1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8	Arnold P. Peter (SBN 120091) apeter@peterlawgroup.com Eyal Farahan (SBN 314849) efarahan@peterlawgroup.com PETER LAW GROUP 270 Coral Circle El Segundo, California 90245 T: (310) 277-0010 F: (310) 432-0599  Attorneys for Plaintiff SAM LINGROSSO	FILED Superior Court of California County of Los Angeles 08/11/2025 David W. Slayton, Executive Officer / Clerk of Court By: J. Ballesteros Deputy		
9	SUPERIOR COURT OF	THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA		
10	COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES			
11				
12	SAM LINGROSSO, an individual,	Case No.: 25LBCV01519		
270 Coral Circle 270 Coral Circle El Segundo, CA 90245 16. 310.277.010 • FAX 310.432.0599 17. 17. 17. 17. 17. 17. 17. 17. 17. 17.	Plaintiff,	FIRST AMENDED COMPLAINT		
Circle 2A 90245 AX 310.	vs.	FOR DAMAGES AND EQUITABLE RELIEF		
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310.277.	TRUSTEES OF THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY, a division of the	1. Discrimination on the Basis of Religious Creed, Ancestry and/or Race		
卓 17	State of California; and CHRISTINA L. VON MAYRHAUSER, an individual;	in Violation of the Fair Employment and Housing Act ("FEHA")		
18		2. Harassment in Violation of the FEHA		
19	Defendants.	3. Retaliation in Violation of the FEHA 4. Failure to Prevent Discrimination and		
20		Retaliation from Occurring in Violation of the FEHA		
21		Violation of the PEHA		
22		Unlimited Civil Action		
23		Amount Demanded Exceeds \$35,000 Jury Trial Demanded		
24		John Timi Domanaca		
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27	FIDQT AME	ENDED COMPLAINT FOR		
28	FIRST AMENDED COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES AND EQUITABLE RELIEF			
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SAM LINGROSSO ("Plaintiff") brings these causes of action against Defendants TRUSTEES OF THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY ("Defendant" or "Trustees"), and Christina L. Von Mayrhauser and each of them (collectively referred to as "Defendants"), and alleges as follows: I. JURISDICTION AND VENUE This Court has jurisdiction over this action pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure § 410.10 because Defendants are residents of, or are doing business in, California. Venue is proper in the County of Los Angeles pursuant to California Code of Civil

# county.

THE PARTIES

II.

At all relevant times, Plaintiff was an individual and an employee of Defendant. Plaintiff became employed by Defendant as the Director of Academic Employee Relations at California State University Northridge ("CSUN") on or about June 24, 2024 and his employment was terminated effective December 16, 2024.

Procedure §§ 395(a) and 395.5 because a substantial part of the events or omissions

giving rise to the claim occurred in this county, and Defendants are located in this

Defendant, the Trustees, is part of the State of California acting in its higher education capacity, through the California State University system. Trustees is incorporated as, and governed by, the Board of Trustees of the California State

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University, which oversees all public universities in the Trustees, including CSUN. CSUN is a California public university located in Northridge, a neighborhood in the San Fernando Valley region of the City of Los Angeles.

- At all times herein alleged in this First Amended Complaint ("FAC"), Plaintiff worked on the CSUN campus and was employed by Trustees, the properly named Defendant in this action.
  - Christina L. Von Mayrhauser ("Von Mayrhauser"), is a natural person and at all relevant times, was serving as the Interim Associate Vice President for Faculty Affairs at Trustees and was Plaintiff's immediate supervisor. In this capacity, she oversaw faculty-related policies and procedures, including recruitment, retention, promotion, and tenure processes. Her responsibilities encompassed managing faculty hiring, ensuring compliance with Trustees' policies and state and federal employment laws, and addressing workplace conflicts involving faculty. Additionally, she acted as a liaison between faculty members and CSUN administration, providing strategic leadership in resolving complex issues affecting faculty and academic staff. At all times relevant to this FAC, Von Mayrhauser was acting in a supervisory role and was an agent, representative, and/or employee of Trustees. Defendant Von Mayrhauser terminated Plaintiff, effective December 16, 2024 because of his political views against antisemitism and advocacy on behalf of Jewish students and faculty.
- 7. At all relevant times, Trustees faculty, staff, administration, and other employees and/or affiliates ("Trustees Agents") were acting within the scope of their employment and/or at the direction and control of Trustees. Moreover, at all relevant

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times, appropriate Trustees Agents were made aware of and took no action against
the conduct of its agents, thereby ratifying their conduct and rendering Trustees
liable for the conduct of its agents.

Each Defendant is sued as the agent and/or employer of each other acting in the course and scope of such employment or alternatively, acting beyond the course and scope of their authority. Without waiving the alternative pleading, reference in this complaint to these Defendants' capacity will be within the course and scope of their authority. Reference made in this complaint to "Defendants" shall be deemed to mean the acts of Defendants acting individually, jointly, and/or severally.

### III. EXHAUSTION OF ADMINISTRATIVE REMEDIES

9. Plaintiff has exhausted his administrative remedies under the Fair Employment and Housing Act and has obtained a Right to Sue letter, a true and correct copy of which is attached hereto as Exhibit A.

### IV. FACTS COMMON TO ALL CAUSES OF ACTION

# A. Plaintiff's Exemplary Background And Professional Qualifications

10. Plaintiff holds a Bachelor of Arts degree from Loyola Marymount University (1995), a Master of Arts from California State University, Long Beach (2002), and another Master of Arts from Claremont Graduate University (2010). As the CSUN Director of Academic Employee Relations, Plaintiff's duties encompassed a broad range of responsibilities aimed at fostering a positive and productive work environment for

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academic staff and faculty. These duties included mediating disputes between faculty and administration, ensuring compliance with CSUN policies and employment laws, managing employee grievances, resolving workplace conflicts, and providing guidance and training on workplace issues. Plaintiff also investigated complaints related to harassment, discrimination, and retaliation and developed strategies to improve employee relations and engagement.

- 11. Throughout his career, Plaintiff has been widely regarded as an effective mediator and advocate for workplace fairness and inclusivity. He has a proven track record of fostering collaborative environments and resolving complex employment disputes in a manner that respects institutional values and individual rights. Before assuming the role of Director of Academic Employee Relations at CSUN, Plaintiff held key leadership positions in both public and private institutions of higher education, where he honed his skills in policy implementation, conflict management, and legal compliance.
- 12. Plaintiff's professional philosophy is centered on bridging communication gaps between employees and leadership, ensuring that all voices are heard, and advocating for solutions that align with organizational goals while addressing the specific needs of individuals. He is particularly skilled at navigating highly sensitive workplace issues, including those involving discrimination, harassment, and retaliation, and has earned the respect of peers and subordinates alike for his integrity, impartiality, and dedication to equity.

- 13. In addition to his administrative roles, Plaintiff has contributed to the field of employee relations through training workshops, policy development initiatives, and mentorship programs aimed at building leadership capacity among faculty and staff. His efforts have consistently resulted in improved workplace morale, increased employee engagement, and enhanced compliance with state and federal employment laws. Plaintiff's expertise in these areas has made him a sought-after leader in the academic sector, particularly in institutions with diverse faculty and student populations.
- 14. Plaintiff's tenure at CSUN was marked by his proactive approach to addressing faculty and staff concerns, mediating disputes, and fostering a culture of mutual respect. His commitment to upholding institutional policies, combined with his deep understanding of employment law and workplace dynamics, equipped him to handle even the most contentious issues with professionalism and sensitivity. Plaintiff's robust educational foundation, coupled with his extensive experience in higher education, has positioned him as a dedicated and capable advocate for fairness and inclusion in academic settings. These attributes made him an ideal candidate to lead efforts in resolving faculty disputes and promoting a positive work environment at CSUN. However, as detailed in the Statement of Facts, Plaintiff's advocacy for marginalized groups, including the Jewish community, was met with resistance and retaliation, culminating in the events that are the basis of this complaint.

