U.S. Department of Justice
Civil Rights Division

Assistant Attorney General
950 Pennsylvania Ave, NW - RFK
Washington, DC 20530

May 2, 2025

VIA E-MAIL TRANSMISSION ONLY

President James E. Ryan
THE UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA
Madison Hall
Charlottesville, Virginia

c/o Clifton M. Iler
Office of the University Counsel
Madison Hall, Third Floor
Charlottesville, Virginia 22902
cliff.iler@virginia.edu

Dear President Ryan,

The United States Department of Justice has received multiple complaints regarding antisemitic discrimination, harassment and abuse, and related retaliation occurring within the University of Virginia's (UVa) educational environment directed towards UVa students and employees who are Jewish, Israeli, and Israeli-American.

The Department is particularly concerned about allegations that UVa engaged in disparate treatment and retaliation in its student discipline processes with regard to a Fourth Year, Jewish UVa student and Jefferson Scholar ("E.N."),who alleged that he was the victim of hate-based misconduct by other students, as well as alleged disparate treatment and retaliation by the University. We have received the recent joint letter addressed to you, dated April 30, 2025, regarding this specific matter from Stand With Us, the Anti-Defamation League, and the Brandeis Center.

The Department has received allegations that several UVa actively-enrolled students committed acts that may involve antisemitic animus. Furthermore, the Department is aware of allegations that several UVa active faculty members acted in support of the students charged with committing the offenses against and antisemitic bullying of the student, further compounding the trauma he and his family suffered. These incidents allegedly occurred in late October 2024. The Department has received complaints, as reflected in the letter reference above, that your administration allowed the alleged principal antagonists to remain on the UVa's Grounds and remain actively enrolled in school without any suspension or termination of privileges. Furthermore, the Department has received complaints that despite the University's obligation to apprise victims of hate-based misconduct and illegal discrimination and harassment of the status of the proceedings against the students charged with committing the transgressions, your administration has openly refused to do so.

The facts surrounding this specific controversy and of the UVa's alleged deliberate indifference and retaliatory treatment of the victim in response are, in a word, disturbing.

Please understand that while this is likely the first of several requests that your administration will receive regarding this matter, this inquiry is unrelated to the other matters regarding the University of Virginia that are currently underway. This letter should in no way be read to limit, modify, or supersede those other matters or the attendant pending requests.

By Friday, May 9, 2025, the Department expects you to:

1. Certify that your administration and the University of Virginia have fully agreed to, complied with and satisfied the demands set forth in the April 30, 2025, letter referenced above;

2. Identify all proceedings, investigations, or disciplinary processes (specifically including, but not limited to any University Judiciary Committee, UVa EOCR, or Threat Assessment Team investigations) that have been initiated (whether concluded or not) regarding this matter or any of the participants in the incidents that gave rise to this matter;

3. Produce all reports, findings, judgments, or memoranda regarding any of the processes or investigations identified in #2 above;

4. Describe with particularity the outcome of each of the matters identified in #2 above. If, for any reason, a matter identified in #2 above is open or unfinished, explain why that is the case;

5. Identify by name, title, and contact information every University of Virginia employee, faculty member, or administrator (including members of the Office of University Counsel) who investigated, reviewed, provided recommendations or conclusions, adjudicated, or had any involvement in this matter;

6. Certify or produce evidence sufficient to demonstrate that all University proceedings (specifically including, but not limited to, "student led" judiciary committee processes), disciplinary processes, investigations (including Office of Civil Rights investigations) that have ever been initiated against "E.N." or could be considered adverse to the student "E.N." have been terminated, dismissed with prejudice, and expunged from the student's records;

7. Describe with particularity the measures taken by the University of Virginia in response to the events complained of by "E.N." and his parents;

8. Describe what measures the University of Virginia has put into place to ensure the safety of "E.N." and his family on Grounds, at his upcoming and anticipated graduation, and in the coming year when "E.N." is a graduate student at UVa;

9. Certify that "E.N." and his family will enjoy safe and unfettered access to the full and complete educational environment at the University of Virginia, both virtual and physical, free of antisemitism, free of antisemitic discrimination, harassment and abuse and free of retaliation or the threat of retaliation.

If you have any questions, please contact this office at (202) 514-7818.

Sincerely,

HARMEET K. DHILLON
Assistant Attorney General
Civil Rights Division
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE

Gregory W. Brown
Deputy Assistant Attorney General
Jeffrey Morrison
Senior Counsel
Civil Rights Division
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE