

ONE HUNDRED NINETEENTH CONGRESS
Congress of the United States
House of Representatives
COMMITTEE ON ENERGY AND COMMERCE
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WASHINGTON, DC 20515-6115
Majority (202) 225-3641
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March 24, 2026

Claire Shipman
Acting President
Columbia University
202 Low Library
535 West 116th Street
New York, NY 10027

Dear Ms. Shipman:

Pursuant to Rules X and XI of the U.S. House of Representatives, the Committee on Energy and Commerce (Committee) is investigating whether Columbia University, including Columbia University's Irving Medical Center (CUIMC), Columbia's Vagelos College of Physicians and Surgeons (Columbia Medical), and other components of Columbia (hereinafter referred to as Columbia) receiving funding from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and its sub-agencies are complying with anti-discrimination provisions of the Civil Rights Act, and are maintaining a safe environment for all members of the Columbia community—including students, faculty, staff, and patients. Recent events and information, as outlined in this letter, raise questions about Columbia's commitment to complying with federal statutory requirements.

In addition, concerns about Columbia's compliance are heightened by a culture of antisemitism that has been further perpetuated since Zohran Mamdani became the Mayor of New York City at the beginning of the year.¹ During his campaign, Jewish leaders in New York noted that Mamdani's rhetoric crossed the line into antisemitism, and that such rhetoric posed a threat to the Jewish people.² Unfortunately, recent crime statistics indicate these fears may not have been misplaced. In January 2026, the first month of the Mamdani Administration, according to the New York City Police Department, Jewish New Yorkers were the targets of 31 reported antisemitic hate crimes, roughly one antisemitic incident per day over the course of one month, accounting for 54 percent of the total hate crimes reported to police, even though overall crime in

¹ Dana Rubenstein, *Zohran Mamdani Is Sworn In as Mayor of New York City*, THE NEW YORK TIMES (Dec. 31, 2025), <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/12/31/nyregion/mamdani-mayor-swearing-in.html>.

² Samuel J. Abrams, *The Lessons We Were Taught and the Ones Being Forgotten*, JEWISH JOURNAL (Nov. 2, 2025), <https://jewishjournal.com/commentary/opinion/384698/the-lessons-we-were-taught-and-the-ones-being-forgotten/>.

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the city dropped 6.7 percent.³ This is a 182 percent increase in January 2026 compared to January 2025.⁴

In addition, Mamdani recently reversed New York City's adoption of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism.⁵ The IHRA definition mattered "because it translated moral concern into an operational standard. It provided guidance to institutions tasked with distinguishing between legitimate political speech and discriminatory conduct. It constrained interpretive drift."⁶ The reversal of using the IHRA definition "moved from a widely recognized framework into a discretionary space shaped by coalition politics."⁷ This action "would have the potential to negatively affect the campus climate for Jews by weakening their ability to point to [Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions] BDS and other anti-Zionist activity as anti-Semitic."⁸

Until recently, Columbia did not have a definition of antisemitism. In August 2024, a university task force report recommended that Columbia adopt a definition of antisemitism, which did not occur despite this recommendation.⁹ It was only after the Trump Administration threatened to pull hundreds of millions of dollars in March 2025, that Columbia finally adopted the IHRA definition.¹⁰ Columbia's history of inadequate handling of allegations of discriminatory or abusive conduct shows there is a serious risk of non-compliance and reversion to weakness on antisemitism that could be emboldened by Mamdani. I am concerned that Mamdani's order emboldens Columbia to move away from the IHRA definition and go back to no definition or a weaker definition of antisemitism.

As a recipient of federal funding from HHS and its sub-agencies, including more than \$690 million in grants from the National Institutes of Health (NIH) in Fiscal Year 2024, and

³ Luke Tress, *NYPD says Jews in city targeted in hate crime per day last month*, THE TIMES OF ISRAEL (Feb. 3, 2026), <https://www.timesofisrael.com/nypd-says-jews-in-city-targeted-in-hate-crime-per-day-last-month/>.

