

The working group removed all references to Jewish people in their definition of ethnic groups. despite public and faith community comments requesting the inclusion.

The working group removed “antisemitism” from the list of discriminatory categories the EQS should address even though the legislature included this language in its original goals.

Antisemitism is the oldest hatred in human history. It has been a problem for thousands of years. Jews have been blamed for a host of problems since the Protocols of the Elders of Zion was published as propaganda in Russia in 1903.

Last week the world witnessed hundreds of Jewish men, women, children, and babies being slaughtered in their homes on the sabbath and a normally joyous holiday that celebrates the Jewish people’s love of Torah — the book of law that guides us to be moral and upstanding citizens of the world and community. Vermont should acknowledge that Jews are scared when they see their fellow Jews dismissed, chided, blamed, attacked, and murdered across the globe in the one place that should be considered their safe homeland.

Vermont should be willing to address the needs of an ethnic group with a rich culture that has sustained persecution for millennia. Vermont educators should acknowledge that Jewish students are deeply disturbed when they have to endure racial slurs, swastikas carved into school property, or having their holiest days of the year ignored on school and athletic schedules.

Vermont should be willing to acknowledge Jews have a history worth knowing and to protect its own Jewish students from harassment in its schools. If Vermont is not willing and able to do this then Vermont is not living up to its own motto of Freedom and Unity.

Sincerely,

K. Heidi Fishman, MA, EdD

Pronouns: she/her/hers

Norwich