



*Representing UW-Madison Faculty.
Strengthening Wisconsin.*

Testimony to the Assembly Committee on State Affairs on Assembly Bill 446, relating to placing a definition of antisemitism in state statute

October 22, 2025

PROFS, the Public Representation Organization of the (UW-Madison) Faculty Senate, represents the interests of UW-Madison faculty. As an organization and as individual faculty members, we abhor antisemitism and racism. We strive day in and day out to create a university environment that is welcoming and inclusive of all opinions and perspectives.

At the same time, we oppose legislative initiatives that would use governmental power to mandate certain speech requirements, potentially limiting free speech and restricting legitimate campus activity. While well-intended, Assembly Bill 446 falls into this category.

AB 446 would require that state agencies, including the Universities of Wisconsin, adopt a definition of antisemitism promulgated by the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA). If you go back and look at the IHRA definition and its history, you will see that AB 446 actually conflicts with the IHRA's original intent.

The framers of the IHRA working definition themselves said the definition should not be legally binding. AB 446 would make the definition legally binding.

Moreover, the IHRA definition has been criticized by advocacy organizations, including Human Rights Watch, Amnesty International, and the American Civil Liberties Union, among others, as having a potential chilling effect on non-violent protests, activism, and constitutionally-protected speech under the First Amendment.

Again, PROFS strongly condemns antisemitism and hate in all of its forms. With equal strength, PROFS also affirms the right to free speech; trampling First Amendment rights will not end the scourge of antisemitism.