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Dr. Robert R. Friedmann
GILEE Founding Director
Professor Emeritus of Criminal Justice
Co-Chair, IACP Community Policing Committee
Andrew Young School of Policy Studies
Georgia State University
P. O. Box 3992
Atlanta, GA 30302-3992

Dear Professor Friedmann:

I am writing to register my strong support for the Law Enforcement Executive Leadership Development program, known as GILEE. Now in its 28th year, GILEE brings US law enforcement officials to Israel for education and exchange purposes. I understand the program has been attacked recently because it is viewed by critics as contravening the movement to boycott Israel over its policies. The critics also allege that the program engages US law enforcement personnel in “military training” by their Israeli counterparts.

The latter claim is patently false. To my knowledge, GILEE does not engage in military training of any sort. As for the charge that the program should be discontinued because it does not conform to the edicts of the boycott Israel movement, I say so be it. I am an academic criminologist. Our field--indeed, any field of free and open inquiry--benefits from cross-border intellectual exchanges of the type GILEE exemplifies. I would argue that such exchanges are especially valuable when policy differences exist between the partners. We learn when we are exposed to differing viewpoints and situations. And, hopefully, that mutual learning can help to resolve or at least clarify differences. That is what we teach our students. It is also a key ingredient of constructive diplomacy. The last thing anyone connected to a university should want to do is close off communication and the exchange of ideas, especially with those with whom we may have disagreements.

GILEE has been widely honored during its nearly three-decade presence at Georgia State University. Deservedly so. It is the type of program that a strong university should nourish and protect. It is my hope that GILEE remains a vital part of the GSU community for many years to come.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "RR", with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Richard Rosenfeld
Curators' Distinguished Professor Emeritus of Criminology and Criminal Justice