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October 30, 2018

City of Portland Human Rights Commission Condemns the Synagogue Attack in Pittsburgh

Portland, OR – The City of Portland Human Rights Commission issues the following statement on the synagogue attack in Pittsburgh.

The murder of eleven Jewish people in their Pittsburgh synagogue on Saturday, October 27, 2018 was a crime of violent hatred and bigotry. The Portland Human Rights Commission shares the grief, fear, and anger of our Jewish neighbors in Portland and across the country, as well as of everyone who believes that this hate crime tears at the very fabric of our society. The attack in Pittsburgh was an attack on every Jew. It was an attack on every place of worship. It was an attack on the very idea of tolerance and mutual respect for fellow human beings. All of us have a profound stake in this idea, and unless we defend it loudly and strongly we are all at risk.

The Commission believes that our grief and anger must be followed by ever greater determination to protect the fundamental rights of all persons to live in peace and dignity, and free from fear. We condemn the vicious language of anti-Semitic hatred that accompanied this act, and the media sites that permit this language to spread widely and easily throughout society. We call upon our elected officials, and all our community members, to raise their voices publicly against all forms of hate speech, whenever it occurs, and to stand in strong solidarity with anyone who is victimized by it.

Guided by the principles set forth in the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Human Rights Commission of Portland believes that our community's broad and strong condemnation of the attack on the Jewish synagogue in Pittsburgh, and the community's equally strong efforts to combat hate-speech and violence directed against any person or group, serves to uphold the following articles in the Declaration:

Article 1: Equal Right to Freedom and Dignity

Article 2: Freedom from discrimination

Article 3: Right to Life, Liberty, and Personal Security

Article 5: Freedom from Torture and Degrading Treatment

Article 18: Freedom of Belief and Religion

Portland Human Rights Commission
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Josue Ramirez, Crystallee Crain, Sonia Marie Leikam, Coi Vu, David Barnard, Chris Wallace Caldwell, Jamila Dozier

The City of Portland Human Rights Commission (HRC) is an all-volunteer advisory body comprised of Human Rights Commissioners appointed by City Council. The HRC advises City Council and City Bureaus on applying a human rights lens to policy and advises on promoting and protecting human rights in the City of Portland. For more information about the City of Portland Human Rights Commission, visit: <https://www.portlandoregon.gov/oehr/6221>.

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