



UNIVERSITY OF MASSACHUSETTS
AMHERST

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April 23, 2019

AMCHA Initiative
c/o Tammi Rossman-Benjamin
P.O. Box 408
Santa Cruz, CA 95061

Dear AMCHA Initiative:

I want to make clear that the event scheduled for May 4 on the UMass Amherst campus is being presented by a private foundation. The foundation has, as many non-UMass organizations regularly do, rented space on campus to host its panel discussion. No university or taxpayer funds are being used to support the event.

UMass Amherst is committed to fostering a community of dignity and respect and rejects all forms of bigotry. The campus is also firmly committed to the principles of free speech and academic freedom. As such, and as is required of a public institution under the First Amendment, UMass Amherst applies a content-neutral standard when making facilities available to outside organizations for the purpose of holding events.

The principle of academic freedom extends to both individual faculty members and to faculty-led academic departments. Departmental sponsorship of various types of events does not constitute an endorsement of the views expressed at those proceedings, rather it is an endorsement of the exploration of complex and sometimes difficult topics. Promoting the free exchange of ideas is one of the most important functions of the university. Our faculty members draw upon their fields of study and expertise to engage in the issues of the day, distinct from a personal political agenda.

I want to state categorically that the opinions expressed by participants at the May 4 event and other such events do not represent the views of the University. And, as has been stated repeatedly, the University remains firmly opposed to academic boycotts of any kind, including BDS.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "K Subbaswamy".

Kumble Subbaswamy, Ph.D.
Chancellor