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# B. Jewish Faculty Member Gary Katz's Raised Safety Concerns Based On Anniversary Of October 7, 2023 Terrorist Attacks In Israel

- 15. At the direction of her supervisor Von Mayrhauser, in or about September 2024, Plaintiff was assigned to address concerns raised by faculty member Gary Katz, Ph.D. ("Professor Katz"). At all relevant times, Professor Katz served as an Associate Professor in the CSUN Department of Psychology and was the Graduate Coordinator for the Psychology Department as well as the Chair of the Graduate M.A. Program in Clinical Psychology. Professor Katz is also a Founder of Matadors Against Antisemitism (MAA), a campus-based Jewish advocacy group composed of faculty and staff.
- 16. Professor Katz's concerns revolved around the upcoming anniversary of the October 7, 2023, terrorist attacks against Israel. Professor Katz expressed fears regarding the safety of Jewish faculty and students on campus, citing a perceived increase in hostile rhetoric, anti-Semitic incidents, and threatening behaviors. He urged campus leadership to take preemptive measures to ensure safety but reported unsatisfactory responses to his warnings.
- 17. Plaintiff met with Professor Katz for approximately two hours. Professor Katz shared his safety concerns and described unsettling remarks written on posters he had displayed outside his office depicting American hostages in Israel. He further noted

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that Jewish students had confided fears of harassment or violence, particularly in the context of pro-Palestinian demonstrations on campus.

### C. Plaintiff Undertook Proactive Actions To Address Professor Gary Katz's Concerns

- 18. Plaintiff contacted Chief Alfredo B. Fernandez ("Fernandez") of campus police to facilitate a safety plan for Professor Katz. Fernandez stated he would follow up with the assigned detective and provide an update. The following day, Fernandez informed Plaintiff that a camera had already been installed in the hallway overlooking Professor Katz's office and that Professor Katz could contact the detective to create a safety plan. Plaintiff promptly relayed this information to Professor Katz, who expressed appreciation for the assistance. Professor Katz's Email To The Jewish Campus Community Praising Plaintiff.
- 19. On or about September 26, 2024, Professor Gary Katz, CSUN's Associate Professor of Psychology, sent an email to a campus listsery comprised of Jewish faculty and allies following a meeting CSUN's Campus Hillel<sup>1</sup>. In the email, Professor Katz described his recent interactions with Plaintiff, Sam Lingrosso, who had been newly appointed as Director of Academic Employee Relations. Professor Katz commended Plaintiff's

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Hillel is the largest Jewish campus organization in the world, dedicated to enriching the lives of Jewish students and fostering inclusive campus communities. At California State University, Northridge (TrusteesN), Hillel serves students across local campuses, providing cultural, educational, and religious programming, and offering support to those facing antisemitism or identity-based threats. (See Hillel International, "About Hillel," available at https://www.hillel.org/about (last accessed March 23, 2025).

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proactive efforts to address ongoing faculty safety concerns, particularly those impacting Jewish faculty during a time of heightened tensions. He wrote:

> "I have been working with Sam for the past few weeks on a long-standing issue that I have with a member of my department and I have found him to be incredibly supportive, a great listener, and one who makes an all-out effort to understand what faculty members are experiencing – particularly in these difficult times. More importantly, Sam has been focused on DOING things rather than talking about them. Thanks to Sam's intervention, I now have a security camera trained on my office door."

20. Professor Katz further emphasized Plaintiff's compassionate and thoughtful approach to faculty well-being, recounting how Plaintiff encouraged him to consider personal safety in light of increasing threats:

> "Sam asked me a question I had been dismissing for a while: 'I would like you to think about some practical aspects of your personal safety. Would you do that?' ... Then he said, 'I'd feel terrible if something happened and we hadn't had this discussion."

21. Professor Katz explained that Plaintiff had requested logistical details—such as his arrival times, parking habits, and class schedule—in order to share that information with Campus Police and allow them to assess possible changes to patrols for increased protection. Katz also noted Plaintiff's desire to extend similar support to other faculty, stating:

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"At the end of our meeting, Sam asked if there were any other Jewish (or non-Jewish) faculty who may feel more protected or more comfortable if he were able to provide a similar liaison service with campus police. I told Sam that I would forward this offer to this group."

- 22. Professor Katz closed the email by acknowledging the difficult reality Jewish faculty faced, writing, "We should not live in fear; however, we should also not be foolhardy," and encouraged others to contact Plaintiff directly, noting that "he is aware of our group and our goals. He is also keenly aware of our vulnerabilities as Jewish faculty."
- 23. Although Professor Katz's intentions were to highlight Plaintiff's responsiveness and commitment to faculty safety, the email was perceived by Defendant Von Mayrhauser as an implicit criticism of her and other campus leaders. The contrast between Plaintiff's decisive actions and others' inaction—particularly in Professor Katz's statement that Plaintiff "has been focused on DOING things rather than talking about them"—was interpreted by Von Mayrhauser as a direct affront to her leadership. Her reaction was marked by visible displeasure and indignation, as she viewed the email as an attack on her authority and an attempt to undermine her credibility within the institution.
- 24. Rather than acknowledging the merits of Plaintiff's work or the urgent safety issues being raised, Von Mayrhauser focused on the perceived critique, exacerbating the tension between herself and Plaintiff. Her conduct illustrated a pattern in which her personal sensitivities and concerns over reputation were prioritized above the safety and well-being of vulnerable faculty members.

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- 25. This reaction occurred in the context of a broader, troubling climate at CSUN, where a vocal campus faction had been targeting Jewish faculty and students—blaming them for the alleged "genocide" of Palestinians and contributing to an increasingly hostile environment. This group unfairly singled out Jewish members of the campus community, promoting fear and discrimination. CSUN's leadership, including Von Mayrhauser, failed to take meaningful action to confront this conduct, thereby fostering a climate of indifference toward antisemitism.
- 26. In this broader context, Von Mayrhauser's hostility toward Plaintiff was not simply a matter of professional disagreement. Her unwillingness to support Plaintiff's efforts to protect Jewish faculty—including Professor Katz—reflected a deeper institutional failure to address discrimination and ensure campus safety. Her conduct further undermined CSUN's stated commitments to inclusion, diversity, and the protection of all members of its academic community.
  - D. Adverse Reaction From Christina L. Von Mayrhauser Regarding Plaintiff's Proactive Actions To Protect The Jewish Campus Community
- 27. Upon learning of Professor Katz's email, Von Mayrhauser accused Plaintiff of making unauthorized promises regarding security measures. Plaintiff requested that Von Mayrhauser verify the facts with Fernandez, who confirmed that Plaintiff had accurately relayed information. Despite this confirmation, Von Mayrhauser maintained her accusations against Plaintiff.

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### E. Christina L. Von Mayrhauser Constructed False Allegations To Justify Plaintiff's Termination

- 28. During the week of October 1, 2024, just prior to the October 7 anniversary, Plaintiff was instructed by Von Mayrhauser to draft a clarifying email regarding Plaintiff's inability to make security decisions. However, Plaintiff was explicitly forbidden from sending the email without Von Mayrhauser's prior review and approval.
- 29. Plaintiff stayed late that evening to draft the email and promptly sent it to Von Mayrhauser for her review. Despite this, Plaintiff did not receive clearance to send the email to the designated listserv.
- 30. The following week, Von Mayrhauser confronted Plaintiff in Plaintiff's office, demanding an explanation for why the clarifying email had not been sent. Plaintiff explained that Plaintiff was awaiting her review and confirmation. Von Mayrhauser repeatedly insisted that Plaintiff should have sent the email and failed to acknowledge receiving the draft that Plaintiff had sent the evening of their discussion with the Chief.
- 31. When Plaintiff offered to retrieve the email to demonstrate that it had been sent, Von Mayrhauser became increasingly angry. Plaintiff began feeling unwell and informed Von Mayrhauser of the need to leave due to feeling sick. Following this exchange, Plaintiff left the campus.
- 32. Subsequently, Plaintiff's doctor placed him on medical leave for 60 days. Upon Plaintiff's return to work on December 9, 2024, Plaintiff was placed on administrative leave. Plaintiff's supervisor informed Plaintiff that Plaintiff was not

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fulfilling the needs of the position or the department and that Plaintiff would not be retained in the position. Plaintiff was presented with a letter offering three months of severance in exchange for signing a resignation letter. Plaintiff declined the offer.

