

Testimony of The Honorable Kathy Manning (NC-06)

FY24 Member Day Hearing

House Committee on Appropriations

Subcommittee on State, Foreign Operations, and Related Programs

March 8, 2023

Dear Chairman Diaz-Balart, Ranking Member Lee, and Members of the Subcommittee,

I appreciate this opportunity to testify before you. I want to begin by thanking you for your work on this Subcommittee to make investments critical to so many aspects of our foreign policy, including the fight against antisemitism.

I am here today as a proud co-chair of the House Bipartisan Task Force for Combating Antisemitism, together with Representative Chris Smith of New Jersey and six other colleagues on both sides of the aisle, including House Appropriations Committee Chairwoman Kay Granger and Vice Ranking Member Grace Meng.

The United States has a longstanding, bipartisan commitment to the fight against antisemitism. I am here today to urge the Subcommittee to strengthen our national commitment to this important priority by providing increased resources for the Office of the Special Envoy to Monitor and Combat Antisemitism (SEAS).

As you know, in recent months and years, we have witnessed a major rise in antisemitic incidents and threats against Jewish communities around the world. History has taught us that attacks and conspiracy theories that target Jews frequently grow to threaten other communities and undermine the health and wellbeing of democracies.

The Special Envoy is our only diplomat whose single focus is to monitor these disturbing trends and advance efforts to counter antisemitism around the world, in all of its forms. I applaud this committee for its prior support, including appropriating \$1.5 million for the office in FY23, an incredibly welcome increase in funding. I am confident that additional support and resources for the Office of the Special Envoy would make a real difference to our government's leadership in the fight against antisemitism. That is why I strongly urge you to support \$2 million in Fiscal Year 2024 for the Office.

We have made great progress in the fight against antisemitism, and in the past few years, many other countries and intergovernmental organizations have followed our lead by establishing their own dedicated, national-level Special Envoys and Coordinators tasked with countering antisemitism. At the same time, the threat of antisemitism continues to spread, take on new forms, and emerge in different parts of the world. These trends increase the workload of, and the demands on, the Special Envoy. While many countries around the world are facing a rise in antisemitism and could benefit from the Special Envoy's expertise, there are only so many countries that the Office of the Special Envoy is able to visit due to limited resources. Additional funding for the Office would support greater U.S. government engagement and leadership on this issue around the globe.

An increase in the Office's appropriation would also help enhance the professionalization and specialization of a dedicated staff to support the Special Envoy, especially as the position was recently elevated to a Presidentially appointed, Senate-confirmed position with the rank of Ambassador.

For these reasons, I respectfully request your support this year for the same year-on-year increase as last year, bringing the total funding for the Office to \$2 million for FY24. And I am proud to join Representative Meng, and many members of the House Bipartisan Task Force for Combating Antisemitism in leading a letter to this Subcommittee supporting this request.

Mr. Chairman, at various times throughout history when antisemitism was on the rise, too many failed to fully confront this threat. That is why it is so meaningful that this Committee, and so many Members of Congress on both sides of the aisle, remain committed to fight this persistent form of hate.

I respectfully ask that you continue to support increased funding for this Office that is so vital to the Jewish community, to our commitment to combating antisemitism, and to America's values and foreign policy.

Thank you for your time and consideration.