

1. 5-11-2023 Full Legislative Antisemitism Task Force Public Notice

Documents:

[5-11-23 ANTISEMITISM TASK FORCE.PDF](#)

2. 5-11-2023 Full Legislative Antisemitism Task Force Minutes

Documents:

[05.11.23 NCL ANTISEMITISM TASK FORCE PUBLIC HEARING.PDF](#)



PUBLIC NOTICE

PLEASE TAKE NOTICE THAT

THE SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE TO COMBAT ANTISEMITISM

**WILL HOLD A
PUBLIC HEARING**

ON

THURSDAY, MAY 11, 2023 AT 6:00PM

**TO COLLECT INFORMATION AND PUBLIC INPUT REGARDING
THE CURRENT EXTENT OF ANTISEMITISM, INCLUDING ACTS OF
ANTISEMITIC HARASSMENT, VIOLENCE, AND VANDALISM IN
OUR COUNTY AND OUR REGION**

IN

**THE PETER J. SCHMITT MEMORIAL LEGISLATIVE CHAMBER
THEODORE ROOSEVELT EXECUTIVE AND LEGISLATIVE BUILDING
1550 FRANKLIN AVENUE, MINEOLA, NEW YORK 11501**

Mineola, NY As per the Nassau County Fire Marshal's Office, the Peter J. Schmitt Memorial Legislative Chamber has a maximum occupancy of 200 people.

Attendees who would like to address the Legislature must submit a slip to the Clerk's office staff. Public comment is limited to three minutes per person. At meetings of the full Legislature, public comment will be heard only during the pre-calendar public comment period and during public hearings that are on the calendar. At meetings of the Legislature's committees, there is no pre-calendar public comment period. Public comment will be heard on agenda items. Public comment on any item may be emailed to the Clerk of the Legislature at LegPublicComment@nassaucountyny.gov and will be made part of the formal record of this Legislative meeting.

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MICHAEL C. PULITZER
Clerk of the Legislature
Nassau County, New York

DATED: May 4, 2023
Mineola, NY

**Scan the QR code to submit written public comment,
which will be incorporated into the record of this meeting.**



NASSAU COUNTY LEGISLATURE

SPECIAL LEGISLATIVE TASK FORCE
TO COMBAT antisemitism

PUBLIC HEARING

Thursday, May 11, 2023

6:12 p.m.

County Executive and Legislative Building
1550 Franklin Avenue
Mineola, New York

TAKEN BY: KAREN LORENZO, OFFICIAL COURT REPORTER

APPEARANCES:

RABBI WEINSTOCK

MINDY PERLMUTTER

AVI POSNICK

PATRICK PIZZO

ERIKA WITOVER

ELLEN IGOE

JEFFREY WIESENFELD

BEN WEINSTOCK

LEWIS YEVOLI

SCOTT CUSHING

LEGISLATORS:

DEPUTY PRESIDING OFFICER KOPEL

ALTERNATE PRESIDING OFFICER FORD

LEGISLATOR PILIP

LEGISLATOR DRUCKER

REPRESENTING MINORITY LEADER ABRAHAMS -

ROBIN WHEAT

LEGISLATOR GIUFFRE

LEGISLATOR MULE

REPRESENTING LEGISLATOR LAFAZAN -

SCARLET SAVEL & REEANA GUPTA

1
2 RABBI WEINSTOCK: Good evening,
3 ladies and gentlemen. My name is Rabbi
4 Elie Weinstock. When I'm not here, I'm
5 the Rabbi of the Jewish Center in
6 Atlantic Beach. I'm proud to serve as
7 the President of the New York Board of
8 Rabbis.

9 We're going to begin this public
10 hearing the way we have started all of
11 our task force sessions. If I could ask
12 everyone to rise and face the flag as we
13 recite the Pledge of Allegiance.

14 (Whereupon, the Pledge of
15 Allegiance is said.)

16 RABBI WEINSTOCK: Good evening and
17 thank you for coming out to this Public
18 Hearing of the Special Legislative Task
19 Force to Combat antisemitism.

20 Before we proceed tonight, I Just
21 want to give you a little bit of
22 background as to this task force. Some of
23 you may be familiar with it, some of you
24 may now only know what this is, but this
25 is really a function of Nassau County

1
2 Legislature taking very seriously the
3 scourge of antisemitism; Jew hatred. The
4 Nassau County Legislature, put forth by
5 Legislator Drucker, stepped forth to pass
6 a bill that established this task force
7 back in August 2021. The idea was in
8 response to rising antisemitism; you hear
9 about it, read about it, some of us are
10 experiencing it. It could not be ignored
11 without trying take some action. There
12 was a need to identify available
13 legislative steps to protect Nassau
14 County residents, in particular, the
15 Jewish Community, from hatred and
16 intolerance.

17 The goal of this task force was also
18 to promote education and public awareness
19 of the problem and to combat hatred in
20 all forms working with other legislative
21 task forces and municipalities. The task
22 force's mission was to hold hearings to
23 understand the problem, to find out about
24 the incidents and occurrences of
25 antisemitism, what where the types of

1
2 hatred being encountered and also to hear
3 from the public, which is why we're here
4 tonight, as well as make recommendations
5 to try and take concrete action that
6 would combat antisemitism in Nassau
7 County.

8 The first meeting was held actually
9 a year ago yesterday. We set out at that
10 first meeting to try and hold onto a
11 phenomenon of hatred, that is thousands
12 of years old. What can we do, what should
13 we do and to try do, and put that into a
14 certain framework in order to tackle
15 antisemitism.

16 At our first session we formed four
17 committees to try and tackle from an
18 educational prospective. How best to
19 tackle and teach antisemitism in schools
20 to educate students to be sensitive to
21 it, to avoid it. And how to engage
22 parents and how to make people aware of
23 exactly what antisemitism is.

24 We have a Law Enforcement Committee
25 to ensure and check in with law

1
2 enforcement that antisemitic acts are
3 being policed and how the Community can
4 work with law enforcement to fight
5 antisemitism.

6 We have a Legislation Committee to
7 identify if there are laws and
8 regulations that the Nassau County
9 Legislature could enact to fight
10 antisemitism.

11 We have a Partnerships Committee.
12 How we can best amplify the message of
13 fighting antisemitism by partnering with
14 other civic and religious organizations,
15 other faith communities to fight against
16 antisemitism.

17 At our subsequent meetings over the
18 past year, we heard from the Nassau
19 County Police commissioner to understand
20 what were the tools being deployed to
21 fight antisemitism. What were the
22 mechanisms, what the Community could do
23 to help them better police antisemitism.

24 We had subsequent meetings with
25 community organizations, the

1
2 Anti-Defamation League to understand some
3 of the organizations in the field
4 addressing antisemitism at a national and
5 local level.