⁴ *Id.*

⁵ Exec. Order No. 1, City of N.Y., Office of the Mayor (Jan. 1, 2026), <https://www.nyc.gov/content/dam/nycgov/mayors-office/downloads/pdf/executive-orders/2026/eo1-prior-executive-orders.pdf>; see also, Luke Tress, *Mamdani revokes IHRA antisemitism definition on day 1, amid broad rejection of Adams orders*, THE TIMES OF ISRAEL (Jan. 2, 2026), <https://www.timesofisrael.com/mamdani-revokes-ihra-antisemitism-definition-on-day-1-amid-broad-rejection-of-adams-orders/>.

⁶ Samuel J. Abrams, *When Standards Disappear: What the Mamdani Reversals Reveal About Jewish Political Vulnerability*, American Enterprise Institute (Jan. 9, 2026), <https://www.aei.org/op-eds/when-standards-disappear-what-the-mamdani-reversals-reveal-about-jewish-political-vulnerability/>.

⁷ *Id.*

⁸ Benjamin Dorfman, *Mamdani's Anti-IHRA Stance Will Put Jewish Students at Risk*, MINDING THE CAMPUS (Sept. 23, 2025), <https://mindingthecampus.org/2025/09/23/mamdani-anti-ihra-stance-will-put-jewish-students-at-risk/>.

⁹ Report #2: Columbia University Student Experiences of Antisemitism and Recommendations for Promoting Shared Values and Inclusion, Task Force on Antisemitism 44-45 (Aug. 30, 2024), <https://president.columbia.edu/sites/president.columbia.edu/files/content/Announcements/Report-2-Task-Force-on-Antisemitism.pdf>.

¹⁰ Letter from Josh Gruenbaum, Comm'r of the Fed. Acquisition Serv., General Services Administration, et al., to Katrina /Armstrong, Interim President, Columbia University, et al. (Mar. 13, 2025), https://president.columbia.edu/sites/president.columbia.edu/files/content/ltr.gsa_hhs_doe_3-13-25.pdf; Announcements, Columbia University, Office of the President, Our Additional Commitments to Combatting Antisemitism (July 15, 2025), <https://president.columbia.edu/news/our-additional-commitments-combatting-antisemitism>.

Medicare and Medicaid reimbursements from the Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Services for health care services provided at the Columbia hospital system, Columbia has an obligation to comply with federal law.¹¹ This includes preventing and appropriately responding to discrimination and harassment. Medicare Part A providers are required to sign an attestation of their compliance with all applicable civil rights laws enforced by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of Civil Rights (OCR)—including Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964.¹² This attestation is referred to as an Assurance of Compliance. These statutes and regulations require compliance with federal civil rights laws that prohibit discrimination based on race, color, national origin, disability, age, and sex.¹³ Moreover, according to the NIH’s Grant Policy Statement, any institution receiving federal funding must ensure work environments are free of discriminatory harassment and are safe and conducive to high-quality work.¹⁴

On July 24, 2025, Columbia University and the United States government announced a major settlement to resolve multiple federal agency investigations into alleged violations of federal anti-discrimination laws.¹⁵ The agreement established “robust oversight, including oversight from an independent Resolution Monitor and an Administrator, to ensure Columbia complies with the agreement and federal laws.”¹⁶ According to the Trump Administration, this action was taken “to address Columbia University’s violations of federal civil rights, protect students, and uphold fairness in higher education.”¹⁷ Significantly, the agreement stated:

Columbia and each of its schools, components, divisions, and departments, including but not limited to professional and graduate schools, will comply with and follow antidiscrimination laws, including Title VI and Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972. Columbia agrees to comply with all applicable laws, including Title VI, Title VII, and Title IX, and Section 1557 of the Affordable Care Act, regarding the treatment of individuals.¹⁸

Thus, Columbia committed in the agreement with the U.S. government not to discriminate on the grounds of race, color, national origin, sex, age, or disability.¹⁹

¹¹ Sara Reardon, *Exclusive: NIH freezes all research grants to Columbia University*, SCIENCE (Apr. 9, 2025), <https://www.science.org/content/article/nih-freezes-all-research-grants-columbia-university>; *see also*, National Institutes of Health (NIH), *NIH Grants Policy Statement April 2024*, <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps/nihgps.pdf>.