### F. Plaintiff Was Terminated For His Perceived Political Views Against Antisemitism And For Acting Swiftly And Decisively To Protect Jewish Faculty And Students

- 33. Plaintiff alleges that CSUN's actions and inactions were influenced by animosity toward the Jewish community and concerns about backlash from campus groups critical of Israel. Plaintiff asserts that CSUN's failure to address safety concerns highlighted systemic bias and disregard for the rights of Jewish faculty and students. Plaintiff further contends that his termination was an act of retaliation, motivated by discriminatory attitudes toward his advocacy on behalf of Jewish faculty and students.
- 34. Plaintiff alleges that CSUN prioritized appeasement of campus groups critical of Israel over the safety concerns of Jewish faculty and students. Plaintiff asserts that this bias undermined his ability to perform his duties and foster a safe, inclusive environment. He claims that his termination exemplifies a broader pattern of neglect and hostility toward the Jewish community on campus, fostering a hostile academic environment.

### G. CSUN Faculty Sound Alarm To Plaintiff On Rising Antisemitism And Campus Safety

35. On October 2, 2024, Andrew Surmani, CSUN Professor of Music Industry Studies and Academic Lead, expressed grave concerns over the safety of Jewish faculty,

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students, and staff on campus. In an email addressed to Plaintiff, Professor Surman
highlighted the ongoing threats facing Jewish members of the campus community.
He referenced multiple antisemitic incidents including the targeting of his colleague,
Professor Gary Katz, and the broader Jewish community at CSUN. Professor
Surmani noted the installation of a security camera outside Professor Katz's office as
a precautionary measure against vandalism and antisemitic acts.

- 36. Professor Surmani articulated a pervasive sense of fear among Jewish faculty and students, stemming from both physical safety threats and the potential for administrative retaliation or social ostracism. He questioned what actions could be taken to protect themselves from potential harassment and sought proactive measures to ensure their safety. This correspondence underscores the hostile and intimidating environment Jewish members of the CSUN community face, exacerbated by a perceived lack of adequate institutional response to antisemitic incidents.
- 37. Despite his own high-ranking role in academic leadership, Dr. Katz stated that he repeatedly encountered resistance and dismissal when raising antisemitism-related issues to CSUN administrators.
- 38. Professor Katz expressed that Plaintiff's actions to protect Jewish faculty particularly to himself—were unique and courageous, in contrast to an institutional culture of indifference. He described Plaintiff as "one of the only people actually doing anything." Professor Katz's view underscores that Plaintiff's termination appears

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retaliatory and unjustified in light of his earnest efforts to improve campus safety
and compliance.
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- 39. Professor Katz's experiences verify that Plaintiff's termination was not the result of performance issues, professional misconduct, or institutional restructuring. It was the culmination of a campaign—subtle in its methods but brutal in its effect—to isolate, discredit, and eliminate anyone who challenged CSUN's indifference toward Jewish suffering.
- 40. Plaintiff was not terminated because he failed to do his job. He was terminated because he did it too well—because he dared to care, to act, and to lead when others would only hide.
- 41. Professor Katz also conveyed concern for other Jewish faculty members at CSUN who were directly harassed by tenured colleagues. One was publicly scolded at a department meeting for supporting Jewish campus events. Despite strong administrative connections, this individual was too vulnerable in her employment status to speak publicly, reflecting a culture of intimidation.

### H. CSUN's Campaign of Silence: Retaliation Against Whistleblowers and Institutional Complicity in Antisemitism

42. In July 2025, Professor Katz has courageously shattered CSUN's imposed silence persistent silence and inaction with a bold show of leadership. As Professor Katz eloquently stated: "The problem is not that CSUN is the worst—it's that it thinks doing nothing is leadership."

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43. On May 28, 2025, Professor Katz, wore a Star of David sash at CSUN's commencement ceremony. Publicly and repeatedly, three graduating students—out of roughly 800—refused to shake his hand in front of nearly 10,000 in attendance. He identified this as a deliberate act of antisemitic insult, fueled by a painful conflation of Judaism and current geopolitical events. Professor Katz reported that Jewish members of the CSUN community have not felt welcome since Oct. 8, 2023, even under heightened physical security measures, underscoring a pervasive atmosphere of fear, exclusion, and intimidation. The incident was not an isolated gesture of disrespect but emblematic of broader campus apathy. It occurred openly before faculty, administrators, and public safety officials—including Los Angeles Police Department snipers stationed visibly on rooftops—yet no formal response or condemnation was issued. This commencement ceremony serves as a microcosm of the systemic failures described by Professor Katz—acts of antisemitic hostility unchallenged by university leadership, reinforcing the Plaintiff's core allegation that CSUN legitimizes an unsafe environment for Jewish-affiliated community members.

44. Professor Katz confirms many of the allegations outlined in this First Amended FAC, as one of the few CSUN faculty members willing to speak publicly regarding the systemic failure of CSUN leadership to address antisemitism. Dr. Katz confirmed that CSUN's treatment of Plaintiff is consistent with his own negative experiences, describing CSUN leadership—including Von Mayrhauser and Vice President for Student Affairs, William Watkins—as passive and unwilling to act, even when presented with serious safety concerns.

- 45. Professor Katz recounted a chilling exchange with the Vice President for Student Affairs, William Watkins, who responded to his plea for action—"Doing nothing and hoping for the best is not leadership"—with the dismissive retort, "That's your opinion." This response epitomizes the administration's passive approach, which masks deeper complicity through neutrality.
- 46. According to Professor Katz, what distinguished the Plaintiff was action. He recalled, Plaintiff as the only person who actually did something... Everyone else either deflected, delayed, or dismissed us." The plaintiff's efforts, involving campus security coordination, safety protocols, and open faculty dialogue, threatened the entrenched status quo and triggered CSUN's swift retaliation.
- 47. As part of his activism, Professor Katz serves as a public leader of Matadors Against Antisemitism (MAA)—a network formed in Spring 2024 by Jewish and allied faculty and staff committed to combating antisemitism at CSUN through education, advocacy, and constructive engagement (matadorsagainstantisemitism.com, jewishjournal.com). MAA's mission statement emphasizes that "antisemitism has no place on campus" and that its principles—diversity, inclusion, and belonging—must guide CSUN's leadership. Despite MAA's efforts—such as panel events and educational campaigns—**Professor Katz** highlighted that university administrators still "nod and smile" without meaningful follow-through.
- 48. The handshake refusals at commencement described in paragraph \_\_\_ above, in full view of university leadership, demonstrate not only antisemitic behavior—but campus tolerance of it. This incident is a salient illustration of the hostile

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environment Plaintiff sought to address. Professor Katz's open expression of Jewish identity triggered direct rejection—an undeniable act of exclusion in an institutional ceremony meant to unify. That this conduct occurred unchallenged in front of thousands, including administrators, underscores the broader allegations of administrative inaction and the culture of "nodding and smiling" without substantive engagement.

