

W. CURTIS THOMAS, MEMBER
301 IRVIS OFFICE BUILDING
P.O. BOX 202181
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA 17120-2181
PHONE: (717) 787-9471
FAX: (717) 787-7297

530 WEST GIRARD AVENUE
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA 19123
PHONE: (215) 560-3261
FAX: (215) 560-2152



House of Representatives
COMMONWEALTH OF PENNSYLVANIA
HARRISBURG

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ON STROKE PREVENTION

Ivory V. Nelson, Ph.D., President
Lincoln University of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania
1570 Baltimore Pike, PO Box 179
Lincoln University, PA 19352

Dear President Nelson,

As a Trustee of Lincoln University, I was shocked and appalled when allegations came out last week that Professor Kaukab Siddique, a tenured Professor of Literature at Lincoln, made offensive and blatantly anti-Semitic statements. Professor Siddique publicly called for the removal of all Jews from Israel, insinuated that the Holocaust is a myth, and attempted to perpetuate tired old stereotypes against the Jewish People. What I find most disturbing is Professor Siddique's assertions in the press that he not only stands behind his statements, but may continue to make them in the future. As a Lincoln Trustee, and as a Member of the Pennsylvania General Assembly, I unequivocally condemn this public hate speech.

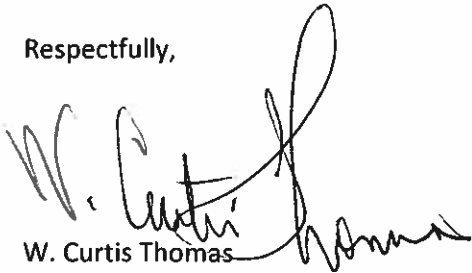
For over 150 years Lincoln University has been a beacon of hope, tolerance, and equality. As noted by former University President Dr. Horace Mann Bond, Lincoln "was the first institution founded anywhere in the world to provide a higher education in the arts and sciences for youth of African descent." For generations Lincoln University, its faculty, its students and its alumni have provided a living rebuttal to the voices of hate, segregation and disenfranchisement. The statements made by Professor Siddique are an affront to this heritage and Lincoln University cannot and should not be a shield for hate speech.

On a personal level, I must appeal to Professor Siddique's better nature to seriously reconsider his statements. The Israeli-Palestinian conflict has been kept alive through violence and fiery rhetoric for far too long. It is a deeply emotional and personal issue for many people; but this does not absolve us of our responsibility as citizens, community leaders, and – most importantly – as grown-ups, to calm the flames of anger and reach for a solution outside the cycle of violence. Mr. Siddique's statements do nothing other than add to the pervasive inertia and mistrust surrounding this issue. I call on him to

repudiate these hateful comments and focus his energies on ways to promote dialogue, build bridges and find common ground.

In the long term, we can reach a solution of peace and prosperity for all as long as we have the fortitude to take the high road, seek understanding and compromise on the issues which divide us.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "W. Curtis Thomas". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a large loop at the end.

W. Curtis Thomas
State Representative, 181st Legislative District
530 West Girard Avenue
Philadelphia, PA 19123