



Chip Roy Responds to “Antisemitism Awareness Act of 2023”

Representative Chip Roy (R-Texas) spoke on the floor of the House of Representatives yesterday and stated Republican leadership rushed the [Antisemitism Awareness Act of 2023](#) through the House.

Roy said the House was unable to debate or amend the bill as it was pushed through, stating:

Yet again today on the floor on the house of representatives we had another show vote to make people feel good about themselves by passing a bill that says antisemitism in the title. That’s what happened and it was put on the floor by republican leadership, and it was put on the floor by republican leadership despite knowing that it was pulled from going through committee. We didn’t have a chance to amend it. We didn’t have a chance to discuss it, debate it, we didn’t have a hearing on it.



AP Images
Chip Roy

Roy accused Republican leadership of passing the legislation by taking advantage of the current political situation involving the anti-Israel protests occurring on University campuses across the country, stating:

It was jammed through to take advantage of this political moment, while all of these horrific things are going around the country. Republican leadership wanted to score political points, so they moved through legislation without the kind of deliberation, debate that is supposed to be carried out by the people in this chamber. As a result, today, a significant number of my Republican colleagues, including myself, voted no. As a result we will be accused of, I don’t know, being for antisemitic behavior, being accused by our friends and allies of not wanting to support Israel, supporting our Jewish-American colleagues and friends, constituents, fellow Americans. Nothing could be further from the truth, but that’s what will happen, and it’ll happen because we dared to stand up and say we don’t believe in thought police.

Roy raised concerns about the legislation’s use of the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance’s (IHRA’s) working definition of antisemitism being written into law, and it’s impact on U.S. citizens first



amendment rights:

We don't believe that a bill should be brought to the floor of the United States House of Representatives, having not gone through Committee, that has a reference in it to international organizations' definitions literally in the statute, and then taking that international organization's definition and then literally in the statute representing and referencing the examples of antisemitic behavior.

Roy stated he opposed the creation of "thought crime" legislation, and empowering the federal government to police opinions:

Now I find the vast majority of the things that were listed in that to be horrific activity, most likely, if not certainly, antisemitic at least in most contexts, some of them are problematic. In totality they certainly raise First Amendment concerns, they certainly raise concerns about something that I've opposed to the best of my knowledge and ability reading through pieces of legislation at every turn and every vote to oppose the whole notion of hate speech, hate crimes, thought police, thought crimes, putting the government into your head and your motivations when you're engaged in criminal behavior.

Roy stated criminal actions should be policed, not the views that may be held by individuals who commit criminal actions:

Criminal behavior is criminal behavior. Violating people's civil rights is violating people's civil rights. But when we want to insert the government into what you're thinking and what motivates you, you are empowering that which should never be empowered: the ability of the government to police thought, to police speech, to police your views.... The actions are the problem, police the actions.



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