- 49. Professor Katz explained that he had sent approximately twelve separate emails to CSUN President Erika Beck between October 2020 and the present, each one raising urgent concerns about the rise of antisemitism and threats to campus safety. These emails—thoughtfully written and factually detailed—documented specific incidents, cited the fears of Jewish faculty and students, and pleaded for clear action, support, or even acknowledgment. Initially, Beck set up a meeting between Dr. Katz and Provost and Vice President for Academic Affairs, Meera Kamarraju. During that meeting, Dr. Katz presented a litary of issues and concerns to Kamarraju, only to be met with smiles, nods, and further inaction. Besides the first email, not a single additional message or plea received a direct response from President Beck. There were no replies, no acknowledgments of receipt, and no indication that the President had read or considered the concerns raised.
- 50. This persistent silence was not an oversight. It reflected a deliberate and institutionalized pattern of disregard for Jewish voices and Jewish safety on campus. In an academic environment where diversity and inclusion are touted as core values, the total absence of engagement from the university's highest official—despite over a

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- dozen attempts at dialogue—sent a devastating message: that the safety, dignity, and rights of Jewish faculty and students are not a priority at CSUN.
- 51. Professor Katz's experience was not an isolated administrative lapse, but rather emblematic of a broader climate of institutional apathy. In the face of hate, the university's leadership did not merely fail to act—it refused to listen. The stonewalling by President Beck, despite her legal, ethical, and moral obligations, reinforced the perception among Jewish members of the campus community that they were invisible, expendable, or worse—unwelcome.
- 52. This sustained indifference is especially egregious given Professor Katz's standing: a tenured faculty member, nationally recognized leader, and public representative of Matadors Against Antisemitism. If even a person in his position could be ignored so thoroughly and systematically, what chance do junior or part-time faculty have to be heard, much less protected? The administration's silence in the face of repeated, good-faith outreach is not simply neglectful—it is complicit.
  - I. Plaintiff's Termination Occurred Amid Escalating Antisemitic Harassment And Violence On U.S. Campuses, Including California State University Northridge, Led By Militant Student Groups And Enabled By Administrative Inaction
- 53. In the aftermath of the October 7, 2023, there has been a dramatic and unprecedented rise in antisemitic activity on college and university campuses across the United States in the aftermath of the October 7, 2023, Hamas attack on Israel. The ADL documented a 321 percent increase in campus-based antisemitic incidents in 2023 compared to the previous year. This alarming trend continued into 2024,

with an additional 84 percent increase in such incidents reported during the early
part of the year. https://www.adl.org/resources/press-release/over-10000-antisemitic-
incidents-recorded-us-oct-7-2023-according-adl (Last accessed May 15, 2025). These
campus incidents include, but are not limited to, targeted harassment of Jewish
students, the spread of antisemitic rhetoric during protests and rallies, acts of
vandalism involving Jewish symbols or student organizations, and efforts to
intimidate or silence Jewish voices in academic and social settings. The ADL's
findings reflect a hostile and unsafe environment for Jewish students and faculty on
many campuses, undermining their right to equal access to education and full
participation in university life. <i>Ibid</i> .

- 54. One particularly egregious incident occurred at The Cooper Union in New York City, where Jewish students were forced to barricade themselves inside the library on October 25, 2023. During a pro-Palestinian protest, demonstrators pounded on doors and windows while chanting threatening slogans. Campus security reportedly advised the students to remain hidden until the protest subsided. https://www.reuters.com/legal/cooper-union-nyc-must-face-jewish-students-lawsuitover-pro-palestinian-rally-2025-02-05/ (Last Accessed May 15, 2025).
- 55. Similarly, at the University of California, Berkeley, on October 18, 2023, a Jewish student was physically assaulted during a counter-protest after challenging demonstrators who were chanting slogans supportive of Hamas. Eyewitnesses reported that the student was punched and knocked to the ground by participants in the anti-Israel rally. See Aaron Bandler, Jewish Berkeley Student Punched at Rally

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for Challenging Pro-Hamas Chant, Jewish J. (Oct. 19, 2023),
https://jewishjournal.com/news/united-states/364211/jewish-berkeley-student-
punched-at-rally-for-challenging-pro-hamas-chant/ (Last Accessed May 15, 2025)

- 56. Many of these incidents have been organized or incited by militant student groups, most notably Students for Justice in Palestine ("SJP"). The national organization and many of its campus chapters have promoted rhetoric that glorifies violence and justifies terrorist acts. At George Washington University, for example, SJP members projected messages such as "Glory to Our Martyrs" and "Free Palestine From the River to the Sea" onto the university library in October 2023—phrases widely understood to endorse terrorist violence and advocate for the elimination of the state of Israel. https://www.foxnews.com/politics/george-washington-university-studentsproject-pro-palestinian-activism-school-library (Last Assessed May 15, 2025).
- 57. Watchdog organizations such as the Clarion Project and the ADL have identified ideological and financial ties between SJP and external groups with connections to designated foreign terrorist organizations. This includes American Muslims for Palestine ("AMP"), which the ADL has characterized as having "significant overlap" with individuals formerly involved in the now-defunct Holy Land Foundation, a group that was shuttered for funneling material support to Hamas. https://www.adl.org/resources/report/audit-antisemitic-incidents-2024 (Last Accessed May 15, 2025).
- 58. CSUN is among the many campuses where SJP maintains an active presence. The ADL lists CSUN as a school with an active SJP chapter. https://www.adl.org/campus-

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antisemitism-report-card/california-state-university-northridge (Last Accessed May 15, 2025). The SJP chapter at CSUN maintains a highly visible online presence and, in May 2024, organized a "Solidarity With Gaza" encampment to pressure the university into adopting anti-Israel positions. See Gisselle Medina, CSUN Students Start Daytime Solidarity With Gaza Encampment, San Fernando Valley Sun (May 8, 2024), https://sanfernandosun.com/2024/05/08/csun-students-start-daytimesolidarity-with-gaza-encampment/ (Last Accessed May 15, 2025). CSUN's SJP chapter has demanded that the school 1) divest from companies funding war and genocide; 2) reinvest in services for students and faculty; 3) cancel the California State University system's contract with the University of Haifa; 4) protect academic freedoms for students and faculty; and 5) call for a permanent ceasefire in Gaza. Ibid.

59. Despite clear affiliations with groups that have glorified violence and engaged in intimidation, university administrations throughout the United States have largely continued to fund, recognize, or otherwise tolerate SJP chapters. In several instances, campus officials have either failed to condemn or actively downplayed the significance of antisemitic incidents. In response, the U.S. Department of Education's Office for Civil Rights ("OCR") opened Title VI investigations into numerous institutions, including Harvard University, the University of Pennsylvania, and Columbia University, for allegedly permitting hostile environments toward Jewish students. See Press Release, U.S. Dept. of Educ., U.S. Department of Education Opens Investigations into Harvard University, University of Pennsylvania, and

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- Columbia University Under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Dec. 7, 2023), https://www.ed.gov/about/news/press-release/ed-hhs-launch-title-vi-investigations-ofharvard-university-and-harvard-law-review-amid-allegations-of-discriminatorypractices#:~:text=ED's%20and%20HHS'%20OCR%20investigations,and%20activities %20receiving%20federal%20funding (Last Accessed May 15, 2025).
- 60. In March 2025, OCR sent letters to 60 universities across the country warning that failure to protect Jewish students from antisemitic discrimination may constitute a violation of federal civil rights laws. See Press Release, U.S. Dept. of Educ., OCR Sends Letters to 60 Universities Under Investigation for Antisemitic Harassment and Discrimination (Mar. 14, 2025), https://www.ed.gov/about/news/press-release/usdepartment-of-educations-office-civil-rights-sends-letters-60-universities-underinvestigation-antisemitic-discrimination-and-harassment (May 15, 2025).
- 61. The failure of universities to take meaningful action—and in some cases, their implicit endorsement of antisemitic conduct—has created a pervasive climate of fear and intimidation for Jewish students and faculty. This environment violates their rights under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and contravenes institutional policies on hate speech, student conduct, and campus safety. Plaintiff's termination occurred squarely within this broader context of escalating antisemitism, administrative indifference, and growing hostility toward individuals who identified as Jewish or expressed support for Israel. The adverse actions taken against Plaintiff were not isolated or coincidental; rather, they were symptomatic of a national

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university culture increasingly characterized by selective enforcement, tolerance for hate speech, and viewpoint-based discrimination.

- J. California State University, Northridge's Institutional Tolerance Of Faculty-Led Antisemitic Advocacy, Failure To Address Hate Incidents, And Endorsement Of A Double Standard That Endangers Jewish Students And Faculty
- 62. CSUN has been the site of repeated incidents of antisemitism involving both campus activity and conduct by faculty members. These incidents include overt hate speech and imagery, as well as faculty-led initiatives and rhetoric that promote militant anti-Israel agendas and support groups widely viewed as hostile to the Jewish community.
  - 1. Professor David Klein: Use Of California State University, Northridge's Platform For Antisemitic And Anti-Israel Advocacy
- 63. Professor David Klein of CSUN's' Department of Mathematics has actively used CSUN resources to promote antisemitic rhetoric and militant anti-Israel campaigns. Professor Klein maintains a Trustees-hosted webpage titled the "Boycott Israel Resource Page," in which he describes Israel as "the most racist state in the world at this time" and accuses it of "apartheid" and "ethnic cleansing." He also encourages academic, cultural, and economic boycotts of Israel in alignment with the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) movement. See AMCHA Initiative, Trustees Web Page Called Anti-Semitic, https://amchainitiative.org/csun-web-page-called-antisemitic/ (Last Accessed May 15, 2025).