6 We heard from the AJC that works
7 with states and municipal governments to
8 suggest legislation and legislative
9 remedies towards antisemitism.

10 We then, again, sitting in committee
11 meetings, try to formulate some language,
12 some responses, to prioritize where are
13 the areas we wished to address. At our
14 most recent meeting, this was circled
15 back again with law enforcement to hear
16 from additional members as well as
17 District Attorney Anne Donnelly to
18 understand the investigation, arrests and
19 prosecution of antisemitism.

20 We begin to think about what some of
21 our recommendations are going to be. One
22 of them in particular can't be done until
23 we hear from the public. That is why
24 this public hearing which was built into
25 the legislation that created this task

1
2 force was scheduled.

3 Here were are one year later.
4 Hopefully a little wiser. And certainly
5 as willing, if not more so to tackle this
6 problem.

7 Before we get into the public
8 hearing, it is a pleasure to call upon by
9 colleague, Avi Posnick, to provide us
10 with some metrics and facts that may be
11 news to you.

12 MR. POSNICK: Good evening. Thank
13 you, Rabbi Weinstock, for your
14 chairmanship of this task force, and
15 thank you for the opportunity to speak
16 this evening. Thank you to all the
17 legislators who are here, my fellow task
18 force members and to everyone from the
19 community who came out tonight. This is
20 really about all of you.

21 As was said, my name is Avi Posnick.
22 I'm the Northeast director for Stand With
23 Us, an international education
24 organization that empowers students and
25 communities to support Israel and fight

1
2 antisemitism. The number of antisemitic
3 incidents over the past year and the past
4 couple of years is frightening. In just
5 the last year, there was a 36% increase
6 in the number of incidents across the
7 country, with New York leading with 580
8 incidents. Of those 580 anti-Semitic
9 incidents, almost half occurred in public
10 spaces, 84 at Jewish institutions, 78 at
11 private residences, 53 at non-Jewish K
12 through 12 institutions, and 43 at
13 business establishments. Long Island is
14 not immune to this either. Of those 580
15 incidents, 76 of those took place on Long
16 Island with 42 of those in Nassau County.

17 You've seen antisemitic flyers in
18 heavily Jewish neighborhoods, swastikas
19 at local parks and schools, and overt
20 antisemitic bullying in our schools, as
21 well as casual antisemitic comments
22 directed at Jewish students and faculty.
23 You'll soon hear from a number of these
24 students who have experienced these
25 unfortunate incidents.

1
2 There are other types of antisemitic
3 incidents that took place as well that
4 often are overlooked and sometimes not
5 even considered antisemitic.

6 As I said before, of the 580
7 antisemitic incidents recorded in New
8 York State just last year, 26 included
9 explicit references to Israel or Zionism.
10 References to Israel and Zionism were
11 found across categories of harassment,
12 vandalism and assault. We believe at
13 Stand With Us that anti-Zionism is
14 antisemitism and that is why we and many
15 others have pushed for the adoption of
16 the IHRA definition of antisemitism,
17 which thankfully Nassau County has
18 adopted, as well as many other
19 municipalities here in the county.

20 This universally accepted and
21 consensus driven definition of
22 antisemitism helps identify what modern
23 day antisemitism looks like, including
24 anti-Zionism. To fight antisemitism, you
25 have to define it to defeat it.

1
2 In conclusion, we're seeing a
3 shocking rise in the number of
4 antisemitic attacks and incidents. And we
5 are about to hear from many of you here
6 tonight who have experienced these
7 incidents. Being here tonight and sharing
8 what has happened is a very important
9 step. We know that with these frightening
10 numbers that I mentioned, there are many
11 more incidents that go unreported, and
12 this is something that we must change.

13 I look forward to working with my
14 fellow task force members, the
15 legislators, stakeholders and all of you
16 here this evening to combat antisemitism
17 in our beloved county.

18 RABBI WEINSTOCK: Thank you, Avi.
19 We look forward to hearing you speak. If
20 you haven't filled out a slip, they're at
21 the front of the room.

22 It's a pleasure to call upon my
23 colleague, Legislator Drucker, who
24 spearheaded the initiation of this task
25 force a couple of years ago and has

1
2 helped shepherd it through this point.
3 His advice on how to move things along
4 has been very helpful. I thank him
5 publicly. And transition us into the
6 public comment portion of this evening,
7 to call on him to introduce the young
8 people he has to speak.

9 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Thank you,
10 Rabbi. I really appreciate the kind
11 comments. Thank you, Avi, for your words
12 too. And I want to thank my legislative
13 colleagues, Legislator Kopel, Legislator
14 Pilip, Legislator Giuffre, and the rest
15 of the task force who have been so
16 committed and dedicated to this very
17 important task.

18 When I sponsored this bill almost
19 two years ago, Summer of '21, it was what
20 I thought was the pinnacle of
21 antisemitism in our country and county.
22 It was disturbing. Yet, after you hear
23 some of the statistics, it's on the rise
24 and it's worse really than it was two
25 years ago. It's more critical now than

1
2 ever that we engage with each other, the
3 communities we represent and live in, to
4 try to end the scourge and at least learn
5 about it. That was my impetus when I
6 filed this legislation. I envisioned
7 that we were going to have a task force
8 comprised of well respected members of
9 our community: Clergy members, elected
10 leaders, civic leaders, and that's what
11 we have. We have a panel here of very
12 fine and respectful people who are
13 dedicating their time to help with this
14 major, major task.

15 We all come from different
16 perspectives and have different
17 perspectives. That is why Rabbi
18 Weinstock formed the subcommittees. My
19 primary focus is education and getting
20 down to the cause of it. In my opinion,
21 at the basic denominator, the lowest
22 level: Our kids schools. That's where I
23 think we need to start. That's really the
24 root of all the trouble. If we can find
25 out how our kids are learning about it,

1
2 what their experiences are, it's going to
3 foster us in forming our opinions.

4 In my district we had a meeting that
5 was attended by a number of us including
6 Legislator Pilip and Plainview Old
7 Bethpage High School where we met with
8 superintendent, administration, faculty
9 and students. We are so grateful and
10 fortunate to have two of the students
11 that were at that meeting come before us
12 to speak and tell us about their
13 experiences firsthand, about how it is a
14 real problem day-to-day today in our
15 schools, experiencing antisemitism and
16 Jew hatred. I really felt that we needed
17 to get into that first, but believe me,
18 th other aspects of this task force, the
19 focus on legislation, education, District
20 Attorney's Office, things like that are
21 very, very equally important.

22 But I really want them to start with
23 our students. And we want to hear from
24 you. You're going to educate us. And
25 that's why we wanted to have my bill

1
2 included specifying to have public
3 hearings to gather information to enable
4 us to form out a plan to combat this.

