

Adoption of International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) Definition of Antisemitism

On April 30, 2020 Regional Council adopted the following motion:

Whereas, the Regional Municipality of York is rooted in the values of democracy, equity and inclusivity; and

Whereas, in June 2018, the Inclusion Charter for York Region was endorsed as a community initiative, bringing together businesses, community organizations, municipalities, police services, hospitals, school boards, conservation authorities and agencies who share a vision to foster a welcoming and inclusive community; and

Whereas, we have a shared responsibility to stop antisemitism in all its forms through education and public consciousness as antisemitic demonstrations continue to threaten communities and undermine democracy; and

Whereas, the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) is an intergovernmental organization founded in 1998 that consists of 34 countries, including Canada, each of whom recognizes that international coordination is needed to combat antisemitism; and

Whereas, six per cent of York Region residents identify themselves as Jewish, which is a higher representation than Canada and Ontario, and Vaughan is home to one of the largest Jewish populations outside of Israel, which includes many Holocaust survivors; and

Whereas, on February 27, 2020, Bill 168, the Combating Antisemitism Act which directly mentions IHRA, unanimously passed a second reading in the Ontario legislature with all-party support; and

Whereas, on January 28, 2020, Vaughan council unanimously endorsed Mayor Bevilacqua's motion to declare January 27 as International Holocaust Remembrance Day, which included the adoption of the IHRA definition of antisemitism; and

Whereas, York Regional Police dedicated a community room at District #4 headquarters to Holocaust Survivor Max Eisen, in recognition and appreciation of his remarkable efforts to eliminate racism and bigotry; and

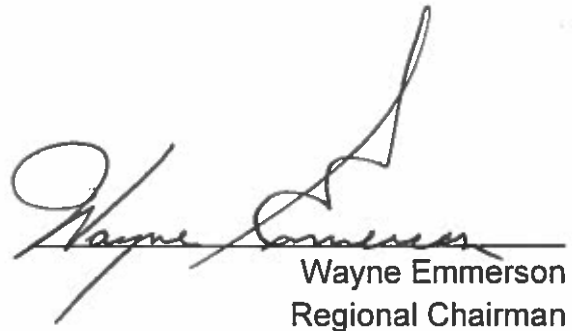
Whereas, York Region is enriched by its thriving, active and engaged Jewish and Israeli communities.

It is therefore recommended:

That the Regional Municipality of York adopt the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance's (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism as adopted at the IHRA plenary on May 26, 2016 as follows:

"Antisemitism is a certain perception of Jews, which may be expressed as hatred toward Jews. Rhetorical and physical manifestations of antisemitism are directed toward Jewish or non-Jewish individuals and/or their property, toward Jewish community institutions and religious facilities"; And

That this decision be forwarded to the local municipalities as well as the Chair of the province of Ontario's Standing Committee on Justice Policy.



Wayne Emmerson
Regional Chairman