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- 64. BDS is an acronym for Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions, a global movement initiated in 2005 by Palestinian civil society organizations. The BDS movement aims to apply economic and political pressure on Israel to comply with international law and respect Palestinian rights. It advocates for:
  - A. Boycotts of Israeli products, academic institutions, and cultural events;
  - B. Divestment from companies profiting from Israel's occupation of Palestinian territories; and
  - C. Sanctions by governments against Israel.

According to the official BDS Movement website:

"BDS is a Palestinian-led movement for freedom, justice and equality. BDS upholds the simple principle that Palestinians are entitled to the same rights as the rest of humanity." BDS Movement, https://bdsmovement.net/ (Last Accessed May 15, 2025). Critics, however, including the Israeli government and many of its allies, argue that BDS is anti-Israel or even antisemitic in intent or effect. The Anti-Defamation League, for example, states: "Many of the founding goals of the BDS movement, and many of the strategies employed in BDS campaigns, are anti-Semitic."

The Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions Campaign (BDS). Anti-Defamation League, <a href="https://www.adl.org/resources/backgrounder/boycott-divestment-and-sanctions-campaign-bds">https://www.adl.org/resources/backgrounder/boycott-divestment-and-sanctions-campaign-bds</a> (May 15, 2025). The page includes graphic images purporting to show Palestinian children injured by Israeli forces and presents one-sided political content on the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. The presence of this material on an official

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Trustees domain has drawn sharp rebuke from Jewish advocacy organizations, which argue that it violates political neutrality and fosters a hostile climate for Jewish students. *Ibid*.

65. In addition, Professor Klein has publicly opposed California State University study abroad programs in Israel, calling them part of a broader Israeli propaganda effort. He argued against the reinstatement of a suspended Trustees-Israel study program in an article published by The Electronic Intifada, aligning again with BDS objectives. See Nora Barrows-Friedman, California Professor Under Attack for Opposing "Study in Israel" Scheme, The Electronic Intifada (May 28, 2012), https://electronicintifada.net/content/california-professor-under-attack-opposingstudy-israel-scheme/10859 (Last Accessed May 15, 2025).

### 2. Professor Theresa Montaño: Public Denouncement Of The Anti-Defamation League As A "White **Supremacist Organization**"

- 66. In February 2021, Professor Theresa Montaño, a faculty member in the Department of Chicana/o Studies, appeared in a webinar titled "The Fight for Ethnic Studies," during which she allegedly described the Anti-Defamation League (ADL)—a leading Jewish civil rights organization—as a "white supremacist" group. See Aaron Bandler, Trustees Prof. Allegedly Calls ADL a 'White Supremacist Organization', Jewish Journal (Feb. 23, 2021), https://jewishjournal.com/news/332683/csun-profallegedly-calls-adl-a-white-supremacist-organization/ (Last Accessed May 15, 2025).
- 67. The ADL has been a longstanding leader in tracking and opposing hate crimes, including antisemitism. For Bandler to label it as a "white supremacist" organization

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is widely regarded as offensive and defamatory by Jewish civil rights groups. The incident has further exacerbated the perception among Jewish students and faculty that Trustees tolerates or enables antisemitic rhetoric from its faculty.

- 3. Professors Mary E. Rosen And Alexander Alekseenko: Public Endorsement Of Boycott, Divestment, And Sanctions (BDS) Campaign
- 68. Professors Mary E. Rosen and Alexander Alekseenko, both faculty members in the Department of Mathematics, have also expressed public support for the Boycott, Divestment, and Sanctions (BDS) Campaign against Israel, which calls for a comprehensive academic, economic, and cultural boycott of the Jewish state. See Canary Mission, Mary Rosen, https://canarymission.org/professor/Mary\_Rosen (Last Accessed May 15, 2025); Canary Mission, Alexander Alekseenko, https://canarymission.org/professor/Alexander\_Alekseenko (Last Accessed May 15, 2025).
- 69. The BDS movement is widely considered antisemitic by the U.S. government, including the Department of State, which has stated that delegitimizing Israel or holding it to a double standard constitutes antisemitism. Public affiliation with this movement by Trustees' faculty intensifies concerns that CSUN is institutionally tolerant of anti-Jewish bias.

### 4. Hate Speech And Antisemitic Graffiti On Campus

70. In December 2018, swastikas and shooting threats were found in a men's bathroom on CSUN campus, prompting widespread concern from Jewish students and faculty.

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Aaron Bandler, Swastika, Shooting Threat Graffiti Found in CSUN Bathroom,	
Jewish Journal (Dec. 5, 2018),	

https://jewishjournal.com/los\_angeles/243231/swastika-shooting-threat-graffiti-foundcsun-bathroom/ (Last Accessed May 15, 2025).

- 71. The graffiti included a drawing of a swastika and phrases threatening violence, including "I'm shooting up the school Monday morning." Despite condemnation by campus officials, the appearance of such antisemitic symbols and threats contributes to a documented pattern of hostile conduct targeting Jewish students.
- 72. During the Fall 2023 Israel-Hamas war, campus tensions spiked and blurred the line between political protest and antisemitism. In the midst of this conflict, the CSUN chapter of Students for Justice in Palestine ("SJP") organized a large walkout and rally on November 30, 2023. Over a hundred students gathered by the campus library to protest the university's neutrality and U.S. support for Israel. https://sundial.csun.edu/177285/news/student-organization-holds-protest-forpalestine/#:~:text=Walk%20to%20protest%20CSUN%E2%80%99s%20continued.Ham as%20war. At this protest, SJP members led chants and made statements that Jewish organizations later flagged as antisemitic or extremism-tinged. For example, demonstrators chanted "From the river to the sea, Palestine will be free," a slogan many Jewish groups interpret as a call to eliminate Israel. *Ibid*. SJP speakers also denounced the Anti-Defamation League as a "pro-Zionist" group, dismissing the ADL's warnings about rising antisemitism as biased. Ibid.

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73.	SJP's open support for the Palestinian cause extended to defending or downplaying
	Hamas: the club had faced criticism for endorsing statements justifying Hamas's
	actions, which led the ADL to label SJP itself an antisemitic organization spreading
	"dangerous rhetoric." The ADL explicitly called out CSUN's SJP chapter, saying its
	rhetoric and support for a group like Hamas (officially compared by Israel to ISIS)
	crossed into antisemitism. Ibid. SJP leaders, when confronted, responded that it's
	"not [our] job to say what Hamas is or isn't" and insisted their focus was on ending
	Israeli "occupation" and "colonialism," not on targeting Jews. Ibid.

74. Nonetheless, Jewish students reported feeling anxious seeing such hostile rhetoric on their campus, especially chants that implicitly call for the dismantling of Israel. The climate at CSUN by late 2023 reflected the broader polarization over Israel-Palestine, which at times veered into antisemitic tropes (e.g. vilifying Jewish organizations like the ADL).

### 5. Formal Student Government Resolution Condemning Antisemitism

75. In December 2020, CSUN Associated Students passed Senate Bill 2020-21-006, condemning antisemitism on campus. The resolution adopted the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) definition of antisemitism and committed the student government to proactive monitoring and reporting of antisemitic acts. Associated Students, Senate Bill 2020-21-006: A Resolution to Condemn Antisemitism on Campus, Trustees Today (Dec. 8, 2020), https://csunshinetoday.csun.edu/community/associated-students-passes-senate-bill-

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to-condemn-anti-semitism-on-campus/ (Last Accessed May 15, 2025). While commendable, this resolution has not curtailed the public actions or statements by certain faculty members that continue to create a hostile educational environment for Jewish students, faculty, and staff.