5 So I'm very proud and pleased to
6 have two students from the the Plainview
7 Old Bethpage High School tonight who were
8 with us at our meeting at the school a
9 couple of months back. I appreciate you
10 taking the time and all the students and
11 all the people and all students who are
12 taking the time to come here, especially
13 the students who I'm sure have to get
14 back and do some studying as we are
15 getting close to the end of the year.

16 I'm particularly proud to have with
17 us today Caroline Kronenfeld and Yoav
18 Muscal. Again, I want to thank you for
19 empowering all of us to continue with
20 this task and how it was very important
21 to me, my fellow colleagues, because that
22 bill was passed in a bipartisan manner on
23 the Nassau County Legislature. That's
24 what makes me proud. That this is
25 something that we all feel and we are all

1
2 concerned about.

3 So thank you very much. Rabbi,
4 Weinstock, you can now turn it over to
5 public comment.

6 RABBI WEINSTOCK: Sure. Thank you,
7 Legislator Drucker.

8 As Legislator just mentioned, we're
9 going to begin with Caroline and Yoav.
10 As was mentioned, afterwards, we will go
11 through the list of those who wish to
12 speak.

13 MS. KRONENFELD: Hello, my name is
14 Caroline Kronenfeld. I am a 12th grader
15 at Plainview Old Bethpage, John F.
16 Kennedy High School. Thank you so much
17 for having me here.

18 I have a few things to talk about,
19 and some of it was touched upon a bit. I
20 heard the term casual antisemitism being
21 mentioned. And I want to emphasize the
22 severity of that.

23 I believe that hatred is learned and
24 not inherited. Children learn in schools.
25 Schools is where everything begins. I

1
2 think that schools are where change has
3 to be made.

4 My district does an excellent job of
5 Holocaust education, but what we don't
6 realize is, or we do realize this,
7 Holocaust does not happen every single
8 day. Casual antisemitism happens every
9 day. Those comments you hear passing by
10 in the hallways, in the library, on
11 social media. That is what happens every
12 day. And that is what students don't
13 realize is so severe. We learn about the
14 Holocaust and the severity of that. We
15 don't learn about the severity of casual
16 antisemitism.

17 In school, we learn about this thing
18 called the pyramid of hate. And the
19 pyramid of hate begins with bias, then
20 goes to acts of prejudice, and then goes
21 to discrimination and then violence and
22 genocide. Casual antisemitism is the
23 stepping stone to these awful acts like
24 the Holocaust.

25 In my school, students say, hear,

1
2 and even overlook these casual
3 antisemitic comments for one of two
4 reasons: It's so normalized that they
5 don't think it's a bad thing or they
6 don't realize the severity of it because
7 they learn about the Holocaust and they
8 know this is just common, this is not
9 going to do anything. But we have to
10 emphasize the fact that those casual
11 comments are very severe and those are
12 what need to be addressed.

13 You have to alter the curriculum in
14 schools to teach students about casual
15 antisemitism and the severity of it in
16 addition to Holocaust and regarding
17 multiple different marginalized groups,
18 not just Jewish people.

19 Thank you.

20 MR. MUSCAL: Thank you, Caroline. I
21 thank you for inviting me as well. Good
22 evening.

23 My name is Yoav Muscal. I moved to
24 the United States a bit more than five
25 years ago from Israel. And something

1
2 that's really relevant to the last few
3 days is right now there's an operation in
4 Israel translated to English it's called
5 Shield and Arrow. Something that happens
6 in every single one of these operations
7 is that someone asks me, Yoav, what is
8 your opinion about Israel versus
9 Palestine? Yoav, what do you think about
10 Gaza? What do you think about what the
11 IDF is doing? What do you think about
12 these casualties? And although I'm an
13 Israeli, also, my Jewish students are
14 held up to that. My Jewish peers are held
15 up to that standard.

16 There is casual antisemitism, and
17 those usually include Jewish stereotypes
18 and offensive remarks. But I believe that
19 a lot of that prejudice actually stems
20 from political antisemitism that is not
21 addressed in school curriculum.

22 Just like Caroline said, the
23 Holocaust is taught. And more than that,
24 in most schools and in most history
25 courses, students do understand how

1
2 antisemitism is an old form of prejudice
3 that still exists. But students don't
4 understand that it's multifaceted and
5 students don't understand that what they
6 say and what they say to their Jewish
7 students about political things also
8 become antisemitic.

9 Of course, including the working
10 definition in our legislature is
11 important, but it also has to be taught.
12 Students are taught about the Holocaust,
13 but they're not taught about what
14 antisemitism is. A lot of these casual
15 comments are made because they're not
16 even thought as to be antisemitic. And
17 when we talk about political antisemitism
18 and comments that are made to Israeli and
19 Jewish students, that also happens
20 because the history of Israel, the
21 history of Jewish refugees. The history
22 of antisemitism isn't taught in a way
23 that is nuanced and in a way that is
24 modern.

25 Students shouldn't feel like they

1
2 can't criticize the Israeli government.
3 Students and teachers should feel like
4 it's a topic that they can talk about in
5 school, about Israel in general. But what
6 should be taught in school and what
7 should be emphasized is that at the end
8 of the day, there's a way to criticize a
9 country, there's a way to criticize a
10 government in a way that doesn't hurt and
11 endanger Jewish students.

12 Thank you.

13 MR. POSNICK: Want to ask a quick
14 question to the students, to Caroline and
15 Yoav, if we can just have you come back
16 up for one second.

17 First of all, thank you both for
18 being here and describing what happened.
19 I think part of the reason for this
20 hearing is so we can get a better
21 understanding about what is really
22 happening, especially as the Legislator
23 said. I'm wondering if you can tell us a
24 little more. Any specific examples of
25 things that you've heard and if they have

1
2 been addressed at all by the school, by
3 faculty. Is there a policy in place that
4 they can be helpful for us to understand
5 what's really happening and then come
6 back for recommendations -- to the extent
7 you're comfortable.

8 MS. KRONENFELD: That's a good
9 question. Thank you.

10 You have touched upon the
11 modernization of our education about the
12 Holocaust and about antisemitism in
13 general. There was one day in my school
14 library where I was walking by and there
15 were a group of boys sitting at a table
16 talking about how "Kanye was right". And
17 the curriculum doesn't teach us about
18 these modern antisemitic comments and how
19 awful they are. We don't realize that one
20 comment can turn into something really
21 bad. Like I mentioned, the pyramid of
22 hate. These small casual comments are the
23 stepping stones to the awful acts of
24 violence and genocide. So that is one
25 thing that I heard.

1
2 So I do believe that modernizing the
3 curriculum of the Holocaust and
4 antisemitism in general, would help
5 students understand that these comments
6 also that helps to be brought forward by
7 social media are harmful and not any
8 better than acts of violence.