¹² National Institutes of Health (NIH), *NIH Grants Policy Statement April 2024*, *supra* note 11 at IIA-14 (Apr. 2024), <https://grants.nih.gov/grants/policy/nihgps/nihgps.pdf>.

¹³ *Id.*

¹⁴ *Id.* at IIA-3.

¹⁵ Fact Sheet: President Donald J. Trump Secures Major Settlement with Columbia University, The White House (July 24, 2025), <https://www.whitehouse.gov/fact-sheets/2025/07/fact-sheet-president-donald-j-trump-secures-major-settlement-with-columbia-university/>; Columbia University, Office of the President, *Our Resolution With the Federal Government* (July 24, 2025), <https://president.columbia.edu/content/our-resolution-federal-government>.

¹⁶ *Id.*

¹⁷ *Id.*

¹⁸ Resolution Agreement Between the United States of America and Columbia University, 7 (July 23, 2025), https://president.columbia.edu/sites/president.columbia.edu/files/content/July%202025%20Announcement/Columbia%20University%20Resolution%20Agreement.pdf?utm_source=substack&utm_medium=email.

¹⁹ *Id.*

In addition to this commitment, Columbia agreed to the selection of Bart M. Schwartz of Guidepost Solutions as a Resolution Monitor for this agreement.²⁰ Mr. Schwartz's responsibilities for the Columbia agreement were "to assess and report on Columbia's compliance with the obligations" included in the agreement.²¹ It is thus troubling to learn that Columbia "repeatedly failed to provide Schwartz with the policies relating to DEI and antisemitism for the vast majority of schools within Columbia."²² Further, according to sources familiar with the case, "Columbia threw out roadblocks at every turn. In one instance, the university refused to set up an anonymous tip line for students to report instances of antisemitism, which Schwartz deemed a matter of basic compliance."²³ It was also alleged that "Columbia withheld information Schwartz needed to conduct a proper analysis of the university."²⁴ In its agreement with the U.S. government, Columbia was required to "ensure that the Resolution Monitor will have access to all Columbia documents and data related to the Agreement. . . ."²⁵ As a result, Columbia announced that Mr. Schwartz had been replaced by Charles J. Cooper.²⁶ I am concerned about Columbia's reported failure to cooperate with Mr. Schwartz, and whether Columbia will be more forthcoming with the new Resolution Monitor.

Regarding the inadequacy of Columbia's leadership in dealing with antisemitism, I am particularly concerned about the lack of responsiveness by Dr. Katrina Armstrong. She was appointed the CEO of Columbia's Medical Center in February 2022, then served as Acting President of the University from August 2024 to March 2025.²⁷ After a sabbatical she returned to her CEO position in May 2025.²⁸

On April 1, 2025, the Acting General Counsel at HHS deposed Dr. Armstrong, the recent Acting President of the University.²⁹ Dr. Armstrong's responses during the deposition suggest a serious lack of awareness or lack of familiarity with issues critical to compliance with federal anti-discrimination laws.³⁰ Her lack of recollection indicates that she was ignorant of recent or contemporaneous events involving the safety of students, which was part of her responsibility.³¹ For example, during the deposition, Dr. Armstrong gave several troubling responses:

²⁰ *Id.* at 15.

²¹ *Id.* at 16.

²² Maya Sulkin, *What Happened to Columbia's Antisemitism Monitor?* THE FREE PRESS (Jan. 27, 2026), <https://www.thefp.com/p/what-happened-to-columbias-antisemitism-monitor>.

²³ *Id.*

²⁴ *Id.*

²⁵ Resolution Agreement, *supra* note 18, at 19.

²⁶ Sulkin, *supra* note 22.

²⁷ Joseph Zuloaga and Emily Pickering, *A fraught beginning and a sudden end: Seven months of Armstrong*, COLUMBIA SPECTATOR (Apr. 3, 2025), <https://www.columbiaspectator.com/news/2025/04/03/a-fraught-beginning-and-a-sudden-end-seven-months-of-armstrong/>.