76. Trustees' repeated failure to discipline faculty members who publicly advocate antisemitic ideas or promote hostile anti-Israel ideologies—combined with reported incidents of hate speech, vandalism, and threats—has created an atmosphere in which Jewish students and faculty reasonably fear discrimination, harassment, and exclusion. CSUN's acceptance of such conduct under the guise of "academic freedom" has enabled this environment to persist, despite public commitments to diversity and inclusion.

### K. Administrative Indifference, Retaliation, And Institutional Failure: Trustees Leadership And Trustees' Role In Enabling Antisemitism

77. Trustees' repeated failure to discipline faculty members who publicly advocate antisemitic ideas or promote hostile anti-Israel ideologies—combined with reported incidents of hate speech, vandalism, and threats—has created an atmosphere in which Jewish students and faculty reasonably fear discrimination, harassment, and exclusion. CSUN's defense of such conduct under the guise of "academic freedom" or "free speech" has enabled this environment to persist, despite public commitments to diversity and inclusion. Within this context, it is hardly surprising that Plaintiff's courageous actions to protect Jewish faculty and students from the threat of harm

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were met with hostility, culminating in retaliatory termination. Rather than being commended for taking meaningful and lawful steps to support a vulnerable campus community, Plaintiff was punished for standing up against bigotry and intolerance that CSUN has consistently failed to address. Plaintiff's termination is not an isolated event, but is instead consistent with—and part of—a broader pattern of antisemitic attitudes and discriminatory practices among Trustees administration.

78. Ultimately, it is both the CSUN administration, appointed by the Trustees, and the Trustees themselves who must be held accountable for this pervasive failure. Their inaction in the face of escalating antisemitic hostility on campus—and their direct role in terminating Plaintiff for having the courage to speak out against it demonstrates not only institutional indifference, but a blatant disregard for the safety and rights of Jewish faculty and students. The Trustees' continued failure to act, both generally and in this specific case, reflects a systemic abdication of responsibility and a breach of their obligation to uphold a safe and inclusive learning environment.

### L. Plaintiff's Support For Academic Freedom Amid Concerns Over BDS Advocacy And Evidence Of Anti-Jewish Bias On Campus

79. Plaintiff does not, in any way, seek to restrict the rights of any CSUN professor to express personal views or opinions regarding the BDS movement, Israeli policy, or any related political or cultural issues. Plaintiff fully respects the principles of academic freedom and the right to engage in open discourse on matters of public

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concern. However, the public positions taken by certain faculty members—including those promoting or aligning with BDS—are relevant because they illustrate a broader pattern of anti-Jewish bias that exists on the CSUN campus. These public statements contribute to a hostile environment for Jewish students and faculty, and are indicative of the underlying discriminatory attitudes that Plaintiff believes are at the heart of this case.

### M. Plaintiff Is A Member Of A Protected Class Within The Scope Of The Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA)

80. The Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA) provides protections to individuals involved in supporting or participating in investigations or remediation of claims related to retaliation, harassment, or discrimination. Specifically, California Government Code § 12940(h) states that it is an unlawful employment practice for an employer to retaliate against any person for opposing any practices forbidden under the FEHA or for filing a complaint, testifying, or assisting in any FEHA-related proceeding. Additionally, California Code of Regulations, Title 2, § 11021 further clarifies these protections by emphasizing the illegality of retaliation against individuals who participate in the enforcement of FEHA rights. This statutory framework is designed to ensure that individuals who engage in activities to address or report discriminatory practices are protected from adverse employment actions, thereby promoting a workplace environment that supports equality and justice. On September 28, 2023, the Biden Administration issued a Fact Sheet clarifying that Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibits certain forms of antisemitic,

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Islamophobic, and related forms of discrimination in federally funded programs and activities. It emphasized that "Title VI of the 1964 Civil Rights Act applies to all programs and activities supported by federal financial assistance. Thus, these protections are wide-ranging and provide important tools to prevent and curb discrimination." See THE WHITE HOUSE, FACT SHEET: BIDEN-HARRIS ADMINISTRATION TAKES LANDMARK STEP TO COUNTER ANTISEMITISM (Sept. 28, 2023https://bidenwhitehouse.archives.gov/briefing-room/statements-releases/2023/09/28/fact-sheet-biden-harris-administration-takes-landmark-step-to-counter-antisemitism/ (Last Accessed May 15, 2025). Title VI of the Civil Rights Act applies to any "program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance." 42 U.S.C. § 2000d. California courts regularly look to Title VII and its application to enforce FEHA.

81. Discrimination based on religious belief, as well as on shared ancestry or ethnic characteristics, is prohibited under FEHA. Plaintiff has demonstrated strong conviction against antisemitism and has taken affirmative steps to protect Jewish faculty and students. Accordingly, Plaintiff is a member of a protected class within the scope of FEHA's protections.

### V. CAUSES OF ACTION

### FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION

# DISCRIMINATION IN VIOLATION OF THE FAIR EMPLOYMENT AND

### HOUSING ACT, GOVT. CODE §§ 12940 et seq.

### (As To Defendant Trustees)

- 82. Plaintiff hereby re-alleges and incorporates by reference all previous paragraphs, inclusive, of this FAC as though set forth in full.
- 83. Plaintiff alleges discrimination in violation of the Fair Employment and Housing Act ("FEHA"), as codified in Government Code §§ 12940 et seq., against Defendants.

  Specifically, Government Code § 12940, subdivision (a), provides that it is an unlawful employment practice for an employer to discriminate against a person in compensation or in terms, conditions, or privileges of employment because of religious creed, ancestry and/or race.
- 84. Plaintiff asserts that the Defendants, by their actions, policies, and practices, have engaged in unlawful employment practices by discriminating against him on the basis of his religious creed, ancestry and/or race. This discrimination was manifest through Defendants' negative reactions, adverse employment actions, and ultimately Plaintiff's termination as a direct result of Plaintiff's proactive efforts to protect the safety and well-being of Jewish faculty and students at CSUN, in response to identified safety risks and concerns that were specifically related to their religious identity.

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- 85. Plaintiff asserts that the Defendants, by their actions, policies, and practices, have engaged in unlawful employment practices by discriminating against him on the basis of religious creed, ancestry and/or race. The treatment Plaintiff endured at the hands of Defendants, including but not limited to, differential treatment, exclusion from meetings, corporate decision-making processes, and his eventual termination would not have occurred if the religious creed, ancestry and/or race of the individuals involved in the events set forth in this FAC were not Jewish. This discrimination manifestly violates FEHA's clear mandate against such discrimination in employment.
- 86. As a proximate result of Defendants' conduct, Plaintiff has suffered and will continue to suffer damage to his career, loss of earnings, benefits, and other compensatory damages, in amounts to be proven at trial. By reason of the discriminatory conduct and as detailed herein, Plaintiff has also endured mental and emotional distress, for which he seeks compensatory damages.
- 87. Defendants are liable for the discrimination against Plaintiff and the damages flowing therefrom as outlined and prohibited under Government Code § 12940, sub. (a). Plaintiff has not yet ascertained the full extent of these damages but will amend this Complaint at such time as they are fully ascertained.
- 88. By reason of the above-described discriminatory practices, Plaintiff has necessarily retained attorneys to prosecute this action and is, therefore, entitled to reasonable attorney's fees and costs pursuant to Government Code § 12965, subdivision (b), in addition to other damages as provided by law and as alleged herein.

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## SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION

## HARRASSMENT IN VIOLATION OF THE FAIR EMPLOYMENT AND

## HOUSING ACT, GOVT. CODE §§ 12940 et seq.

## (As To All Defendants)

- 89. Plaintiff hereby re-alleges and incorporates by reference all previous paragraphs, inclusive, of this FAC as though set forth in full.
- 90. Plaintiff alleges harassment in violation of the FEHA, against Defendants. Specifically, Government Code § 12940, subdivision (j)(1), provides that it is an unlawful employment practice for an employer, or any individual acting on behalf of the employer, to harass an employee on the basis of religious creed, ancestry and/or race.
- 91. Plaintiff asserts that the Defendants, through their actions and inactions, have engaged in, permitted, and failed to take all reasonable steps to prevent harassment against Plaintiff on the basis of religious creed, ancestry and/or race. This harassment was manifest through a series of adverse actions, including but not limited to, the unwarranted criticism, undermining, and eventual termination of Plaintiff as a direct consequence of Plaintiff's proactive efforts to protect the safety and well-being of Jewish faculty and students at Trustees in response to identified safety risks and concerns that were specifically related to religious identity.
- 92. The hostile work environment created by Defendants was severe and pervasive enough to alter the conditions of Plaintiff's employment and constituted an abusive

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working environment, thereby violating the provisions of FEHA as outlined in
Government Code § 12940, subdivision (j)(1).