9 MR. MUSCAL: Absolutely.

10 I'd also like to add that when we
11 talked about antisemitism in the
12 committee with our superintendent,
13 something that our superintendent
14 discussed is that, incidents of
15 antisemitism that happened and how they
16 were dealt with.

17 There was an instance where a
18 swastika was drawn in an elementary
19 school and that was dealt with. There was
20 an instance, it was on social media that
21 was dealt with. But both of these were,
22 again, these casual and stereotypical
23 forms of antisemitism.

24 Personally, a lot of the type of
25 antisemitism I'm talking about also exist

1
2 outside of the school, with students,
3 with social media, and primarily on
4 social media. I've had a lot of these
5 interactions and messages not in person,
6 rather than being in school. And because
7 of that, it's a bit harder for schools to
8 address instances. It's not that they
9 can't be prevented with proper education.
10 I think that something that happens a lot
11 is that from a lot of accounts and people
12 online that can be comments that are
13 anti-Zionist and that say things like
14 Israel isn't a legitimate country and
15 refer to Jewish people in certain
16 pejorative terms. And when students
17 repost that, like that, or share that,
18 it's a bit harder for schools to crack
19 down.

20 RABBI WEINSTOCK: Thank you very
21 much.

22 We will move on to the people
23 interested in speaking. Just a reminder
24 we are trying to keep comments to a
25 concise three minutes as possible. We're

1
2 here to listen.

3 Echoing Avi's comment, if you are
4 speaking and can identify certain
5 examples and who they were dealt with,
6 that would be helpful for the task force.

7 We are going to hear from another
8 student, Sofie Glassman.

9 MS. GLASSMAN: Hello. My name is
10 Sofie Glassman and I'm a sophomore at East
11 Meadow High School.

12 Antisemitism is something that I've
13 experienced since the age of five when on
14 the school playground a girl told me that
15 I was not allowed to play with here
16 because I was Jewish.

17 More recently, since the beginning
18 of High School, antisemitism has been
19 something that I have faced almost daily.
20 In between classes, when I walk through
21 the hallways, comments are made such as:
22 Go back to Auschwitz, or burn in an oven,
23 or even up close saying go back to
24 Palestine, or free Palestine.

25 If an administrator notices and

1
2 decides to do something, which is not
3 always the case, they will simply just
4 tell the student to stop. While, those
5 comments are not being directed towards
6 me per say, they make me severely
7 uncomfortable.

8 Yesterday, I was informed that in
9 one of the boys bathrooms, there are
10 swastikas etched into a few of the
11 stalls. Those bathrooms have staff
12 entering them and they have not done
13 anything about it.

14 In November 2021, I was in the
15 school cafeteria eating lunch with a few
16 of my friends. Directly behind me, I
17 suddenly hear a voice loud and clear say
18 that they were going to burn someone in a
19 gas chamber. I was stunned to say the
20 least, and I immediately felt extremely
21 uncomfortable.

22 The next day, while in the
23 cafeteria, the same person and his
24 friends were surrounding someone's phone
25 watching a loud video. From what I heard,

1
2 it was a video of a bunch of Holocaust
3 and Jewish jokes. As a Jewish person, I
4 felt extremely unsafe. I immediately
5 texted my mom who called the school and
6 the next day I was sent down to talk to
7 an administrator at my school about what
8 was going on. She reassured me it would
9 be taken care of.

10 Days go by and I keep getting called
11 out by different school administrators to
12 discuss this issue. During these days, I
13 ate in the cafeteria near this group of
14 people that were continuously making
15 antisemitic jokes and comments to one
16 another. One of these days I heard them
17 talking about how they were going to
18 throw things at me until they could "knock
19 out" my Judaism. I had never even spoken
20 to this group of people before.

21 Once I heard them talking about me,
22 I immediately texted my mom again in a
23 panic. She called the school and demanded
24 to speak with the principal who told her
25 that they were already handling the

1
2 students and the issue, even though we
3 knew they weren't. My mom demanded that
4 the principal handle it right then in
5 that moment. He took the students and
6 questioned them. My parents then told
7 the principal that they were coming to
8 meet with him first thing he next Monday
9 morning.

10 At the meeting, he told them the
11 kids claimed they didn't do it, but will
12 be punished. From the start of the
13 initial comment to the date of the
14 punishment, it had been a full week that
15 I had to be antagonized by the same group
16 of people. I found out later that the
17 punishment was two days of in-school
18 suspension, which the kids got to spend
19 together in a room where they could fool
20 around.

21 In my opinion, this punishment was
22 not severe enough and this incident was
23 not taken as seriously as it should have
24 been. School is a place I am supposed to
25 feel the most safe in and feel supported

1
2 by the administration.

3 Thank you.

4 RABBI WEINSTOCK: Lisa Shubin.

5 MS. SHUBIN: Good evening. My name
6 is Lisa Shubin and I am member of the
7 elected executive and Board of Trustees
8 of Temple B'nai Torah, a reform
9 congregation in Wantagh and I am a
10 lifelong resident of East Meadow. My
11 rabbi, Daniel Bar-Nahum, could not join
12 this important meeting tonight, and so I
13 am here to offer the following remarks on
14 his behalf and on behalf of our community
15 and congregation. In his words:

16 First, let me thank this task force
17 for convening and for focusing on the
18 important issue of rising antisemitism
19 and anti-Jewish hatred in our world, our
20 nation and in our communities. As I am
21 sure most in this room know, the most
22 recent Anti-Defamation League statistics
23 about antisemitism are disconcerting, to
24 say the least.

25 According to their report detailing

1
2 2022 incidents, in 2022, ADL tabulated
3 3697 anti-Semitic incidents throughout
4 the United States. This is a 36% increase
5 from 2021 and the highest number on
6 record since ADL began tracking
7 anti-Semitic incidents in 1979. This is
8 the third time in the past five years
9 that the year end total has been the
10 highest number ever recorded.

11 In addition, incidents increased in
12 each of the major audit categories.
13 Antisemitic harassment increased 29% to
14 2298; antisemitic vandalism increased 51%
15 to 1288; and antisemitic assaults
16 increased 26% to 111. All of this is why
17 as a synagogue, we have panic buttons,
18 locked doors, security at major events,
19 the rave app that alerts the SWAT team
20 and why we rely on government funding to
21 harden our facility through state and
22 federal grants.

23 We understand we are a potential
24 target. The police understand this as
25 well, and we are grateful for their

1
2 constant presence and the excellent
3 relationship we have with our local
4 Nassau County Police Department.

5 I have anecdotally also recognized
6 the increase in antisemitism. In my 11
7 years of being a rabbi on Long Island, I
8 have dealt with an occasional issue in a
9 school often the result of kids pushing
10 boundaries more than any true animus
11 against the Jewish people. These issues,
12 even if not born of hatred, must still be
13 responded to since any allowance for this
14 behavior tells others that it is
15 permissible.