²⁸ Aaron Sibarium and Eliana Johnson, *Columbia's Armstrong to Return From Sabbatical as CEO of Medical Center*, THE WASHINGTON FREE BEACON (May 12, 2025), <https://freebeacon.com/campus/columbias-armstrong-to-return-as-ceo-of-medical-center/>.

²⁹ Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong, *In re: Columbia University* (Apr. 1, 2025), <https://freebeacon.com/wp-content/uploads/2025/04/Dr.-Katrina-Armstrong-040125-Full-Size.pdf>.

³⁰ *Id.*

³¹ *Id.*

- She said she could not recall in detail any of the specific horrible things she heard from Jewish students saying, “[y]ou know, I think that it’s really hard for me to come up with specifics.”³² She also said, “I have no specific memory of hearing” that students were “calling for the destruction of the state of Israel;”³³
- She also said she had no memory of hearing “that students at Columbia spit on Jewish students.”³⁴
- In response to a question quoting Columbia’s Antisemitism Task Force Report from August 2024, that students spat on Jewish students, she said, “I do not have specific recollections here of what is in this report or what I recall from this report.”³⁵
- In response to a question quoting a faculty member who called Jewish men wealthy white capitalists who “laundered dirty money,” she stated that “I don’t remember reading the specifics.”³⁶ She still did not recall when told the allegation was also mentioned in the university’s August 2024 report on antisemitism.³⁷ Moreover, she admitted that she did not try to find out whether the faculty member said something antisemitic since in her experience she did not oversee “management options for faculty members in pursuing claims of discrimination and harassment” which “are done through our established Title VI and other efforts.”³⁸
- She also said, “I do not have specific recollections” of what is in Columbia’s antisemitism report.³⁹

Dr. Armstrong further revealed that she seemed to know little nor show much engagement about the process of implementing recommendations to deal with antisemitism, noting that Columbia’s Office of the General Counsel (OGC) oversees the work.⁴⁰ In fact, Dr. Armstrong repeatedly noted how she referred the handling of discrimination complaints to OGC, suggesting she just deferred to the OGC with no indication that she requested or received follow-up information about the findings from these referrals.⁴¹

Further, even though the university initially expressed a willingness to cooperate with the Trump Administration’s demands that were designed to improve the situation at Columbia, reports of a leaked transcript from a March 2025 meeting illustrate Dr. Armstrong’s brazen attitude towards implementing such changes:

³² *Id.* at 58.

³³ *Id.* at 59.

³⁴ *Id.* at 44-45.

³⁵ *Id.*

³⁶ *Id.* at 27-28.

³⁷ *Id.*

³⁸ *Id.* at 30-31.

³⁹ *Id.* at 45.

⁴⁰ *Id.* at 51.

⁴¹ *Id.*

[A]t a meeting with 75 faculty members in March, Armstrong appeared to suggest that she had no plans to actually implement the changes. She claimed there would be “no changes” to the rules on masked protests, for example, and implied that the promised oversight of the Middle Eastern Studies department was a bait and switch.⁴²

During the April 2025 deposition, Dr. Armstrong said she did “not have precise recollections” of that meeting, even though she was aware of a transcript of that meeting.⁴³ Overall, the federal task force “was not satisfied with Dr. Armstrong’s testimony, finding her answers evasive and lacking in seriousness, and it was also dismayed that she could not recall any incidents in which Jewish students had been harassed on campus.”⁴⁴

After her resignation as acting president, “Dr. Armstrong decided to take a sabbatical and spend time with her family,” before returning to her position as CEO of the medical center.⁴⁵ That sabbatical could have been an opportunity for the University Board of Trustees, OGC, and Dr. Armstrong to reflect on the way Columbia has addressed antisemitism on campus and ways to reform and improve Columbia’s record of compliance with federal civil rights laws. Questions remain as to whether Dr. Armstrong has become a better leader capable of helping oversee the implementation of the agreement.

