Palestinian textbook bill gains bipartisan support in Congress

May 17, 2023

The Jerusalem Post

<https://www.jpost.com/diaspora/antisemitism/article-743375>

A bipartisan bill requiring the US secretary of state to submit annual reports on inciteful and antisemitic [Palestinian educational material](https://www.jpost.com/israel-news/article-722151) has been introduced to Congress and unanimously passed in the House Foreign Affairs Committee.

The bill was announced as the Palestinian Authority and UNRWA continue to print textbooks for Palestinian schools that include antisemitism and incitement against Israel and Jews, an issue that the [EU passed a resolution condemning](https://www.jpost.com/international/article-742629) last week.

The goal of the bill is for the State Department to inform Congress if any US foreign aid is utilized in the creation of textbooks used by Palestinian schools that include inciteful and antisemitic content.

‘For decades, the United States and the American people have been the top donor to the Palestinian people, including to the [Palestinian Authority and UNRWA](https://www.jpost.com/middle-east/article-734321) – but this is not a blank check,’ said Congressman Brad Sherman who reintroduced the bill. ‘American dollars must be spent in a way that reflects American values of tolerance and peacebuilding. Unfortunately, instead of envisioning a Palestinian state alongside Israel, the current Palestinian curriculum erases Israel from maps, refers to Israel only as ‘the enemy,’ and asks children to sacrifice their lives to ‘liberate’ all of the land between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea.

‘Ending incitement and violence in the curriculum taught to Palestinian schoolchildren isn’t only a matter of Israel’s security – it’s an obligation that the Palestinian Authority and UNRWA owe their beneficiaries, children who deserve quality education that nurtures their future instead of manipulating them to cut that future short by engaging in senseless violence.’

‘Kids aren’t born discriminating against their peers,’ said Congressman Brian Mast. ‘Hate and intolerance are learned behaviors, and there’s absolutely no reason that US taxpayers should be funding that type of instruction. This bill can help break a generational cycle of hatred, and move toward a peaceful and secure Israel.’

‘With antisemitism on the rise around the world, we must ensure that it never starts in the classroom,’ said Congressman David Trone. ‘We should all hope that the students of today – the leaders of tomorrow – are taught the values of peace over hate and intolerance. This bill works to do just that.’

‘The commitment of Congressman Sherman and his colleagues, on both sides of the aisle, to put an end to the incitement of Palestinian schoolchildren is laudable,’ said IMPACT-se CEO Marcus Sheff. ‘While the Arab world improves their textbooks, the US gives $350 million a year to UNRWA, the majority of which goes to an education sector that teaches hate. Clearly, that must end.’

PA and UNRWA continuously publish antisemitic, anti-Israel textbooks

A [report by IMPACT-se](https://www.jpost.com/middle-east-news/article-711581) last year found that Palestinian textbooks contained a large amount of antisemitism and anti-Israel material. According to the report, the books portrayed Jews as impure and encouraged the children to sacrifice themselves and kill Israelis.

The books also erased Israel's existence and legitimacy, referring to the entire country as Palestine.

Another report released in November found that the textbooks published for the 2022-23 school year had not improved and continued to spread antisemitic conspiracy theories and encourage children to grow up to be terrorists.

This form of education is seemingly strongly affecting Arab youth, as the first few months of 2023 saw a relatively large number of terror attacks carried out by teenagers as young as 13.