



News

from
Assemblyman
**DOV
HIKIND**

WINTER 2012

WORKING WITH FEMA TO RELIEVE DISASTER VICTIMS

Assemblyman Hikind's office is still inundated with calls regarding the after effects of Hurricane Sandy. Shortly after the disaster, the Assemblyman announced the addition of Jeanie Silver, a former FEMA employee, to his staff. The Assemblyman and his staff also met with six FEMA officials to better ensure effective, accessible information to Hurricane Sandy victims who may be eligible for post-disaster financial relief.

"Many people are still confused about FEMA's process and what they can offer," said the Assemblyman. "People should file with both FEMA and their insurance companies immediately. There are multiple resources available through FEMA that many are unaware of. Anyone who has suffered any sort of damage to their home, car, business, non-profit organization, or anything else may be eligible for a wide range of assistance programs, including low-interest SBA loans, personal property disaster relief, rental assistance, unemployment, medical, and dental assistance. The important thing is that you must apply to find out what's available, and you should be conscious of the deadlines, which are fast approaching."

Currently, the deadline for individual assistance is December 30, 2012 and the deadline for SBA is December 31, 2012.



Assemblyman Dov Hikind and staff member Jeanie Silver with FEMA officials.

There are multiple ways to apply for FEMA assistance:

- Apply Online at DisasterAssistance.gov
- Apply via a smartphone at m.fema.gov
- Apply by phone by calling (800) 621-3362; people with speech or hearing disabilities should call TTY (800) 462-7585.
- Apply directly at a Disaster Recovery Center. DRC's are one-stop centers that allow you to see many agencies at once and to get face-to-face assistance with your application.

Those in need of assistance or guidance in dealing with FEMA can contact Assemblyman Hikind's office at 718-853-9616 and ask for Jeanie, or email jeaniesilver2012@gmail.com.

ASSEMBLYMAN DOV HIKIND

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THE FIGHT FOR JACOB OSTREICHER CONTINUES

Jacob Ostreicher has now been held for nearly 18 months in a Bolivian prison without being formally charged with a crime. Although his bail was denied for a seventh time in November and the Bolivian government seemed satisfied with letting Jacob remain behind bars, Jacob has remained front of mind with Assemblyman Hikind and his staff.

Fortunately, Bolivia's interior minister recently announced that six government officials were arrested on suspicion of attempting to rob and extort Jacob. Those arrested included the judge who first ordered Jacob jailed and officials working in the state agency that seized 18,000 metric tons of rice from him.

"We share in the Ostreicher family's hope," says Assemblyman Hikind who has continued to rally his fellow elected officials, as well as the media and will continue to do so as long as Jacob remains imprisoned. In September, the Assemblyman organized thousands of synagogues into action on Jacob's behalf. Men and women across America joined in prayer and were urged to follow-up with calls and letters to their elected officials.

Jacob's wife Miriam stays in constant contact with the Assemblyman while numerous efforts on multiple fronts continue in an effort to free Jacob.



U.S. Senator Charles Schumer and former NY Governor David Paterson join Assemblyman Hikind at the Bolivian Mission to the U.N. to denounce detention of Jacob Ostreicher.

As of this printing, there are new developments in this case almost every day. With G-d's help and everyone's prayers and involvement, we look forward to sharing news of Jacob Ostreicher's release.

WE OBJECT TO FLATBUSH'S NEW TRUANCY CENTER

When Assemblyman Hikind got word of a new Truancy Processing Center at 1780 Ocean Avenue, just two doors from the Shaare Torah Girls High School, he led several of his fellow elected officials (Assemblywoman Helene Weinstein, Councilman David Greenfield, Councilman Michael C. Nelson and his Chief of Operations Chaim Deutsch, founder of the Flatbush Shomrim) along with Mrs. Haber, principal of Shaare Torah, and Richard Altabe of Shaare Torah, to meet with the Department of Education

to protest the matter. The center had been planned without any elected officials or residents being notified.

