

A Jewish Statement to the Oregon Food Bank

The organizations and institutions below express their deep disappointment to the Oregon Food Bank for their statement “Oregon Food Bank Statement Calling for a Ceasefire of Israel’s Violence against Palestinians” which remains on its website.

<https://www.oregonfoodbank.org/posts/oregon-food-bank-statement-calling-for-a-ceasefire-of-israels-violence-against-palestinians>

The title alone indicates a bias towards a complicated international situation, placing all blame on one party and accusing Israel of waging war on a civilian population rather than battling a terrorist organization which brutally murdered, raped and kidnapped more than a thousand of its citizens. The statement also includes false charges of colonialism and genocide which the Oregon Food Bank is not in a position to substantiate.

It is our understanding that the Oregon Food Bank has never made a political statement or comment on international issues before this one. War, hunger and famine are not new, nor are they limited to this one conflict. Famine in Sudan threatening 18 million with starvation, a multi-year unprovoked war in Ukraine which threatens food supplies to much of the world, and the 13 million Syrians - including thousands of Palestinians - who are in the grip of hunger because of a cruel civil war, all go unmentioned. This begs the question of why this conflict alone deserves the Oregon Food Bank’s outrage.

Many of the undersigned have been longtime supporters of the Oregon Food bank as donors and volunteers, some since its founding in 1982. We maintain a commitment to the mission of eliminating hunger in Oregon, and its root causes. But we cannot see how calling on one party of a conflict thousands of miles away to commit to a ceasefire, while allowing the terror organization that broke the ceasefire to continue to flourish on its borders, helps eliminate hunger in Oregon.

While we welcome OFB’s later statement on Jewish-American Heritage month, it does nothing to negate the harm already done. As both statements note, anti-Semitism is on the rise in our nation and our community. In our view, the false accusations here serve to further fan the flames of Jewish hatred.

We ask the Oregon Food Bank to retract its statement and issue one indicating that it will maintain its focus on hunger and its root causes here in Oregon. Until such time we will support other local organizations who are upholding this important mission.

Jewish Federation of Greater Portland
Greater Portland Hillel
Jewish Family and Child Service

Mittleman Jewish Community Center
Oregon NCSY
Oregon Jewish Community Foundation
Portland Jewish Academy
Portland Kollel
Beit Midrash Eitz Chaim
Congregation Beth Israel
Congregation Neveh Shalom
Congregation Shaarie Torah
Congregation Keser Israel
Congregation Ahavath Achim