



Written by [Warren Mass](#) on September 21, 2020

162 House Democrats Vote Against Antisemitism Amendment to Rights Bill

After Representative Virginia Foxx (R-N.C.) proposed an amendment to the Equity and Inclusion Enforcement Act (H.R. 2574) adding antisemitism to race, color, or national origin as a form of discrimination to be prohibited by the act, 162 Democrats in the House voted against Foxx's amendment.

"With anti-Semitism on the rise around the world, the need for this amendment is clear," Foxx said,



The summary of H.R. 2574 said that the bill "authorizes private civil causes of action for disparate impact violations ... of federal regulations of general applicability that prohibit discrimination on the ground of race, color, or national origin in programs or activities receiving federal financial assistance." The stated purpose of the bill, which was introduced by two Democrats, Bobby Scott of Virginia and John Conyers, Jr. of Michigan, was to strengthen Title VI of the Civil Rights Act by restoring "the right to individual civil actions in cases involving disparate impact."

Most Republicans, including Foxx, initially opposed H.R. 2574. Foxx stated during debate: "The consequences of this legislation within the education community are very clear. The creation of a private right of action would lead to additional burdens on already taxed State and local agencies, especially school systems who would have to defend themselves against tenuous allegations advanced by parents and activists."

When the speaker pro tempore asked Foxx, "Is the gentlewoman opposed to the bill?" Foxx answered, "I am in its present form."

Foxx then moved to insert an amendment into the text that included this wording: "Antisemitism Considered Discrimination. — In carrying out the responsibilities of the recipient under this title, the employee or employees designated under this section shall consider antisemitism to be discrimination on the basis of race, color, or national origin as prohibited by this title."

Foxx continued: "If this House is going to radically rewrite title VI, as this bill does, we should use this opportunity to show commitment to combating anti-Semitism."

One might think that this language would appeal to most Democrats, who usually describe themselves as champions of all minorities. However the vote indicated differently. While 66 Democrats voted for the amendment, enough to pass it when added to the votes of 189 Republicans, 162 voted "nay." Among the 162 were all four members of the "squad" — Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (N.Y.), Rashida Tlaib (Mich.), Ilhan Omar (Minn.), and Ayanna Pressley (Mass.)

H.R. 2574 passed in the House on September 16 by a vote of 232-188 and now goes on to the Senate. If the Senate passes it, President Trump will likely veto it.

A September 14 statement issued by the Executive Office of the President begins: "The Administration



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strongly opposes passage of H.R. 2574.” The statement continues: “Granting a private cause of action for enforcement of such regulations would inevitably lead to a massive expansion of litigation involving recipients of Federal financial assistance, diverting resources toward litigation and away from education.” It concludes: “If H.R. 2574 were presented to the President, his advisors would recommend that he veto the bill.”

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