

AMERICAN ASSOCIATION OF JEWISH LAWYERS AND JURISTS

U.S. Affiliate of the International Association of Jewish Lawyers and Jurists

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October 7, 2021

Anthony Capuano
CEO and President
Marriott International
10400 Fernwood Rd.
Bethesda, MD 20817

By Email to: anthony.capuano@marriott.com

Dear Mr. Capuano,

The American Association of Jewish Lawyers & Jurists (AAJLJ) is the voluntary bar association of American Jewish lawyers. We are a national nonprofit association that represents the American Jewish legal community on legal issues that affect, and are of importance to, the community, including; freedom of religion, civil rights, human rights, access to justice, social justice, and defense of the rule of law. The Association also advocates upon and defends against matters affecting the global Jewish community such as antisemitism and those which are designed to undermine the State of Israel such as the BDS movement. We also provide opportunities for American lawyers and lawmakers to better understand the Israeli justice system and the strength of the rule of law in Israel.

Like many around the world, we watched aghast as Gil Ofarim, a German Jew was brought to tears having been refused service by the Westin Leipzig for wearing one of the most ancient symbols of Judaism around his neck. The irony was not lost on many, for there was a time within living memory where a Jew would have been shot for not wearing a Magen David – A Star of David – in Leipzig, but the motivation here is the same. As a community, such antisemitic acts cut deeply, and as a Magen David wearing, Bonvoy supporting Jew such as myself, I could not fathom being treated in such a way. It may well be that due to force of history, employees in the Westin Leipzig have not had opportunity to interface with Jewish culture outside of a memorial.

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The AAJLJ demands not condemnation, as that is a given, but action is required here. It is imperative that Marriott International broadens its diversity training and provide heightened and urgent courses to recognize and combat anti-Semitism to its employees.

The fact that a manager of a Marriott hotel felt comfortable enough to discriminate against a Jew in this way demonstrates that there is flaw in the Marriott training. That not one other employee who witnessed this discrimination took any step to stop it in its tracks, shows that there is a culture of acquiescence. It is abundantly clear that those who should not forget, have forgotten.

Rather than merely complaining, we would be more than happy to assist Marriott International in ensuring that such a sorry event becomes a turning point. Accordingly, the AAJLJ would gladly provide lawyers well-versed on Jewish culture and history and well-qualified anti-discrimination training so that all Marriott and Westin can be as informed on anti-Semitism as they are of other forms of discrimination.

Yours Sincerely,



Robert Garson

President