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March 9, 2011

The Honorable Barack Obama
President
The White House
Washington, D.C. 20500

Dear Mr. President:

We welcome the opportunity to participate in the White House Bullying Prevention Conference later this week. In advance of the Conference, the Anti-Defamation League is pleased to submit the attached policy and programming recommendations for Federal action.

Over the past decade, the League has built on its award-winning anti-bias education and training initiatives and become a leading national source for innovative programming and advocacy to address bullying and the pernicious new form of harassment affecting children and students known as cyberbullying.

Bullying and harassment in elementary and secondary educational settings is a continuing problem for school districts, parents, and students across the nation. In addition, cyberbullying is on the rise, as an increasing number of youth are misusing Internet and cell phone technology to bully, harass, and even incite violence against others. For some perpetrators, in-person bullying and harassment, as well as online cruelty, may be precursors to more destructive behavior, including involvement in hate groups and bias-related violence.

The impact of bullying has been well documented – studies have shown that difficulty making friends, loneliness, low self-esteem, depression, poor academic achievement and truancy are all associated with being bullied.

The Federal government, in partnership with non-profit and community organizations, can play a critical role in ensuring that our schools and communities are safe places for all students. Federal leadership on these important issues helps nurture a climate and a culture in which most members of the community are willing to condemn bigotry, bullying and harassment.

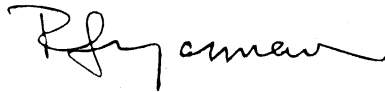
We believe that while laws and appropriate, inclusive school-based policies can be a focal point for addressing bullying, education strategies, training programs, and community involvement are necessary complements to any effective response.

Mr. President, we very much appreciate the fact that your Administration has demonstrated extraordinary commitment to address bullying and cyberbullying in a comprehensive and inclusive manner. The Department of Education Office of Civil Rights Bullying and Harassment Guidance, the significant work of the Department's Office of Safe and Drug Free Schools on the topic, the new and expanded federal partners and CDC Web sites, and the video messages you and members of your

Cabinet made to elevate the issue and empower targets all demonstrate your clear recognition that leaders can make a difference addressing this issue.

Finally, we applaud your initiative in calling together this important White House Conference on Bullying Prevention. We stand ready to partner with you as you continue to build on these initiatives and develop, fund, and promote proactive strategies to confront bullying, cyberbullying, and harassment in schools and in the community.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "R. Sugarman".

Robert G. Sugarman
National Chair

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "A. Foxman".

Abraham H. Foxman
National Director