

January 16, 2025

Dear President Vinson, Professor Marchand, Professor Glymph, and Dr. Grossman,

On behalf of ADL (Anti-Defamation League), we write to express our profound concerns regarding the resolution AHA members voted to support at your recent business meeting, which is now before the AHA Council for consideration. While we recognize the complexities of navigating such matters, we strongly urge the Council to veto The Resolution to Oppose Scholasticide in Gaza. This resolution serves to demonize Israel, marginalize Jewish voices, and perpetuate falsehoods that have no place in a scholarly association like AHA.

This resolution undermines the viability of the AHA in several ways:

- **Amplifies Antisemitism Concerns** | The resolution's framing perpetuates harmful biases and reinforces narratives that marginalize Jewish voices. Its adoption would create an unwelcoming environment for many historians and fail to uphold the AHA's commitment to inclusivity and equity.
- **Deviates from Mission** | The resolution is not aligned with the AHA's core purpose. The association exists to promote historical scholarship, not to engage in political activism on contentious issues about which not all historians have a shared perspective. Endorsing this resolution, or allowing the possibility of membership endorsement, would alienate many members who joined the AHA based on its stated mission. By taking a position on an issue not directly related to the association's mission, the AHA would stifle free inquiry and intellectual exchange, which are some of its core values.
- **Erodes Credibility and Reputation** | The AHA has been a respected source for evidence-based, nonpartisan historical perspectives for more than a century. Associating with such a resolution risks diminishing the trust of policymakers, journalists, and the public. "Scholasticide" refers to the intentional mass destruction of an educational system. There is no evidence of this intent by Israel in Gaza or elsewhere. The destruction of institutions, including educational ones, is an unfortunate byproduct of war, exacerbated when terror groups like Hamas embed their operations within school buildings.

- **Violates Fiduciary Responsibility** | Council members have a legal duty to act in the best interest of the association. This obligation is not limited to financial matters but extends to protecting all dimensions of the association, from its reputation to legal risks and beyond. You must prioritize AHA's long-term sustainability.

As academia faces increased scrutiny, this resolution provides ammunition to critics who accuse scholarly organizations of partisanship. The AHA has been exemplary in defending academic freedom and resisting political incursions into curricular decisions. Endorsing this resolution would undermine these efforts, as well as other initiatives that directly align with the AHA's mission.

We recognize the decision to veto the resolution will likely generate substantial pushback from a subset of your membership. There are loud voices advocating for this resolution, but we know there are also many members who are deeply troubled and alienated by it, including those who feel afraid to speak out against it. Failing to veto this resolution would further marginalize these voices and push many historians into silence and out of the association.

Be strong in defending the integrity of the AHA. This is an opportunity to reaffirm the association's commitment to its core values and to ensure it remains a welcoming, inclusive, and intellectually rigorous space for all historians.

We ask you to share this letter with the full AHA Council and implore the Council to veto the resolution and communicate that decision, along with its rationale, clearly and unequivocally to the membership. Transparency and clarity will be essential in preserving the association's legitimacy.

Sincerely,



Jonathan Greenblatt
CEO and National Director