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January 9, 2013

UC STUDENT PETITION SUPPORTING UCSA'S RESOLUTION AGAINST HR-35 SURPASSES  
1,000 SIGNATURES

***Students voice their united opposition to California Resolution HR-35 and thank the UC Students Association for vocally opposing it while taking a morally consistent stand against racism. HR-35 proposes broad bans on student speech supporting Palestinian rights and criticizing discriminatory Israeli policies.***

Today a petition signed by UC students and recent graduates who support the University of California's Student Association (UCSA) resolution regarding HR-35 surpassed 1,000 signatures. Signers applauded UCSA "for standing up on behalf of the UC community and defending [their] right to advocate for human rights," and for representing the "majority viewpoint at the UC which opposes racism in all forms, whether it be anti-Jewish acts by anti-Semites or anti-Palestinian policies undertaken by Israel in its discriminatory and illegal occupation." The petitioners thanked the UCSA for its robust rebuke of State Assembly bill HR-35.

HR-35 is a non-binding resolution passed through the California State Assembly over the summer. The bill inappropriately labels criticism of Israeli state policy as anti-Semitic and recommends broad forms of censorship of students and faculty at the UC to prevent criticism of Israel.

Attorney Liz Jackson, cooperating counsel with the Center for Constitutional Rights characterized HR-35 as "an anti-democratic attempt to intimidate and silence students from expressing pro-Palestinian views." Jackson explained, "HR-35 mislabels advocacy for Palestinian rights as inherently anti-Semitic. This is a complete distortion of students' human rights advocacy. To argue that such speech should be restricted, as HR-35 does, is to decimate the principle of free speech and it is plainly unconstitutional."

HR-35 is part of a well-documented pattern of intimidation against those speaking out in support of Palestinian rights on UC/CSU campuses, noted in a recent letter from civil rights groups to the UC Administration. Its passage comes shortly after the release of a controversial Campus Climate report that recommends similar forms of censorship of pro-Palestinian students, ranging from limiting the pro-Palestinian speakers allowed on campus to "enforcing balance" when pro-Palestinian speakers do come to campus.

Both the climate report and HR-35 have been widely criticized and opposed by civil rights groups such as the National Lawyers Guild and Center for Constitutional Rights, community organizations such as Jewish Voice for Peace and the Council on American Islamic Relations, and academic groups such as the California Scholars for Academic Freedom and the Middle East Studies Association. The ACLU of Northern California recently warned of the "chilling effect" that related federal lawsuits targeting Palestine human rights activists are having on UC students' constitutionally protected speech rights.

UC Berkeley student Ley Cerezo added that “HR-35 inevitably encourages a climate of fear in a student body whose dedication to activism ought not to be censured nor even reserved for mere toleration, but celebrated in a system of public universities. Just as we speak out against the many injustices sustained by various bodies of government, so too do we continue our opposition to any illegitimate limitations on our speech.”

Today’s petition, signed exclusively by current and former UC students in the space of a few weeks, demonstrates the breadth of public opposition to censorship and attacks on the pro-Palestine community. Students say that as a new year starts and students return to campus, they look forward to collecting more signatures and building public awareness of threats to pro-Palestinian advocacy.

Read full petition here: <https://sites.google.com/site/ucstudentsagainsth35/> and find a link to this press release and other relevant background information at [www.ucsjp.posterous.com](http://www.ucsjp.posterous.com).