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PCOA Statement in Solidarity with Our Jewish Community

In recent weeks, our community has seen a series of anti-Semitic attacks targeting the Jewish community. These vile acts of vandalism include defacing the door of Chabad on River with a swastika and an anti-Semitic slur, and a rock thrown through the front door of the synagogue at Congregation Chaverim.

In solidarity with the Jewish community, and following their lead, Pima Council on Aging stands with our Jewish friends and community members and unequivocally denounces these despicable acts and indicators of hateful intolerance.

Though recent world events have contributed to a spike in anti-Semitic attacks across the US, these are not isolated incidents. Acts of vandalism, harassment, and violence against the Jewish community and hate crimes against other marginalized communities have increased steadily over the past several years. Some of these acts include two bomb threats to the Tucson Jewish Community Center, increased anti-Semitic rhetoric on social media, and stickers placed around the greater Tucson area meant to intimidate Jewish residents.

Though recent events of anti-Semitism bring light to the historic oppression, discrimination, and violence the Jewish people have endured throughout centuries, we know that they are not alone. Rising anti-Semitism has happened alongside a rise in racist violence and hate towards other marginalized communities, including communities of color, the Asian community, the LTGBQ+ community, and the Muslim people.

To address the rise in anti-Semitism and other forms of hate speech and discrimination, Pima Council on Aging will join with other area organizations to collaborate on a best path forward to systemic change. We welcome advice and guidance from these communities in ways that our organization can address this growing crisis and create a more equitable Pima County.

As Ellie Wisel once said, “the opposite of love is not hate, it’s indifference.” We must not allow the horrific historical persecutions of Jewish people to be forgotten or minimized, nor should we allow the active persecutions and discriminations of other marginalized communities. Together we must take action now to curb these disturbing trends and put an end to acts of discrimination and hatred. Together we must build a Southern Arizona community in which all are welcome and respected.