

Durham Mayor Steve Schewel Named Anti-Israel “BDS Mayor of America”

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Durham City Council Recognized for “Scapegoating Jews” in Public Awards Ceremony

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DURHAM, NC – North Carolina Coalition for Israel (NCCI) and Fight Back Now (FBN) today held an awards ceremony at Durham City Plaza to recognize Mayor City Steve Schewel and the Durham City Council for their infamous municipal resolution against Israel in 2018.

NCCI and FBN had earlier presented the trophies directly to Schewel at a City Council public comment session. Schewel, however, declined to take possession of them, shouting: “Take that trophy and move it! I’m -- I’m gonna! You either take that trophy and move it now or you will not be coming back here to speak!”

[Watch Video Here](#)

“Schewel’s legislation demonizes Jews,” said Deborah Friedman, vice chair of NCCI. “But it also hurts all Americans by fomenting suspicion and hatred.”

The groups said the event was their first annual “Municipal BDS Awards,” a reference to the Boycott, Divestment, Sanctions movement, whose radical, anti-Israel ideology shaped the Durham boycott. The trophies read: “Scapegoating Jews since 2018.”

“Schewel struts around the Jewish community acting like all is forgiven after his flagrantly anti-Semitic actions,” said Josh Ravitch, chair of NCCI. “This trophy is a reminder to him that we will continue to hold him accountable for the damage he has done.”

Said Kathryn Wolf, executive director of FBN, “Schewel didn’t seem to like our trophies – surprising, considering the enthusiasm with which he legislated against our people.”

***** BACKGROUND INFORMATION *****

Schewel in 2018 spearheaded the nation’s first ban of a renowned police training program in Israel, a boycott that continues to wreak havoc in Durham and reverberate nationally. Dubbed “Deadly Exchange,” the boycott campaign was conceived by fringe anti-Israel

activists. It alleges the Israel program instructs American police to “terrorize Black and Brown communities.”

Officials enacted their anti-Semitic boycott despite an outpouring of pleas from their Jewish constituents. To favor anti-Israel activists, Schewel during the 2018 Passover holiday waived city rules regarding notice to speak at public hearings. Immediately after the boycott’s passage, anti-Semitic incidents in the North Carolina Triangle region surged, and have continued unabated. A lawsuit over the legislation brought by NCCI and others is pending before the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Fourth Circuit.

North Carolina Coalition for Israel is a group of diverse, grassroots, action-oriented advocates for Israel and the Jewish people. We actively engage with our community to illuminate contributions of the Jewish state, which make the world a better place. We fight anti-Semitism with vigor and passion, directly calling out anti-Israel bias and prejudice.

Fight Back Now is a national, non-profit advocacy group thwarting the spread of the toxic “Deadly Exchange” campaign, which aims to demonize Israel and the Jewish people.