"Residents are entitled to a say in matters that can so deeply impact the character of our community, to say nothing of the safety and well-being of our children," said the Assemblyman. Following the meeting, promises were made by the DOE, but not kept. Assemblyman Hikind has promised to continue monitoring the situation and to work towards a feasible solution.

HONORING THE BOBOVER REBBE, Z"TL

Although the Staten Island Expressway is undergoing some much-needed construction, Assemblyman Hikind saw to it that the NYS Department of Transportation specially opened a second lane on the expressway to allow

thousands of Chassidim easier access to the cemetery of Rabbi Shlomo Halberstam, the Bobover Rebbe, z"tl, who is interred at Floral Park Cemetery in Deans, NJ, on the occasion of the Rebbe's 12th yahrtzeit.

BRINGING JUSTICE TO CROWN HEIGHTS

Ehud Halevy was sleeping in a Crown Heights community center when he was awoken by two police officers who charged him with trespass, harassment, resisting arrest, and assault on a police officer. He then spent the next four nights in jail. But when a surveillance video was discovered that showed Halevy as the victim of the assault, Crown Heights' community leaders reached out to Assemblyman Hikind who immediately worked to resolve the matter.



Assemblyman Hikind flanked by Chanina Sperlin of Crown Heights and Councilwoman Letitia James at press conference.



The Assemblyman organized and led a number of elected officials in a public condemnation of the police brutality and demanded an investigation into the incident. The officials joining Assemblyman Hikind included NYS Senator Eric Adams, Assemblyman Karim Camara, NYC Public Advocate Bill de Blasio, NYC Comptroller John Liu, and Councilwoman Letitia James, as well as Crown Heights community leaders Barry Sugar (president of the Crown Heights Jewish Leadership Council) and Chanina Sperlin.

The result:

All charges against Halevy were dropped and one of the police officers was placed on restricted duty.



NYS Senator Eric Adams, attorney Norman Siegel (former Director of the New York Civil Liberties Union) and Assemblyman Hikind link arms at a march for Ehud Halevy.

PRESSURING THE PARKS DEPT. TO CUT DANGEROUS TREES NOW

Assemblyman Hikind has called on the NYC Department of Parks & Recreation to remediate the many trees that were damaged by Sandy but have not fully fallen yet.

“This superstorm has taught all of us hard lessons,” said the Assemblyman, “not the least of which is an



ounce of prevention is genuinely worth a pound of cure. In a proactive effort to prevent further power outages and, indeed, save lives before the winter is upon us, my staff surveyed Borough Park and Flatbush and found many potentially dangerous and some obviously hazardous trees and tree branches, many damaged by the hurricane and now poised to fall and wreak further havoc with the next big weather event.”

Assemblyman Hikind called on Veronica M. White, NYC Parks Commissioner, to immediately make remediation of the dangerous trees and branches the department’s number one priority. “Before the winter is upon us and the heavy snows fall, I am requesting that the Department of Parks survey the city for the types of hazardous tree situations that my staff has observed. The remediation of these problems should be an immediate priority—certainly ahead of planting new trees—as lives can be saved by acting promptly.”

If you see a tree that is endangering people, please contact our office and send a photo of the tree and its location to Hikindpress@gmail.com.

SHEMA KOLAINU HOLDS LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST



Assemblyman Hikind officially welcomed Yidel Perlstein, the new Chairman of Community Board #12, on the occasion of Shema Kolainu’s 10th Annual Legislative Breakfast. Shema Kolainu has been a leader in servicing children with autism for more than a decade. “I’m honored to support Shema Kolainu’s fine work,” said the Assemblyman.

RECOGNIZING BELZ RAV CHESED’S AMAZING WORK



“The Rav Chesed organization simply does amazing work,” said Assemblyman Hikind, who was honored for his own community service by the Belz organization that provides for needy families. Rav Chesed’s annual dinner was held at Anshei Sfard. The Assemblyman also had high praise for Shia Langsam, the organization’s executive director. “How fortunate our community is to have Shia Langsam and Rav Chesed,” the Assemblyman said.