

Deputation Against Proposed By-Law to “Protect Vaughan’s Vulnerable Social Infrastructure”

Independent Jewish Voices
York Region

C90.

Communication

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Independent
Jewish Voices
Canada

Voix juives
indépendantes
Canada



Introduction

- Independent Jewish Voices' York Region chapter represents progressive Jewish community members in Vaughan and across York Region.
- Anti-semitism and anti-Palestinian racism are both serious problems that must be addressed. One isn't more or less important than the other.
- We believe we all must fight these forms of discrimination **together**. We want our government to facilitate dialogue and collaboration – not suspicion, suppression and division.

Why do progressive
Jews reject this
proposed by-law?

1. This bylaw would **not** increase safety.

- The Vaughan staff report on the proposed by-law provides examples of alleged hate crimes.
- **Not a single one** of the examples cited (arson, bomb threats, vandalism, shooting at buildings) would have been prevented by the proposed bylaw. There is **zero evidence of any connection** between peaceful protests and such acts.
- Vaughan must focus on **investigating and addressing acts of violence** instead of offering a false solution that a) won't prevent hate crimes **and** b) will permanently reduce the entire Vaughan community's democratic rights and freedoms.

2. We need to rule on **facts**, not feelings.

- As written, the bylaw would kick in if a community member merely *feels* “intimidated” or “concerned” for their safety or security - **even if there’s no actual threat whatsoever.**
- This is a **shockingly low bar** for stripping others of their democratic right to peaceful protest, calling in armed police to physically suppress them, and fining them up to \$100,000!
- As adults, we all know that **feelings are not facts.** It is extremely dangerous to legislate away anything that merely *feels* scary to some. Our laws - and especially our punishments - must be grounded in **facts**, not subjective emotions.

3. The protests have been legitimate.

- This by-law was proposed in the wake of peaceful protests that took place in Thornhill.
- The peaceful protests were held outside synagogues while they hosted non-religious **real estate events** selling land in Israel-Palestine that is under serious dispute.
- Other venues in Vaughan chose **not** to host the sale specifically because they felt it would be problematic.
- As progressive Jews, we support the community's right to peacefully protest such an event, wherever it may be hosted.

What do progressive
Jews want instead?

What do we want instead?

- Initiatives that bring Vaughan minorities **together** to solve problems collaboratively
- Solutions that address **actual violence and hate crimes**, instead of subjective feelings
- Solutions that do **not** reduce the entire Vaughan community's democratic rights and freedoms

Thank you!