- 93. As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' conduct, Plaintiff has suffered, and continues to suffer, significant emotional distress, humiliation, anxiety, and other psychological injuries, all to his damage in a sum to be established according to proof at trial.
- 94. By reason of the above, Defendants are liable for creating and maintaining a hostile work environment against Plaintiff and the damages flowing therefrom as outlined and prohibited under Government Code § 12940, subdivision (j). Plaintiff has not yet ascertained the full extent of these damages but will amend this FAC at such time as they are fully ascertained.
- 95. By reason of the conduct described herein, Plaintiff has necessarily retained attorneys to prosecute this action and is, therefore, entitled to reasonable attorney's fees and costs pursuant to Government Code § 12965, subdivision (b), in addition to other damages as provided by law and as alleged herein.

## THIRD CAUSE OF ACTION

## RETALIATION IN VIOLATION OF FEHA

## (As To Defendant Trustees)

- 96. Plaintiff hereby re-alleges and incorporates by reference all previous paragraphs, inclusive, of this FAC as though set forth in full.
- 97. Plaintiff alleges retaliation in violation of the Fair Employment and Housing Act ("FEHA"), as codified in Government Code §§ 12940 et seq., against Defendants.

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Specifically, Government Code § 12940, subdivision (h), provides that it is an unlawful employment practice for an employer to retaliate against a person for opposing any practice forbidden under the FEHA or for filing a complaint, testifying, or assisting in proceedings under the FEHA.

- 98. Plaintiff engaged in protected activities under the FEHA by acting to protect the safety and well-being of Jewish faculty and students at Trustees in light of identified safety risks and concerns related to their religious identity. Plaintiff's actions included, but were not limited to, directly addressing the safety concerns of Jewish faculty member Professor Gary Katz, facilitating the installation of security measures, and advocating for a campus environment that respects and protects the rights and safety of all members of the CSUN community, irrespective of their religious creed, ancestry and/or race.
- 99. Despite Plaintiff's protected activities, Defendants engaged in retaliatory conduct against Plaintiff, culminating in adverse employment actions, including but not limited to unwarranted criticism, the construction of false allegations, and ultimately, Plaintiff's wrongful termination from employment. These actions were taken in direct response to Plaintiff's efforts to fulfill his professional responsibilities while advocating for the safety and rights of Jewish students and faculty, thus constituting retaliation under the FEHA.
- As a direct and proximate result of Defendants' retaliatory conduct, Plaintiff has suffered, and continues to suffer, significant harm, including loss of employment,

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damage to professional reputation, emotional distress, and other damages, in amounts to be established according to proof at trial.

- 101. By reason of the above, Defendants are liable for retaliation against Plaintiff in violation of the FEHA, and Plaintiff is entitled to damages as outlined and prohibited under Government Code § 12940, subdivision (h). Plaintiff has not yet ascertained the full extent of these damages but will amend this FAC at such time as they are fully ascertained.
- attorneys to prosecute this action and is, therefore, entitled to reasonable attorney's fees and costs pursuant to Government Code § 12965, subdivision (b), in addition to other damages as provided by law and as alleged herein.

## FOURTH CAUSE OF ACTION

## FAILURE TO PREVENT DISCRIMINATION, HARASSMENT, AND RETALIATION IN VIOLATION OF FEHA

## (As To Defendant Trustees)

- 103. Plaintiff hereby re-alleges and incorporates by reference all previous paragraphs, inclusive, of this FAC as though set forth in full.
- 104. Plaintiff alleges that Defendants, and each of them, failed to take reasonable steps to prevent discrimination, harassment, and retaliation against Plaintiff on the basis of religious creed, ancestry and/or race, in violation of the FEHA Despite Plaintiff's proactive and lawful efforts to protect the safety and well-being of Jewish faculty and students at Trustees in light of identified safety risks and concerns related to their

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religious identity, Defendants, and each of them, engaged in a pattern of conduct that allowed an environment where discrimination, harassment, and retaliation could flourish unchecked.

- 105. Specifically, Plaintiff was subjected to adverse employment actions, including but not limited to unwarranted criticism, false allegations, and wrongful termination, as a direct consequence of Plaintiff's fulfillment of his professional responsibilities and his advocacy for the safety and rights of Jewish students and faculty. Such actions by Defendants, and each of them, constitute a failure to prevent discrimination, harassment, and retaliation as required under FEHA.
- 106. Defendants, and each of them, knew or should have known of the need to take preventive measures but failed to implement or enforce any sufficient policy, training, or corrective actions that would adequately address and prevent the discrimination, harassment, and retaliation experienced by Plaintiff. This failure directly contributed to the hostile work environment that Plaintiff endured and the subsequent damages Plaintiff suffered as a result.
- 107. By reason of the above-stated failures, Plaintiff has suffered, and continues to suffer, significant harm, including but not limited to, emotional distress, humiliation, loss of professional reputation, and other damages, in amounts to be established according to proof at trial.

# 270 Coral Circle El Segundo, CA 90245 TEL. 310.277.0010 ♦ FAX 310.432.0599

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VI.	I National Cart V Ha	ANDIDECT	AKATUKY KELIE	P ALLEGATIONS

Plaintiff hereby incorporates by reference all preceding paragraphs as though fully 108. set forth herein.

- Plaintiff seeks injunctive relief pursuant to California Code of Civil Procedure § 526, et seq., and declaratory relief under the California Declaratory Judgment Act, Code of Civil Procedure § 1060, et seq., to prevent ongoing and future violations of his rights under FEHA and related statutes.
- Plaintiff alleges that Defendants have engaged in practices that have caused, and will continue to cause, significant harm to Plaintiff and the broader Jewish community at CSUN. These practices include, but are not limited to, discriminatory, retaliatory, and harassing actions against Plaintiff for his advocacy on behalf of Jewish faculty and students, as well as Defendants' failure to take adequate measures to prevent such conduct.
- Plaintiff seeks a judicial declaration that Defendants' actions and omissions constituted discrimination, harassment, and retaliation in violation of FEHA, and that these actions have created a hostile and unsafe environment for Jewish faculty and students at CSUN.
- Plaintiff further seeks injunctive relief requiring Defendants to implement and 112. enforce policies and procedures designed to prevent discrimination, harassment, and retaliation based on religious creed, ancestry, and/or race. This includes

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comprehensive training for all faculty and staff, the establishment of a monitoring and reporting system for incidents of antisemitism, and the appointment of an independent ombudsperson to oversee compliance with these measures. Absent such relief, Plaintiff will suffer irreparable harm, as monetary damages alone are insufficient to remedy the ongoing threat to his rights and the rights of others similarly situated within the CSUN community.

- Plaintiff requests that this Court issue a preliminary and permanent injunction 113. prohibiting Defendants from engaging in any further discriminatory, retaliatory, or harassing conduct against Plaintiff or any other individual on the basis of religious creed, ancestry, and/or race.
- Plaintiff further requests that this Court retain jurisdiction over this matter to ensure compliance with its orders and to protect Plaintiff's rights and the rights of all Jewish faculty and students at CSUN.

