The ADL's statement about Daniel Biss, who has just been elected to represent Illinois's 9th Congressional District, is deeply troubling. I have known Daniel for many years, first as our state legislator and then as mayor of Evanston. He is an exceptionally bright and caring person who has worked closely with the Jewish community to confront antisemitism in Evanston.

As mayor, Daniel stood with the Jewish community whenever we faced antisemitic rhetoric or threats. In February 2024, speakers at a City Council meeting made vile antisemitic comments about my congregation. The mayor called me immediately and showed up to services that Friday night to support our community. Mayor Biss and the Council issued a joint statement condemning them before the next meeting. At that meeting, he spoke publicly about how those remarks made him think of his grandmother, a survivor of Auschwitz.

The ADL's first charge, that his refusal to provide police support to clear the encampment at Northwestern shows a lack of urgency about Jewish students, is simply wrong. The Evanston Police Department did not find that the encampment posed a threat to students or the community. Police leadership warned that forcibly clearing it could make the situation worse. Mayor Biss made clear that he would not order police to disperse a protest or arrest protesters against the advice of the department's own leadership. That is responsible governance, not indifference. How would a physical confrontation between police and Northwestern students have made Jews any safer? Mayor Biss wisely recognized that it was Northwestern's responsibility to address the concerns of its Jewish students. The encampment ended through negotiation, without violence, and that was the best possible outcome for everyone involved.

The second charge, that he blamed AIPAC when questioned about Northwestern, is equally mistaken. Those questions came in the middle of a primary in which an AIPAC-aligned super PAC spent millions working to defeat him. AIPAC's allies made clear that they supported Laura Fine because they agreed with her positions on Israel, and they knew full well that Daniel was her most serious rival. It was fair for him to point out that the attacks were political.

Finally, the suggestion that his support for repealing Illinois's anti-BDS law shows he doesn't care about antisemitism does not hold up. Anti-BDS laws raise serious free-speech concerns, and they do nothing to keep Jews safe.

Evanston has confronted antisemitism well because of the deep bonds Evanstonians have built across our differences, whether religious, political, racial, or otherwise. When antisemitism has reared its head, the wider community, including our religious leaders, has condemned it publicly: in the newspaper, from the pulpit, and by showing up at our synagogues. Despite disagreements about Israel and Israeli policy, the interfaith community has stood with the Jewish community against antisemitism, just as we work together against racism, xenophobia,

and every other form of hate. I sincerely wish the ADL would learn from what we have built here.

We are fortunate to have someone of Daniel's intellectual caliber, political skill, and proven commitment to the safety and well-being of everyone in our community as our new Congressman. The ADL would do well to learn from him and work together with him to keep the Jewish community safe.

Rabbi Andrea London