16 In previous years, I've been
17 informed of and responded to issues in
18 the East Meadow, Wantagh and Seaford
19 districts. Now, this is not to say or
20 suggest that these districts are
21 antisemitic or doing something to foment
22 these incidents. Each incident has always
23 been addressed by the schools in
24 appropriate ways. I have worked to be a
25 resource for principals and teachers and

1
2 to be a support for my young congregants
3 who don't understand why this hate exists
4 and their parents who moved to these
5 neighborhoods with the expectation that
6 their kids would be able to live free
7 from fear of being hated for being Jews.

8 Notwithstanding the above, I have
9 never had to juggle as many issues of
10 antisemitism at once as I am currently.
11 As a synagogue, we serve nine school
12 districts in our education program and
13 next year we expect that number to grow
14 to ten. We also serve folks from as far
15 as Long Beach.

16 Throughout this last year, I've
17 heard about incidents or issues at
18 schools in the Island Trees District,
19 Levittown District and East Meadow
20 District. What we are seeing is, I
21 believe, the result of national, state
22 and local politics and politicians who
23 have brought trafficking in biased hatred
24 and conspiracy from the fringe into the
25 mainstream. Words and actions that for

1
2 decades were understood by our society to
3 be beyond the pale of appropriateness
4 have now been given allowance and at the
5 highest levels.

6 Antisemitism is not just hatred
7 because of religious practice. It is also
8 a millennia old conspiracy theory which
9 posits that Jews have power that we use
10 to illicit untoward ends. As society
11 evolves, so too does antisemitism. Unless
12 and until leaders at all levels make it
13 clear that it will not be tolerated, it
14 will continue to plague our society.

15 Here are some more details for you
16 to understand what the Jewish community,
17 and in particular Jewish children are
18 dealing with in 2023. Please note that
19 these are only the incidents we know
20 about, the ADL Statistics, as these
21 stories I share are based on
22 self-reporting and, therefore, we know
23 that they under-represent what is
24 actually happening.

25 RABBI WEINSTOCK: If you could wrap

1
2 it up. You could also submit this.

3 MS. SHUBIN: Of special concern is
4 what happened at the East Meadow Board of
5 Education in March. This is most
6 concerning because unlike students who
7 may be parroting the adults around them
8 or acting out of ignorance, in this case,
9 we're talking about adults who know
10 exactly what they're saying and why. In
11 response to community pushback against
12 state mandated diversity education, the
13 school board in East Meadow has been
14 harassed and harangued, using vile
15 language and imagery both in person and
16 online. As two of our members serve on
17 the school board and as East Meadow was
18 one of our community's population
19 centers, I went to the meeting in March
20 as the rabbi to support my congregants
21 and offer perspectives that a community
22 which teaches diversity in whatever way
23 is a community that is safer for Jews and
24 all minorities. While I spoke during the
25 open commentary period at the end of the

1
2 meeting, having announced myself as a
3 rabbi, I was heckled, jeered and taunted
4 by many in attendance. They attempted to
5 overpower my statement with their
6 cacophony.

7 As I leaned into the microphone to
8 conclude my remarks, according to
9 multiple reports, antisemitic epithets
10 were hurled at me as well. Harassment
11 continued on social media even after the
12 meeting directed at me and at the members
13 of the Board of Ed. I can tell you that
14 this incident affected me deeply and for
15 many days I can only imagine what our
16 young people must be feeling when this
17 happens to them.

18 RABBI WEINSTOCK: As you finish, if
19 the Rabbi was here, he would be able to
20 share. You can submit that. I am
21 sympathetic to the Rabbi as they want to
22 say everything on their mind, but we
23 really need to try abide by the time
24 limit. Thank you very much. If you want
25 to pass it to us, we will share with the

1
2 committee.

3 Alan Skorski.

4 MR. YEVOLI: As the rabbi touched on
5 a point that I find very interesting and
6 I was looking at what occurred in the *New*
7 *York Post*, it's very simple. It says,
8 Representative Rashida Tlaib plans to
9 host an anti-Israel event marking the
10 75th anniversary of the so called
11 catastrophe resulting from the creation
12 of the state of Israel. That's an elected
13 official. Now, what message does that
14 send?

15 It's outrageous when you can be
16 allowed to stand on the floor of the
17 United States Congress, make statements
18 like this and no one takes you to task.
19 It's a major part of the problem we're
20 confronted with.

21 Thank you.

22 MR SKURSKI: Good evening, honorable
23 members of the Legislature and the task
24 force. I'm Alan Skorski. I'm a political
25 activist living in West Hempstead. I will

1
2 keep my 30 minutes speech down to three
3 minutes.

4 Something that's very important, and
5 I've been saying this for a long time,
6 it's very easy to condemn the easy
7 antisemitism. You can condemn the
8 swastika on the sidewalk, the vandalism
9 on a synagogue. Last year you remember
10 there was a woman who made a real big
11 mistake going to the Rockville Town
12 Center to make a speech about rabbis
13 coming to town and what the Jews were
14 going to do. And she was finished. I
15 mean, even Governor Hochul condemned her.
16 So that's easy.

17 But getting to the point that you
18 just made, and this is where the problem
19 lies, you can't condemn, you can't combat
20 antisemitism or any racism halfway. You
21 do it the whole way, or you don't.

22 Examples you just mentioned, when
23 Speaker McCarthy became the speaker, he
24 removed Ilhan Omar from the Foreign
25 Affairs Committee. Every single Democrat

1
2 opposed him, including many Jewish
3 Democrats.

4 Last week, Kevin McCarthy spoke at
5 the Knesset commemorating the 75th
6 anniversary of the state of Israel. And
7 as you just pointed out, Rashida Tlaib,
8 who, like Ilhan Omar, one of the most
9 antisemitic members of Congress, wanted
10 to hold an event commemorating the
11 catastrophe of the recognition of the
12 state of Israel. Kevin McCarthy again
13 said you're not doing it in this house.
14 She was moved to another chamber thanks
15 to Bernie Sanders. Again, not one
16 Democrat condemned it.

17 Ladies and gentlemen, if you're not
18 going to condemn antisemitism because
19 it's politically inexpedient, everything
20 else here is a waste of time. I've been
21 to so many rallies where people will say
22 antisemitism is bad and blacks and Jews
23 have had relationships for so many years.
24 That's all very generic. But it's easy if
25 you can't condemn the Linda Sarsours who

1
2 are active on college campuses with
3 Students for Justice in Palestine and the
4 antisemitism in academia and you're not
5 going to condemn Ilhan Omar and the squad
6 unless the Republicans agree to condemn
7 Marjorie Taylor Greene. This is not a
8 trade off, ladies and gentlemen. You're
9 either going to fight antisemitism
10 because it's the right thing to do or
11 we're just going to keep having these
12 events here and we'll just all
13 congratulate ourselves. Thank you.

