly at a July 2025 Representative Assembly in Portland, Oregon.

The charges are a politically motivated attempt to equate opposition to the Israeli state and its ongoing genocide in Gaza with antisemitism and to use federal anti-discrimination law as a weapon against democratic rights.

The Brandeis Center's complaint rests on two interlocking lines of attack. The first concerns the NEA's existing DEI (Diversity, Equity and Inclusion) infrastructure: its racially coded bylaws, constitutional provisions and standing rules mandating proportional representation of U.S. Census-defined "ethnic minorities" at every level of the union, from delegate assemblies to staff hiring. The complaint argues that because Jewish members are classified as "White (not Hispanic origin)" under the Census rubric, they are structurally excluded from these benefits and opportunities.

The second focuses on the conduct at the assembly's vote last July on New Business Item (NBI) 9, a resolution calling for a boycott of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL), and NBI 6 and 7, which dealt with Palestinian history and the distinction between anti-Zionism and antisemitism.

The NEA's Representative Assembly voted democratically to sever ties with the ADL because of its equation of the Gaza genocide as "antisemitism"

and calls for bans and investigations against pro-Palestinian groups. Standing reality on its head, the Brandeis Center charges treat the vote and the surrounding debate as evidence of a "hostile environment."

The filing arrives in a context where the both the Democrats and the Trump administration have waged a systematic campaign to criminalize opposition to Israel's genocide in Gaza. Executive orders have directed universities to function as extensions of immigration enforcement, enabling the cancellation of student visas and deportations of protesters on fabricated charges of "antisemitism."

In March of 2025, ICE agents seized Columbia University activist Mahmoud Khalil, and a second Columbia protester was arrested shortly after, with Trump's deputy attorney general threatening terrorism charges against students and universities alike. A Department of Justice task force was launched to investigate 10 universities, while hundreds of international students had visas summarily revoked. The political climate created by this repression has driven activists like Momodou Taal into exile and emboldened efforts to equate anti-war organizing with criminal conduct.

The fact that the Democrats are full partners in this—and, under the Biden administration, the leaders and initiators of it—exposes the union bureaucracy's alliance with this capitalist party. Under the Biden administration, peaceful protesters, including Jewish anti-war activists, were smeared as "antisemitic" to justify repression. In spring 2024 alone, more than 2,500 anti-war protesters were arrested during campus crackdowns across at least 25 states.

When Representative Ocasio-Cortez provided Zionist lobby groups a platform in 2024 to smear opponents of the Gaza genocide, the pseudo-left played a central role in legitimizing this narrative. The Democratic Party itself has repeatedly codified this logic, including through H.Res.183 in 2019 and the promotion of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s definition of opposition to the State of Israel or the Gaza genocide as “antisemitic.”

The NEA bureaucracy has actually helped pave the ground for this legal attack on its own members. After last summer’s vote in Portland to distance the organization from the ADL, the NEA Executive Committee moved within a week to suppress the mandate and preserve its relationship with the ADL.

NEA President Becky Pringle issued a statement denouncing the membership’s position and reaffirming the union’s “unequivocal” opposition to antisemitism, adopting the ADL’s conflation of anti-Zionism with antisemitism. This is the same bureaucracy that has spent millions of members’ dues funds supporting Biden and Harris, both of whom materially armed and politically defended Israel’s assault on Gaza.

The Brandeis Center is also using the reactionary logic of identity politics as an opening to demand greater access to top positions for Zionists, equating this with representation for Jewish people as “ethnic minorities.” The NEA’s governing documents are saturated with identity-based rules and proportional representation schemes that divides teachers into separate racial categories rather than uniting them on the basis of their common class interests.

The Brandeis Center’s complaint exploits the door the NEA has left open. This is the logical extension of identity politics, a framework that substitutes racial and ethnic representation for class struggle.

Workers must oppose this reactionary lawsuit. But the defense of democratic rights cannot be carried out under the control of a union apparatus joined at the hip with the Democratic Party.

The fight against war and political repression requires the independent political mobilization of the working class on the basis of a socialist and internationalist program, uniting educators, students and workers of every background in defense of free speech, democratic rights and opposition to imperialist war.



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