



**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

Robin Judd
President

Laura Leibman
VP Program

Joel Berkowitz
VP Publications

Ari Y. Kelman
VP Membership

Lila Corwin Berman
Secretary/Treasurer

Warren Hoffman
Executive Director

Dear President Cauce and Provost Richards,

We write to express our concerns over the University of Washington's decision to strip Professor Liora Halperin of her endowed chair and effectively dismantle the Israel Studies program, which she directs. While it is within the university's rights to return funds to a donor, we believe doing so in this case sets a very dangerous precedent by empowering the donor to enforce their political will—and to punish a faculty member for their beliefs—through the sheer fact of money given and the threat of withdrawing it or withholding future gifts.

The Association for Jewish Studies, the largest learned society and professional organization representing Jewish studies scholars worldwide, is dedicated to its members' intellectual and academic freedom. The organization's statement of core values endorses the American Association of University Professors' Statement of Principles on Academic Freedom and Tenure and commits to supporting its members' right to articulate beliefs and positions without fear of retribution. Unfortunately, we believe the University of Washington's actions are in violation of our member's academic freedom.

We urge the university to take the necessary steps to reinstate the resources and long-term institutional support that accompanied Halperin's endowed position at the university.

Sincerely,

The Executive Committee of the Association for Jewish Studies