14 RABBI WEINSTOCK: Helaine Kaish.

15 MS. KAISH: Hi. My name is Helaine
16 Kaish. I'm a proud Jew and was raised to
17 believe in acceptance. In fact, my
18 grandfather wrote a letter to Congress to
19 tell them basically to get their act
20 together and help work towards a more
21 peaceful world.

22 The 60's and the 70's were times
23 were it looked like peace and love were
24 on their way to a new level of reality.
25 My generation rejoiced, which is why it

1
2 is so incredulous to me that it's taken
3 such a turn in the opposite direction. I
4 don't understand it, but I'd like to help
5 change it.

6 I feel this change has to start at
7 the very beginning of our children's
8 education and should be taught with a
9 required curriculum starting in all
10 schools at the very beginning and
11 continuing right through high school.

12 When children meet on the
13 playground, if they're young enough,
14 there's nothing to keep them from
15 enjoying each other and having fun
16 together. If we could start them out that
17 people do have differences, but are also
18 very much alike, and if friendship and
19 acceptance is so much more fulfilling and
20 joyful than hate and fear, we'd be on our
21 way to a much happier country and world.
22 It would have to be a sharing of thoughts
23 and feelings throughout the many
24 disciplines that they are taught
25 throughout the day. It would be a rock

1
2 solid part of the curriculum, because if
3 our country doesn't get together and work
4 out its differences soon, the results can
5 be catastrophic and no literacy or math
6 or computer science will be able to fix
7 it.

8 All kinds of hate, whether it be
9 Holocaust denial, which is an alarmingly
10 high rate; Asian Muslim racial hate; hate
11 of indigenous people, the list goes on
12 and on; it's all got to be eliminated.

13 As an elementary school music
14 teacher, I worked in a vastly
15 multicultural school and experienced
16 xenophobia firsthand. I spent much time
17 teaching understanding with use of books,
18 discussions, songs and dances. I can tell
19 you that it works, but it must be taken
20 seriously. Thank you very much.

21 RABBI WEINSTOCK: Norm Kasch.

22 MR. KASCH: My name is Norm Kasch.
23 I'm the founder of the Wall of Tears.
24 We're a non-profit looking to build
25 memorials to the Holocaust in order to

1
2 teach students and the the public about
3 what hate, indifference and education can
4 make in a world we live in today.

5 I live in West Hempstead and I'm a
6 member of the community security service.
7 There are 13 members in our synagogue
8 that spend the entire Saturday during
9 services securing the facility against
10 antisemitism and hate. We have spent a
11 considerable amount of money on bullet
12 proof windows, locks, doors, cameras. And
13 this is the life that we live with today.

14 So I want to take just this moment
15 to thank you, folks. Thank the Task
16 Force and the Legislature for the support
17 and shining a light on this problem. I
18 also want to take a moment to thank the
19 Nassau County Police Department who has
20 been a tremendous amount of support for
21 us and has stood by us during incidents
22 during the last couple of years.

23 Thanks for the opportunity.

24 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Rabbi
25 Weinstock, I would be remiss if I did not

1
2 recognize my fellow colleagues on the
3 Legislature, Legislator Ford and
4 Legislator Mule. Legislator Lafazan is
5 recovering from surgery.

6 UNIDENTIFIED TASK MEMBER: Mr.
7 Kasch, you mentioned security issues with
8 windows, doors, etcetera. How are you
9 funding that?

10 MR. KASCH: We got grants for all of
11 the work that was done. A significant
12 amount of financial support through the
13 State and Federal Government Homeland
14 Security Grants. They made it available
15 to just about every religious institution
16 in the country. So we've taken advantage
17 of it several times.

18 UNIDENTIFIED TASK MEMBER: Has that
19 been your experience with other --

20 MR. KASCH: Every one of them have
21 taken advantage of these grants.

22 UNIDENTIFIED TASK MEMBER: Do you
23 believe that a task force such as ours
24 should look to expand upon that for
25 modernization purposes? Do you have any

1
2 insight on that considering the fact that
3 you have this experience?

4 MR. KASCH: I can speak for my own
5 particular synagogue. I think we've been
6 adequately funded. We have put up our own
7 money as well, so I think most of our
8 needs have been taken care of.

9 I have no doubt there are smaller
10 synagogues that are not understanding the
11 process, which is extensive to file for
12 those grants. There are professionals
13 out there that help people file for the
14 grants. I think to the extent that you
15 could make that public and available to
16 people, it would be helpful.

17 UNIDENTIFIED TASK MEMBER: Thank
18 you.

19 MR. KASCH: Thank you.

20 RABBI WEINSTOCK: Elizabeth Kahn.

21 MS. KAHN: I just want to thank you
22 for letting me speak. I know I was not on
23 your calendar.

24 Before I introduce myself, I would
25 like to commend the students who spoke

1
2 tonight. You are very brave. I cannot
3 Imagine what it is like. I cannot imagine
4 what it is like to go to school and be
5 afraid on daily basis because you are
6 Jewish.

7 My name is Elizabeth Kahn. I'm the
8 director of Institutional advancement at
9 the Schechter School of Long Island. I'm
10 a lifelong Long Islander. I am a graduate
11 of a day school, which is not a yeshiva
12 but a conservative educational
13 institution. I am a parent of day school
14 graduates and now I'm an administrator at
15 a day school.

16 We did not even know this new task
17 force exists. We did not know about this
18 meeting tonight. We heard it through a
19 back channel two days ago or else we
20 would have had this whole room filled up
21 with our high school. Very disappointing.
22 And I think that's part of the problem,
23 is that the word is not out there.

24 I can tell you that our kids in our
25 school can stand up for antisemitism.

1
2 They find it. They need it all the time
3 on the ball field when they're playing
4 hockey. They know how to stand up for
5 themselves and nobody can push them
6 around because they have a very strong
7 background.

8 Hate is learned. It is taught in the
9 home; it is learned in the home. It is
10 taught that it is okay. Antisemitic acts
11 that go on, whether they be overt or
12 sublime are tolerated every single day.
13 Nobody is outraged. Nobody is screaming
14 and banging on the floor and banging on
15 the tables. We should be here outraged
16 screaming on the tables.

17 Let's even talk about the security
18 grants. What Mr. Kasch did not say is
19 that you have to lay the money out for
20 those grants before you can get
21 reimbursed from the state. So in order
22 for us at the Schechter School to
23 reinforce our windows and to reinforce
24 our doors, we have to lay out that
25 \$250,000, prove to the State we made the

1
2 improvements, and to the Federal
3 Government, and then filed to get the
4 money back. That is a very difficult
5 thing for us to do.

