



The President

February 2, 2012

Dear Friends:

While a long-standing Penn commitment in California keeps me from being with you in person this evening, I want you to know that I am very much with you in spirit, and I extend my most sincere thanks for your participation in this evening's program.

I cannot begin to convey how pleased I am that Penn Hillel, the Jewish Federation of Greater Philadelphia, and numerous other co-sponsors have stepped forward in the midst of a challenging few weeks on campus to add important voices to the conversations that are occurring about Israel.

A commitment to open expression is fundamental to a great university like Penn. Occasionally that commitment gets tested, and that will certainly be the case this weekend. We recognize the right of any student or student group to freely express their opinions. Unfortunately, some then assume that those words carry the University's endorsement. With regard to the BDS conference this weekend, that could not be further from the truth.

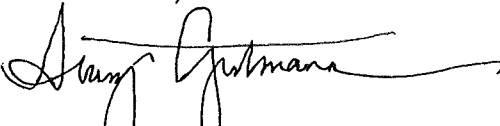
It is important that you all know that we have been unambiguous in repudiating the positions that are espoused by those sponsoring that conference. They run counter to our principles, our ideals and importantly, our actions. I am very proud of the active collaborations that Penn has with Israel and hope that we will see those grow in the years ahead. Penn is blessed to have one of the largest and most active Hillel chapters in the country. And we are unwavering in our support of the Jewish state. Let me say it in the clearest possible words: we do not support the goals of BDS.

To Ira and Sherrie and all the members of the Federation board, I offer my heartfelt thanks for stepping forward to co-sponsor this wonderful gathering, and realizing the importance of a thoughtful, educational response to this weekend's events. I believe that truth and reason will win the day. To Rabbi Mike Uram and my dear friends at Penn Hillel, thank you for your role in creating and facilitating tonight's program, and for serving as a powerful beacon for Jewish life at Penn since 1944.

I also want to extend my thanks to Alan Dershowitz for coming to speak this evening. I have long admired Alan's intellect and passion, and know his words will inspire you all.

Your presence here tonight makes a very important statement. Thanks for doing it the right way. Thanks for supporting the cause of Israel. And thanks for supporting Penn.

Shalom,



Amy Gutmann