### VII. PRAYER FOR RELIEF

WHEREFORE, Plaintiff prays as follows:

- 1. For general, special, actual, compensatory and/or nominal damages, as against Defendants, in an amount to be determined at trial;
- 2. For a temporary restraining order, preliminary injunction, and permanent injunction;
- 3. For a Declaration that Defendants: (a) discriminated against Plaintiff; (b) failed to provide reasonable accommodations to Plaintiff; (c) failed to engage

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## **EXHIBIT A**



## Civil Rights Department

651 Bannon Street, Suite 200 | Sacramento | CA | 95811 1-800-884-1684 (voice) | 1-800-700-2320 (TTY) | California's Relay Service at 711 calcivilrights.ca.gov | contact.center@calcivilrights.ca.gov

May 20, 2025

Eyal Farahan 270 Coral Circle El Segundo, CA 90245

**RE:** Notice to Complainant's Attorney

CRD Matter Number: 202505-29474420

Right to Sue: Lingrosso / TRUSTEES OF THE CALIFORNIA STATE

UNIVERSITY et al.

## Dear Eyal Farahan:

Attached is a copy of your complaint of discrimination filed with the Civil Rights Department (CRD) pursuant to the California Fair Employment and Housing Act, Government Code section 12900 et seq. Also attached is a copy of your Notice of Case Closure and Right to Sue.

Pursuant to Government Code section 12962, CRD will not serve these documents on the employer. You must serve the complaint separately, to all named respondents. Please refer to the attached Notice of Case Closure and Right to Sue for information regarding filing a private lawsuit in the State of California. A courtesy "Notice of Filing of Discrimination Complaint" is attached for your convenience.

Be advised that the CRD does not review or edit the complaint form to ensure that it meets procedural or statutory requirements.

Sincerely,

Civil Rights Department



## Civil Rights Department

651 Bannon Street, Suite 200 | Sacramento | CA | 95811 1-800-884-1684 (voice) | 1-800-700-2320 (TTY) | California's Relay Service at 711 calcivilrights.ca.gov | contact.center@calcivilrights.ca.gov

May 20, 2025

**RE:** Notice of Filing of Discrimination Complaint

CRD Matter Number: 202505-29474420

Right to Sue: Lingrosso / TRUSTEES OF THE CALIFORNIA STATE

UNIVERSITY et al.

## To All Respondent(s):

Enclosed is a copy of a complaint of discrimination that has been filed with the Civil Rights Department (CRD) in accordance with Government Code section 12960. This constitutes service of the complaint pursuant to Government Code section 12962. The complainant has requested an authorization to file a lawsuit. A copy of the Notice of Case Closure and Right to Sue is enclosed for your records.

Please refer to the attached complaint for a list of all respondent(s) and their contact information.

No response to CRD is requested or required.

Sincerely,

Civil Rights Department



## Civil Rights Department

651 Bannon Street, Suite 200 | Sacramento | CA | 95811 1-800-884-1684 (voice) | 1-800-700-2320 (TTY) | California's Relay Service at 711 calcivilrights.ca.gov | contact.center@calcivilrights.ca.gov

May 20, 2025

Sam Lingrosso 270 Coral Circle El Segundo, CA 90245

RE: Notice of Case Closure and Right to Sue

CRD Matter Number: 202505-29474420

Right to Sue: Lingrosso / TRUSTEES OF THE CALIFORNIA STATE

UNIVERSITY et al.

## Dear Sam Lingrosso:

This letter informs you that the above-referenced complaint filed with the Civil Rights Department (CRD) has been closed effective May 20, 2025 because an immediate Right to Sue notice was requested.

This letter is also your Right to Sue notice. According to Government Code section 12965, subdivision (b), a civil action may be brought under the provisions of the Fair Employment and Housing Act against the person, employer, labor organization or employment agency named in the above-referenced complaint. The civil action must be filed within one year from the date of this letter.

After receiving a Right-to-Sue notice from CRD, you may have the right to file your complaint with a local government agency that enforces employment anti-discrimination laws if one exists in your area that is authorized to accept your complaint. If you decide to file with a local agency, you must file before the deadline for filing a lawsuit that is on your Right-to-Sue notice. Filing your complaint with a local agency does not prevent you from also filing a lawsuit in court.

To obtain a federal Right to Sue notice, you must contact the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission (EEOC) to file a complaint within 30 days of receipt of this CRD Notice of Case Closure or within 300 days of the alleged discriminatory act, whichever is earlier.

Sincerely,

Civil Rights Department

### 1 COMPLAINT OF EMPLOYMENT DISCRIMINATION BEFORE THE STATE OF CALIFORNIA 2 **Civil Rights Department Under the California Fair Employment and Housing Act** 3 (Gov. Code, § 12900 et seq.) 4 In the Matter of the Complaint of Sam Lingrosso CRD No. 202505-29474420 5 6 Complainant, VS. 7 TRUSTEES OF THE CALIFORNIA STATE 8 UNIVERSITY 401 Golden Shore 9 Long Beach, CA 90802 10 CHRISTINA L. VON MAYRHAUSER 11 401 Golden Shore Long Beach, CA 90802 12 Respondents 13 14 1. Respondent TRUSTEES OF THE CALIFORNIA STATE UNIVERSITY is an employer 15 subject to suit under the California Fair Employment and Housing Act (FEHA) (Gov. Code, § 12900 et seg.). 16 2. Complainant is naming CHRISTINA L. VON MAYRHAUSER individual as Co-Respondent(s). 17 18 3. Complainant Sam Lingrosso, resides in the City of El Segundo, State of CA. 19 4. Complainant alleges that on or about May 19, 2025, respondent took the following 20 adverse actions: 21 Complainant was harassed because of complainant's religious creed - includes dress and grooming practices, association with a member of a protected class, race (includes hairstyle 22 and hair texture). 23 Complainant was discriminated against because of complainant's ancestry, religious creed - includes dress and grooming practices, race (includes hairstyle and hair texture) and 24 as a result of the discrimination was terminated, reprimanded, given additional work responsibilities or assignments. 25

Complaint - CRD No. 202505-29474420

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Date Filed: May 20, 2025

CRD-ENF 80 RS (Revised 2025/02)

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2	Complainant experienced retaliation because complainant reported or resisted any form of discrimination or harassment and as a result was terminated, reprimanded, given
3	additional work responsibilities or assignments.
4	Additional Complaint Details:
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26	-2- Complaint – CRD No. 202505-29474420
27	
28	Date Filed: May 20, 2025
	CRD-ENF 80 RS (Revised 2025/02)

1	VERIFICATION
2	I, Eyal Farahan, am the Attorney in the above-entitled complaint. I have read the
3	foregoing complaint and know the contents thereof. The matters alleged are based on information and belief, which I believe to be true. The matters alleged are based on
4	information and belief, which I believe to be true.
5	On May 20, 2025, I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of
6	California that the foregoing is true and correct.
7	El Segundo, CA
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26	-3- Complaint – CRD No. 202505-29474420
27	
28	Date Filed: May 20, 2025
	CRD-ENF 80 RS (Revised 2025/02)

1	PROOF OF SERVICE
2	Lingrosso v. Trustees Of The California State University, et. al.
3	Case Number: 25LBCV01519
	Case Ivamoer. 25LDC v01515
4	STATE OF CALIFORNIA, COUNTY OF LOS ANGELES:
5	I am employed in the county of Los Angeles, State of California. I am over the
6 7	age of 18 and not a party to the within action; my business address is 270 Coral Circle, El Segundo, California 90245.
8	On August 11, 2025, I served the foregoing document(s) described as
9	FIRST AMENDED COMPLAINT FOR DAMAGES AND EQUITABLE RELIEFon
10	the interested parties in this action as follows:
11	Dennis Walsh dwalsh@walshlawyers.com Attorneys for Defendants
12	Walsh & Associates, APC 16633 Ventura Boulevard, Suite 800
13	Encino, CA 91463
14	
15	[ X ] (By Electronic Service) Pursuant to agreement of the parties or court order, I
16	caused a copy of the above-listed document(s) to be sent from e-mail address aramirez@peterlawgroup.com to the person(s) at the e-mail address listed in the Service
17	List, I did not receive, within a reasonable time after the transmission, any electronic message or other indication that the transmission was unsuccessful.
18	I declare under penalty of perjury under the laws of the State of California that
19	the foregoing is true and correct. Executed on August 11, 2025. at El Segundo,
20	California.
21	Andrea Ramirez  Andrea Ramirez
22	Andrea Ramirez
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PROOF OF SERVICE