

**Congress of the United States**  
**Washington, DC 20515**

August 3, 2007

John Cavanaugh, Ph.D.  
President, University of West Florida  
Office of the President  
11000 University Parkway  
Pensacola, Florida 32514-5750

Dear President Cavanaugh,

We urge you to join the United States House of Representatives as well as university presidents nationwide in condemning the May 30, 2007 decision of the main union representing 120,000 British college teachers, the British University and College Union (UCU), in boycotting Israeli academic institutions.

We strongly believe this unjustified boycott of Israeli academic institutions is an assault on the principles of academic freedom and open exchange and will limit cultural and scientific collaboration between foreign universities and academics. Unconscionably, it also contributes to the unacceptable de-legitimization and demonization of the State of Israel. As a sign of solidarity with Israel and its academic institutions against this deplorable action on the part of the UCU, on July 11, 2007 the House of Representatives unanimously passed House Resolution 467, condemning the UCU's decision to support this boycott of Israeli academia. This resolution also urges the international scholarly community to reject calls for an academic boycott of Israel and reaffirm their commitment to academic freedom and cultural and scientific international exchange.

As you may be aware, opposition to the UCU boycott has also been expressed by university presidents nationwide, led by Columbia University President Lee Bollinger, who reaffirmed his university's steadfast support for Israeli scholars and universities. Bollinger stated that he finds the boycott "utterly antithetical to the fundamental values of the academy, where we will not hold intellectual exchange hostage to the political disagreements of the moment." Presidents from many universities, including Brandeis University, the University of Virginia, and within our own state, the University of Miami and Florida Atlantic University, have endorsed Bollinger's statement and reaffirmed the responsibility of others in their distinguished positions to express their support for open academic exchange and collaboration between American and Israeli institutions.

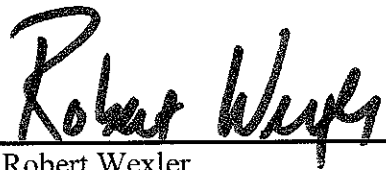
We share the sentiments of President Bollinger and believe that is critical for the presidents of American colleges and universities to publicly express their condemnation of the UCU boycott of Israeli academia and their unequivocal commitment to promote academic freedom. In this vein, we respectfully request that you endorse President Bollinger's statement, and we strongly encourage you to release your own statement opposing the UCU boycott. We have enclosed a copy of President Lee Bollinger's statement for your review, as well as copy of a statement released on July 25, 2007 by Frank Brogan, President of Florida Atlantic University, endorsing Bollinger's statement, and a copy of a letter written to UCU President Linda Newman on July 19, 2007 by Ray Ferrero, Jr., President of Nova Southeastern University, calling for an end to the boycott.

At a time when our ally Israel faces grave threats from terrorist such as Hamas and Hezbollah and rogue regimes such as Iran, it is critical that the United States express solidarity with the Israeli people. The UCU's boycott is the latest example of anti-Israel bias that does little to resolve the ongoing Israeli-

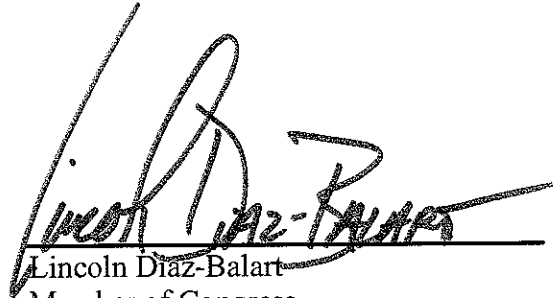
Palestinian divide and only emboldens the enemies of peace and reconciliation. It is essential that you join the House of Representative and your esteemed colleagues in sending a clear message that you and the Florida university community reject the UCU boycott, stand firmly for academic freedom and support Israeli scholars and educational institutions.

We greatly appreciate your support on this issue and look forward to your response to our letter. Please know we are working closely with several major Jewish organizations in Florida and nationally including the American Jewish Committee, Jewish Council for Public Affairs and the Israel Campus Coalition. These organizations share our unequivocal opposition to this unjustified boycott and stand ready to work with your University to address the UCU's deplorable decision to boycott Israeli academic institutions.

Respectfully,



Robert Wexler  
Member of Congress



Lincoln Diaz-Balart  
Member of Congress



Alcee L. Hastings  
Member of Congress



Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
Member of Congress



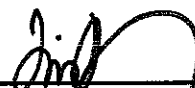
Corrine Brown  
Member of Congress



Ileana Ros-Lehtinen  
Member of Congress



Kathy Castor  
Member of Congress



Tim Mahoney  
Member of Congress



Vern Buchanan  
Member of Congress



Cliff Stearns  
Member of Congress



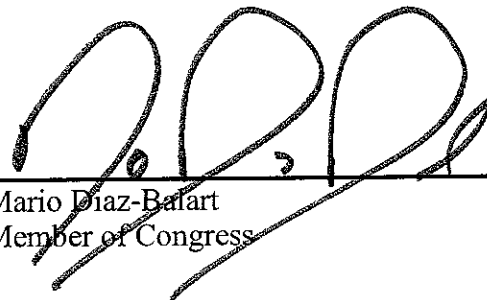
Ginny Brown-Waite  
Member of Congress



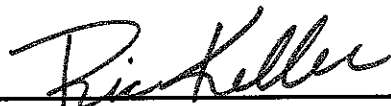
Tom Feeney  
Member of Congress



Kendrick Meek  
Member of Congress



Mario Diaz-Balart  
Member of Congress



Ric Keller  
Member of Congress



Gus M. Bilirakis  
Member of Congress



Ron Klein  
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