

ADMINISTRATION

White House appoints Chanan Weissman as liaison to Jewish community

BY MYCHAEL SCHNELL - 08/05/21 5:06 PM ET

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The White House has appointed [Chanan Weissman](#) to serve as as liaison to the Jewish community, following calls from many to take action amid a rise in antisemitism in the U.S.

Weissman, who is the director for technology and democracy on the National Security Council, served as the Jewish liaison during former [President Obama's](#) final year in office. He also worked in the Trump administration as a section lead for internet freedom and business and human rights until April.

A White House official confirmed the appointment in a statement to The Hill on Thursday.

antisemitism and hate; serve people in need; support the US-Israeli relationship; and promote dignity, equality, and opportunity for all," the official said.

Jewish Insider and The Washington Post first reported on Weissman's nomination, which comes amid a startling rise in antisemitic incidents throughout the U.S., which spiked during the May conflict between Israel and Hamas, the Palestinian militant group that controls the Gaza Strip.

The Anti-Defamation League (ADL) revealed that month that reports of antisemitic incidents had surged by 63 percent since the beginning of the Middle East violence, which lasted for 11 days.

The administration has since faced mounting pressure to take action on the rise of violent attacks targeting the Jewish community. Biden has condemned the incidents on multiple occasions, but some were hoping for additional measure.

In May he called the antisemitic incidents "despicable, unconscionable" and "un-Americans," adding that they "must stop." Last month, after a swastika was discovered at the State Department, the president said "Let me be clear: Anti-Semitism has no place in the State Department, in my Administration."

Three Jewish Democrats penned a letter to Biden in May calling on the White House to "swiftly" name an ambassador-at-large to monitor and combat the rise in hate against the Jewish community.

Weissman discussed his experience serving as Jewish liaison during the Obama administration during an interview with Hillel International in 2016, telling the organization that he saw his job as "a bridge with lanes operating in both directions."

"I need to, at once, convey the president's policies and positions to the Jewish community but also need to fully capture and convey the wide (and growing) range of perspectives from the Jewish community back to the decision-makers at the White House," he continued.

The Jewish Federations of North America (JFNA) welcomed Weissman's nomination in a statement Tuesday, citing the rise in antisemitic attacks online and on college campuses.

"At a time when the Jewish community is facing a surge of antisemitism online, on

“JFNA looks forward to working closely with Weissman on an all-government approach to confronting hatred and violent extremism,” they added.

The ADL applauded the White House’s selection in a [statement](#), writing that the new position will help the administration address concerns such as antisemitism and extremism.

“Especially in light of the recent rise in antisemitic incidents, we’re pleased the White House has chosen Chanan Weissman to finally fill the position of liaison to the Jewish American community,” Jonathan Greenblatt, CEO of the ADL, said in a statement.

“This will improve the Biden Administration’s ability to foster relationships with the Jewish community and work with stakeholders to address concerns such as antisemitism and extremism. ADL and other Jewish organizations have been advocating for someone to fill this critical role for several years, and we look forward to working with him,” he added.

—Updated at 6:22 p.m.

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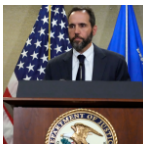
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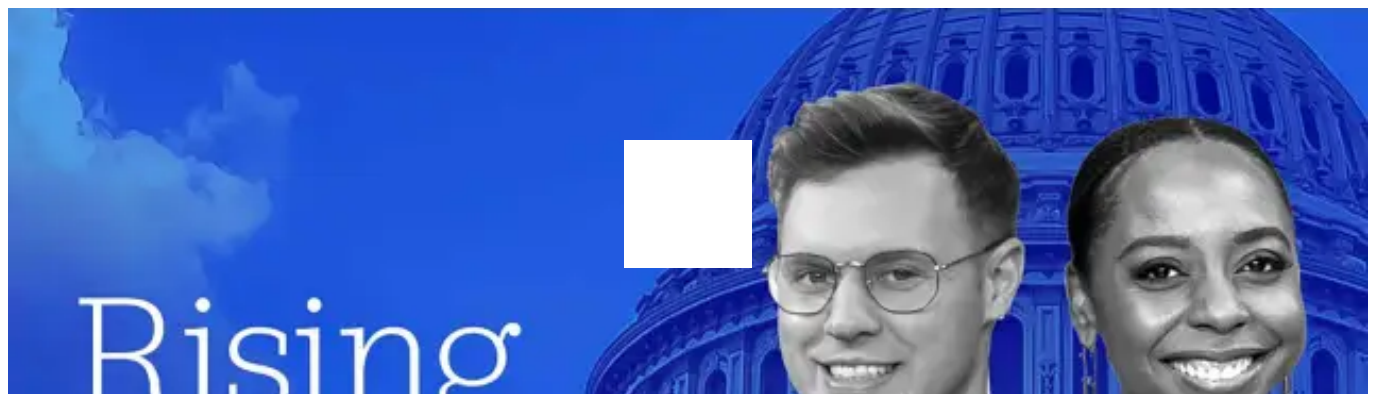


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