



AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH LAWYERS AND JURISTS

U.S. Affiliate of the International Association of Jewish Lawyers and Jurists

AAJLJ Purim 2024 Statement

We celebrate Purim this year in the wake of October 7th, the deadliest day for Jews since the Holocaust, and the explosion in domestic and global antisemitism that, in defiance of all decency, followed. The parallels are eerily similar, with too many happy to join the ranks of Haman but too few brave enough to speak up – this is why Charbonah, Queen Esther’s aide, is singled out for praise in the Megillah.

It has been suggested in some quarters that, much in the mode of Kol Nidre, we should be seeking permission to celebrate this festival with the joyousness and revelry that are its hallmark. And yet, Purim might be a perfect holiday for the times, a reminder that (to borrow a phrase from another Jewish holiday) in every generation there are those that rise up to destroy us. However, as the Jewish people of ancient Persia did, we must have faith that through prayer, the intercession of G-d, and our own initiative, we will survive... and live to celebrate our deliverance.

That last part of the formula for survival, the importance of taking the initiative ourselves, is what the American Association of Jewish Lawyers and Jurists – which represents the American Jewish legal community in regard to legal issues that affect, and are of importance to, the community – is all about.

The Jewish community is at a critical juncture as it confronts ongoing efforts to undermine support for the legitimacy of the State of Israel and to minimize and redefine antisemitism. While there are many worthwhile organizations working to combat such efforts in other venues, there is no central national address doing so from within and on behalf of the Jewish legal community. Moreover, while bar associations directed at the general population provide a crucial public service,

there is no replacement, as other minority communities have discovered, for a voluntary bar association that places emphasis on and addresses the particular concerns of one's own legal community.

AAJLJ has for decades provided a rich panoply of programming and advocacy. And yet, it is fair to ask whether we were not created "for such a time as this." As we approach Purim, we encourage you to celebrate with all the vigor of years past, knowing that through support of AAJLJ you are taking a stand as part of a Jewish American legal community that is ready to meet the challenges of the day.

Please take this opportunity to join, renew your membership in, or donate to the AAJLJ.

Robert Garson
President

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Executive Director

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