



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

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Socialists in Office Stand in Solidarity with Student Encampments for a Free Palestine

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Officials Denounce Violent Suppression of Student Protesters at NY Universities

Democratic socialist State Senators Julia Salazar (SD-18), Jabari Brisport (SD-25), and Kristen Gonzalez (SD-59); Assemblymembers Zohran Mamdani (AD-36), Emily Gallagher (AD-50), Marcela Mitaynes (AD-51), Phara Souffrant Forrest (AD-57) and Sarahana Shrestha (AD-103); New York City Council Members Tiffany Cabán (CD-22) and Alexa Avilés (CD-38); Ithaca City Council Members Phoebe Brown and Kayla Matos, and Tompkins County Legislator Veronica Pillar, who represent over one million New Yorkers released the following statement:

“We stand in solidarity with the students practicing peaceful protest at Columbia, NYU, CUNY, Cornell, the New School and all across the country, and we condemn the violent repression that university administrators and the police have wreaked upon these students.

We are moved watching students exercise their protected rights to freedom of speech and assembly in a united call for an end to the ongoing genocide in Gaza—and for their universities to divest from institutions that profit from this genocide, Israeli apartheid, and occupation. We also stand firmly opposed to antisemitism, which is part of the same machinery of fear and division that these students are organizing against. We have seen students lead in creating peaceful, multiracial, interfaith spaces on campus; this practice of solidarity is inspiring and is what is needed to foster mutual understanding and combat hate. Demonizing activists, students, and higher education is a page out of the long-standing playbook for crushing movements for racial and economic justice.

Universities should be spaces to express and deliberate new ideas. Instead, university collusion with the police to brutally sweep and surveil student encampments has transformed these educational spaces into something resembling military outposts. We stand with the students in demanding amnesty for those their administrations and the police have targeted: universities must reverse student suspensions and guarantee no further retaliation.

Despite great risks, these students are creating a roadmap for how people from a variety of backgrounds can come together in pursuit of justice. Instead of disgracefully slandering them, our leaders should take to heart what they and so many others are demanding — an immediate and permanent ceasefire in Palestine and an end to Israeli apartheid and occupation.”