Moreover, the final Columbia Task Force on Antisemitism released its fourth and final report in December 2025, which revealed more incidents of antisemitism.⁴⁶ For example, the Task Force report stated that at the Mailman School of Public Health, an NIH funding recipient, a “teacher told the students three of the school’s major donors, who were Jewish, had made their gifts with the aim of ‘laundering blood money.’ He referred to Israel as ‘so-called Israel.’”⁴⁷ In another example, the Task Force report noted:

One [Jewish or Israeli student] reported that a teacher told her students, in a class on advocacy, that accounts of sexual violence by Hamas were exaggerated or fabricated, notwithstanding the fact that this violence has

⁴² Sibarium and Johnson, *supra* note 28.

⁴³ Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong, *supra* note 29 at 41.

⁴⁴ Sharon Otterman, *Columbia’s Former Leader Faced Contentious Interview After Resigning*, THE NEW YORK TIMES (Apr. 7, 2025), <https://www.nytimes.com/2025/04/07/nyregion/columbia-president-armstrong-federal-deposition.html>.

⁴⁵ Eliana Johnson, *‘No Specific Memory’: Columbia University’s Armstrong Tells Feds She Can’t Recall Specifics of Any Anti-Semitic Incident on Campus*, THE WASHINGTON FREE BEACON (April 6, 2025), <https://freebeacon.com/campus/columbia-universitys-armstrong-cant-recall/>.

⁴⁶ Columbia University Task Force on Antisemitism, *The Classroom Experience at Columbia: Protecting The Academic Freedom of Faculty and Students*, Report #4 (Dec. 2025), <https://www.columbia.edu/content/sites/www.columbia.edu.content/files/content/about/Task%20Force%20on%20Antisemitism/Task-Force-Antisemitism-Report-4-The-Classroom-Experience-at-Columbia.pdf>.

⁴⁷ *Id.* at 28 (citing Douglas Belkin, *Some Columbia Professors Accused of Pro-Palestinian Indoctrination*, THE WALL STREET JOURNAL (March 8, 2024), https://www.wsj.com/us-news/education/some-columbia-professors-accused-of-pro-palestinian-indoctrination-002013fc?gaa_at=efas&gaa_n=AWetsqc8GHEqWJLf0lJ9Qvj1Tq_uIRs-zNYrVwzA5x1eIcD1WjsSW1aAwhn_xY_E-50%3D&gaa_ts=698b5b5b&gaa_sig=0g4KKClDs_xP5TMrbw8tYco1Urt2JnfoagkqT6uz-BB6yeZdvr4IIS0epPGv-ITCY7UQDdXhTvsoaDIITL41hg%3D%3D).

been repeatedly confirmed by mainstream media outlets, as well as by the UN.⁴⁸

In addition, a December 2025 report from StopAntisemitism that surveyed 90 schools gave a failing grade to Columbia (one of 14 with a failing grade), where “Jewish students have faced repeated antisemitic incidents” while “[f]ederal investigators found the university showed ‘deliberate indifference’ toward these issues.”⁴⁹ The Task Force report also noted:

Just as universities must be open to different ideas, they also must be open to people of different backgrounds. We cannot succeed in our research or teaching missions if we exclude or discriminate against people based on their race, gender, religion, national origin, sexual orientation, disability, status as a military veteran, or membership in any other protected class. Antidiscrimination is an imperative grounded in our mission and values, as well as in the law.⁵⁰

Columbia’s alleged non-cooperation with the Resolution Monitor; recent statements and performance of the leaders of Columbia, including the current leader at Columbia Medical; and newly reported antisemitic incidents continue to raise concerns.⁵¹ Given these concerns, questions remain as to whether Columbia can effectively comply with federal anti-discrimination laws. Therefore, I request that Columbia respond to the following by April 7, 2026:

1. For each year since January 1, 2023, how many retaliation complaints were submitted by complainants who were alleging civil rights violations by those at Columbia? How many of those complaints were related to antisemitism?
 - a. How many of the retaliation complaints were substantiated? Of those, how many were related to antisemitism?
 - b. What actions were taken in each of the cases where retaliation was found? Of those, how many were related to antisemitism?
2. For each year since January 1, 2023, how many discrimination and harassment complaints under any provision of the federal anti-discrimination laws have been submitted related to Columbia? Of those, how many were related to antisemitism?
3. For each year since January 1, 2023, how many of the discrimination and harassment complaints that fall under any provision of the federal anti-discrimination laws were

⁴⁸ *Id.* at 30-31.