6 You come to us, we will help you be
7 part of the solution. Our kids will be
8 part of the solution. Come to us as a
9 school, we will work with you. This is
10 what we do with our kids. We educate
11 them. Secular education, Jewish
12 education, to be proud of who they are.
13 They're proud Americans. They're proud
14 Jews. And they will happily be a part of
15 your solution.

16 Thank you.

17 RABBI WEINSTOCK: Thank you for all
18 that have commented. This is the end of
19 our list. I would be remiss if I didn't
20 ask our Legislators if they wish to
21 comment and members as well. Obviously,
22 we are not going to be able to respond
23 and solve, but I know for myself, it's
24 been very helpful to hear some of the
25 pain, passion, and resolve shown.

1
2 We have one more speaker, Judy
3 Lyman.

4 MS. LYMAN: Hi, I'm Judy Lyman, and
5 I'm on the board of the Holocaust
6 Memorial and Tolerance Center of Nassau
7 County.

8 I just want to thank you all for
9 organizing this task force. It's very
10 important and the word will get out that
11 you all are paying attention to what is
12 going on. So thank you very much.

13 I just wanted to say, for people who
14 do not know, believe it or not, I can't
15 believe I'm saying this, that the
16 Holocaust was the systematic, state
17 sponsored persecution and murder of six
18 million Jews by the Nazi regime and its
19 allies and collaborators. I only say
20 it -- I know that everybody knows it
21 here, but I'm saying it for people who do
22 not that happen to be here tonight. And
23 that's the problem. People do not know,
24 here in in the United States of America
25 that this is the case.

1
2 The Holocaust Memorial and Tolerance
3 Center of Nassau County teaches thousands
4 of students and adults each year about
5 unchecked hatred and the need to prevent
6 genocide. We are located in Glen Cove,
7 New York. I invite everyone here to visit
8 the center. Please tell your friends,
9 your children and grandchildren, to call
10 your boards of education your PTOs and
11 tell them like Schechter representative
12 said, we need to pound, pound, pound and
13 say we want and deserve the education.

14 So I suggest you visit the center
15 and we're on double and triple time to
16 teach kids about unchecked hatred. It is
17 the education that will end hatred. It is
18 us speaking up here and in our
19 communities to ask for this education. So
20 thank you very much for having this and I
21 appreciate -- we have been in touch with
22 each other, but I appreciate all that you
23 do.

24 Thank you.

25 LEGISLATOR KOPEL: First, I want to

1
2 thank Legislator Drucker for pushing this
3 concept and shepherding it to fruition
4 here.

5 A lot of you touched several chords
6 within me. Based on my own experience
7 when I was in elementary school -- I'm a
8 yeshiva graduate. I do recall way back
9 when literally having kids from the
10 public school down the street lie in wait
11 and having to fight our way home, very
12 often it happened. It happened all too
13 often. But there's a common denominator
14 here. It's kids don't understand. Kids do
15 not understand. And everyone's pushing
16 the whole concept of education.

17 Much later when I was in law school,
18 and we're talking, I'll say 50 years ago,
19 give or take, someone who is a guest in
20 my home, in my home, eating our food for
21 dinner, made a joke. A Holocaust joke.
22 When I looked horrified, he was genuinely
23 surprised; he didn't get it. He didn't.
24 The man was not an antisemite. He just
25 did not get it. He did not understand

1
2 that this was something that was hurtful,
3 especially back then. We were talking
4 about 20 some years after the Holocaust.
5 We're not almost 80 years removed as we
6 are now. Many, many people were still
7 within living memory. My in-laws, my
8 wife was there. My in-laws were
9 survivors.

10 So as everybody said, it's kids,
11 kids who are doing stupid kids tricks.
12 They're painting swastikas on walls
13 because that's the kind of thing that
14 kids do and they don't understand. And of
15 course, kids are not born as antisemites
16 or anti anything for that matter. They
17 they hear it, they learn it and they
18 absorb it. And you're not going to teach
19 their parents, I don't think. You're not
20 going to re-educate people once they're
21 adults, for the most part. That you're
22 talking about deterrence. But with kids,
23 you're talking about education and they
24 can be changed and they can be taught.
25 And I think that's basically the theme

1
2 that I've heard from from just about
3 everyone here. And I think that's what
4 it's brought out.

5 And once again, I thank you,
6 Legislator Drucker.

7 MR. YEVOLI: I'm going to try to be
8 as brief as I possibly can. And I'm not
9 known for an individual who doesn't speak
10 for a long time. So I will apologize very
11 quickly.

12 Number one, I'm a believer in
13 accountability. And that may sound harsh,
14 but you learn this hatred somewhere.
15 There has to be some accountability. I
16 understand if you're a student in high
17 school, maybe you're not subjected to
18 everything that I think should be done.
19 But again, your hatred began somewhere.

20 Now, whether you're going to deface
21 the crucifix, whether you're going to put
22 a swastika on the side of a synagogue or
23 even scribbling somewhere on a mosque,
24 it's a crime of hate. You have to be held
25 accountable. You have to change the way

1
2 the existing law exists.

3 Now, if it's not going to be the
4 children, certainly when you're an adult,
5 you know better. Let's be candid about
6 it. You're not going to be able to do
7 this by simply saying, well, you're going
8 to go to class and we're going to talk to
9 you for the next two days of how you
10 shouldn't hate someone. That's wonderful
11 in a world that doesn't really exist. The
12 real world is tough. It's cruel. And you
13 have to begin to fight these things the
14 same way. If you're going to be a mamby
15 pamby about it, it's not going to change
16 a thing.

17 And believe me, I have the greatest
18 deal of respect for the individuals who
19 serve on this committee, starting with
20 Legislator Drucker and Rabbi Weinstock, I
21 mean, they give an awful lot of time into
22 trying to get to the bottom of this
23 problem. But I am going to be working,
24 ironically, with the County Executive on
25 things that are going to increase the

1
2 current laws. I think that's critical. I
3 think when you start to get the message
4 that if you're going to paint the
5 swastika on the side of a synagogue,
6 what's going to happen? You're not just
7 going to go to class and say, oh, it's
8 something you shouldn't do. No, it's got
9 to be more than that. You have to be held
10 accountable. You want to have that
11 swastika removed? Well, there's going to
12 be a penalty with that. And it's going to
13 be more than two days in a classroom
14 telling you you shouldn't hate anybody.

15 And maybe if you start with damages
16 that have to be paid to have that
17 swastika removed, then the parents of
18 those children will have to say, we're
19 not going to allow little Jimmy to do
20 anything like this. And going to say the
21 same thing to the school boards as well.
22 I'm not criticizing the school boards.
23 I'm sure they do everything they can at
24 their disposal to try to overcome this
25 problem.

