

April 7, 2022

Dear Chancellor Suárez-Orozco

We are faculty members at UMass Boston, writing to express our sincere appreciation of your recent decision to reverse the removal of Sabra Hummus from campus dining halls.

As you are aware, a student organization attempted last month to pressure the dining services to remove Sabra Hummus from the campus dining facility. This drive to remove Israeli products from the cafeteria was accompanied by a series of insensitive statements about Israel and its supporters on campus. We support open discussion about the conflict in the Middle East, including legitimate and warranted criticism of Israeli policies. However, the campaign to ban Sabra was put forward as part of the BDS (Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions) movement -- a movement dedicated to delegitimizing Israel through the diplomatic, financial, academic, and cultural isolation of Israel and Israelis, and those who support them.

As you may have seen from the 3/17/2022 letter sent by the Anti-Defamation League surrounding this issue on our campus, many Jewish students feel increasingly vulnerable and excluded as a result of such campaigns:

<https://newengland.adl.org/files/2022/03/Letter-from-ADL-to-Chancellor.pdf>

Thus, we were concerned that the dining services at UMass Boston initially complied with this demand (perhaps not fully understanding the motivation behind it), and we are very glad to see that our university chose to reverse course on this issue. The boycott of Sabra Hummus and the singling out of a particular country is exclusionary and divisive, and inimical to UMass Boston's values and its mission to offer a welcoming and inclusive learning environment for all. Since we believe that such controversies may arise again, we felt it was important to let you know that we fully support and appreciate the way that you addressed this issue.

We admire your wise and courageous decision to reverse this policy and assure that our campus' proud history and heritage of engagement rather than exclusion continues unabated. Your decision to re-stock Sabra Hummus in the campus dining hall makes our school a more free, fair, and inclusive space for students, faculty, staff, and the greater UMass Boston community as a whole. Again, we commend your choice to stand up for what is right, even if it may not be popular among all students and staff.

Sincerely,

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