⁴⁹ StopAntisemitism, *Antisemitism on U.S. College & University Campuses 2025 Report* 17 (Dec. 2025), <https://stopantisemitism.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/12/2025-College-Report.pdf>.

⁵⁰ Columbia University Task Force on Antisemitism, *The Classroom Experience at Columbia: Protecting the Academic Freedom of Faculty and Students*, Report #4 *supra* note 46 at 22-23.

⁵¹ See, e.g., Sulkin, *supra* note 22; Transcript of Dr. Katrina Armstrong, *supra* note 29; Sibarium and Johnson, *supra* note 28; Columbia University Task Force on Antisemitism, Report #4, *supra* note 46.

submitted by Columbia faculty or staff? Of those, how many were related to antisemitism?

- a. For each year since January 1, 2023, how many of the complaints were allegations against Columbia faculty or staff? Of those, how many were related to antisemitism?
 - b. For each year since January 1, 2023, how many of the complaints were allegations against the leadership of the Medical School or HHS-funded components of Columbia? Of those, how many were related to antisemitism?
4. For each year since January 1, 2023, how many of the discrimination and harassment complaints under any provision of the federal anti-discrimination laws resulted in findings of discrimination and harassment under any provision of the federal anti-discrimination laws? Of those, how many were related to antisemitism?
 - a. For each year since January 1, 2023, how many of the discrimination and harassment complaints under any provision of the federal anti-discrimination laws were related or connected to individuals or institutions at Columbia that received NIH-funded grants? Of those, how many were related to antisemitism?
5. For each year since January 1, 2023, how many of the discrimination and harassment complaints under any provision of the federal anti-discrimination laws were substantiated? Of those, how many were related to antisemitism?
6. For each year since January 1, 2023, of the discrimination and harassment complaints under any provision of the federal anti-discrimination laws related or connected to individuals or institutions at Columbia that received NIH-funded grants, how many were reported to the NIH? Of those, how many were related to antisemitism?
7. For each year since January 1, 2023, how many internal investigations were conducted by or for Columbia into any of the discrimination and harassment complaints under any provision of the federal anti-discrimination laws? Of those, how many were related to antisemitism?
8. Who maintains the data on discrimination and harassment allegations for Columbia?
 - a. How is this data tracked?
 - b. Is any of this data shared? If so, with whom is the data shared?
 - c. How does this data boost awareness and how is it used to prevent retaliation against complainants?
9. What is the median length of an investigation of a discrimination complaint at Columbia?

- a. Who is made aware, and at what frequency when the investigation is longer than 180 days?
10. What is the process for handling discrimination and harassment complaints at Columbia?
 - a. How has this process changed over the last five years?
 11. How does Columbia work to protect and support victims of violations of federal anti-discrimination laws, including when a complainant chooses to be anonymous?
 12. What actions does Columbia take to protect complainants when retaliatory behavior or safety threats are made towards the complainant?
 13. Is a finding that an individual perpetuated abuse in violation of federal anti-discrimination laws a reason to remove tenure?
 14. Apart from the agreement with the U.S. government, what actions have been taken when Columbia fails to follow its own federal anti-discrimination compliance policies?
 15. How often is Dr. Armstrong briefed by the OGC on the implementation of actions to combat discrimination and harassment?
 - a. What information is conveyed in these briefings?
 - b. How long after a report on discrimination or harassment at Columbia is filed or a finding is made is Dr. Armstrong briefed on the matter?
 16. Who is involved in ensuring Columbia's compliance with anti-discrimination laws? To what extent is Dr. Armstrong involved?

I appreciate your prompt attention to this request. If you have any questions about this request, please contact the Majority Committee Staff at (202) 225-3641.

Sincerely,



Brett Guthrie
Chairman
Committee on Energy and Commerce

Letter to Acting President Claire Shipman

March 24, 2026

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cc: The Honorable Frank Pallone, Jr., Ranking Member, Committee on Energy and
Commerce
The Honorable Yvette D. Clarke, Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Oversight and
Investigations