



New York State Assembly  
Albany, N.Y.

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE**

May 26, 2026

**Assembly Members Secure Budget Victory Expanding Protections for Houses of Worship, Jewish Schools, and Community Centers Amid Rising Antisemitic Harassment and Violence**

Over the last three years, Jewish communities across New York have faced a deeply troubling rise in antisemitism, harassment, and violence. From attacks outside synagogues and community institutions to the intimidation of students on college campuses, too many New Yorkers no longer feel secure in the very places that should offer refuge and belonging.

When the original proposal for a 25-foot buffer zone restricting protest at houses of worship was first introduced months ago, many of us in the Assembly immediately felt it did not go far enough. This was never about restricting one's constitutional right to peaceful protest; rather, it was about government's responsibility to ensure that vulnerable New Yorkers are safe from targeted intimidation. Those conversations were not always easy, but they were necessary. However, even as momentum was building for that initial, limited proposal, we in the Assembly recognized that a narrow 25-foot boundary simply could not match the magnitude of this crisis. While Jewish New Yorkers search for reassurance that their safety concerns are being heard, we knew that a stronger, more expansive response was required. This state intervention became undeniably urgent following the New York City Mayor's veto of the City Council's school safety perimeter transparency and reporting bill. That municipal failure left many Jewish New Yorkers deeply disappointed and exposed. If the City of New York cannot find it within themselves to take the necessary steps to protect our children, the State of New York must and will step in to act. We refuse to let local executive vetoes dictate the safety of our children, and we came together to fight for a state-level bill with real teeth.

The final legislation successfully secured in the New York State budget represents a massive legislative achievement driven by the State Assembly. We fought to double the perimeter to a commanding 50-foot protective buffer zone, and crucially expanded its scope so that protections are no longer strictly limited to houses of worship. The new law now explicitly shields Jewish day schools, and Jewish Community Centers (JCCs). This expanded perimeter also creates a misdemeanor for individuals who demonstrate and harass within the 50-foot zone. This is not about silencing lawful protest; it is about ensuring that New Yorkers can enter a house of

worship, a school, or a community institution without fear of harassment, intimidation, or violence.

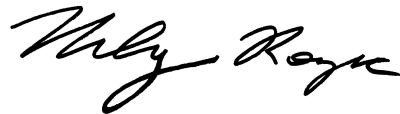
We are especially grateful to Assembly Speaker Carl E. Heastie for standing firmly with us throughout this intense process and recognizing the true seriousness of this moment. This historic victory would not have been possible without Speaker Heastie's steadfast leadership and courage. He and our coalition of Assembly members refused to settle early, pushed past the baseline blueprints, and ultimately carried this expanded and robust legislation across the finish line.

At a time of rising hatred and division, New York must send a clear message: every community deserves to feel safe walking into its houses of worship, schools, or community institutions. This legislation is a monumental step toward ensuring that promise is upheld and that New Yorkers of all faiths are protected by the full authority of the State.

Sincerely,



Steve Stern  
Member of Assembly (10 AD)



Nily Rozic  
Member of Assembly (25 AD)



Charles Lavine  
Member of Assembly (13 AD)



Edward Braunstein  
Member of Assembly (26 AD)



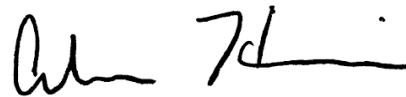
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Rebecca Seawright  
Member of Assembly (76 AD)



Jeffrey Dinowitz  
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Amy Paulin  
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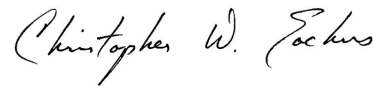
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