1
2 But, you know, we can go to meeting,
3 after meeting, after meeting, after
4 meeting. If you don't confront the
5 problem head on, change the way things
6 are being done, we're not really going to
7 solve anything. And there's not a member
8 of this committee who doesn't want this
9 situation resolved as best we can.

10 Now, we're not going to stamp out
11 antisemitism. It's existed for thousands
12 of years. It never should have started,
13 but it did. And we're living with it in
14 the aftermath.

15 Yeah, there are individuals who
16 don't believe there was a holocaust. How
17 is that humanly possible? I mean, you're
18 refuting everything that you know,
19 everything you see on television. Makes
20 no sense, but they absolutely believe
21 there was not a Holocaust. It was all
22 made up, by who? I mean, we're in insane
23 times.

24 I'm going to close on this note, and
25 I apologize for taking this much time.

1
2 You've got to hold the elected officials
3 also responsible for their actions. When
4 you're allowed to stand up on the floor
5 of the United States Congress and espouse
6 antisemitism and espouse hatred for
7 Israel and then espouse hatred for the
8 country that elected you to the office
9 that you have, you can't get away with
10 that. There has to be censure. There has
11 to be a price that's paid for that. I'm
12 sorry.

13 You know, maybe I'm a bit of a
14 radical in that regard, but I believe in
15 accountability. I always did. It's the
16 way I was brought up. And maybe that's
17 not part of the problem, but it's part of
18 my DNA. You couldn't do these things. My
19 parents said no. If you to make a remark
20 about someone, you're not allowed to do
21 that. And I'm sorry to go on and on, but
22 I really feel very strongly about this. I
23 honestly do.

24 Thank everybody for coming. Thank
25 the members of this board, because this

1
2 is truthfully a job that is one that we
3 we do because we want to do it. And I
4 think that's a credit to this board and
5 everybody on it.

6 Thank you very much. Sorry I went on
7 as long as I did.

8 LEGISLATOR FORD: Good evening. I,
9 too want to thank Legislator Arnie
10 Drucker for spearheading this committee
11 and this movement to help us learn about
12 antisemitism and to help combat it and to
13 eradicate it. And I do want to extend my
14 gratitude to Legislator Mazi Pilip for
15 putting this hearing together and
16 continuing to make sure that we become
17 educated and aware of this issue and as
18 well as Legislator John Giuffre, who have
19 all been partners.

20 For me, I have to say that I commend
21 all the speakers and yes, especially the
22 students. It is very, very heartbreaking
23 to hear about their experiences. They go
24 to school to learn. It's a social time
25 where you can have fun with your friends.

1
2 You can have maybe to a certain degree, a
3 carefree day, especially when there's no
4 tests. But then to be subjected to such
5 hateful words, such demeaning words to
6 me, this just cannot be tolerated. And I
7 think that we need to address this at a
8 very, very, very young level.

9 I grew up in Queens. I am a product
10 of 12 years of Catholic school, parochial
11 school. But our neighborhood, and
12 especially our block was a mixture
13 between Christians and Jews. So as
14 children, we learned early on, as we
15 played together, we shared our interests.
16 Yes, sometimes we fought, but most times
17 we really had like a lot of fun going to
18 one another's houses, having lunch,
19 cookies, whatever. So there was always
20 that sense of unity, community,
21 regardless of if the child went to a
22 Catholic school or if somebody went to a
23 public school. And I think that that is
24 very, very important that all children
25 learn no matter where they go to school,

1
2 whatever religion you practice, that
3 we're all one people and we should all be
4 treated with equal respect and
5 compassion.

6 For me, I never realized. As a
7 Catholic, I did not grow up with this
8 type of hatred aimed at me. But I
9 remember talking to my friend Fran, who
10 lived across the street from us and she
11 was telling us how her cousin went to
12 school out west and he was very horrified
13 because one of the students came over to
14 him and started rubbing his head. So he
15 was like, what are you looking for? And
16 the student, the fellow student said, I
17 was looking for your horns because I
18 heard that Jews were a product of the
19 devil. So that to me was something as a
20 young woman, young student, that to hear
21 something like that, that could be said
22 to another individual or that belief was
23 beyond. I just couldn't understand it.

24 So I think that, yes, maybe we
25 should take the message that we had when

1
2 we started in the 60s and 70s of unity,
3 the summer of love, this feeling of
4 acceptance and learning about what had
5 happened in the past that, I think that
6 we need to really work upon this even
7 more.

8 I'm going to close with this. I had
9 the opportunity of visiting Dachau, and
10 to me it was one of the most unbelievable
11 experiences. I believe, especially for
12 those who want to deny the Holocaust, I
13 would mandate that each and every single
14 individual who wants to say it didn't
15 happen, walk on those hallowed grounds
16 and really feel the lives lost that are
17 there. And to know that you truly, truly
18 sense what happened there. And I think
19 that that will change their mind and
20 maybe they, too, will then help eradicate
21 this curse of antisemitism.

22 But I thank everybody here and we
23 will continue this work. And I think
24 that, everybody, we need to be sometimes
25 maybe a little bit more vocal and more

1
2 forceful.

3 Thank you.

4 MR. POSNICK: I want to ask one
5 quick question. And this is actually a
6 question to Sofie, who was here before us
7 since we talked about the importance of
8 having consequences. Just to have this on
9 the record. You had mentioned that to
10 your knowledge, the incidents that took
11 place, the swastikas, the remarks and
12 things that were being said, there have
13 been very little, if any, consequences
14 towards the alleged students who did
15 this.

16 MS. GLASSMAN: Yes. The swastikas,
17 I actually heard about that yesterday
18 from I was telling people that I was
19 coming here to speak, which, by the way,
20 I found out about this event 36 hours
21 before it happened. Basically, they told
22 me that there were swastikas in the
23 school bathroom and they had brought it
24 to the attention of some administrators
25 at my school. And they said, oh, we can't

1
2 do anything about it. It's etched into
3 the stalls. And then the comments that
4 are made every single day toward me. If
5 an administrator hears that, they're just
6 like, hey, knock it off or they or they
7 don't say anything to the people, they're
8 just like they rolled their eyes or
9 whatever. Walk away.

10 But the specific incident that
11 happened to me, the kids, they got
12 suspended for two days. It was a group of
13 five of them and all that. They put them
14 in a room together for two days, to my
15 knowledge. In-school suspension, where
16 they could talk to each other and just
17 hang out for two days. And those kids,
18 yeah, they hated all groups of people.
19 But yeah.

20 MR. POSNICK: So before you leave
21 tonight, please make sure to talk. I want
22 to get our legal team to work with you.

23 MS. GLASSMAN: Oh, really? Thank
24 you.

25 LEGISLATOR PILIP: Hello, everyone.

1
2 Thank you so much for all of you for
3 coming here. But I also would like really
4 to thank the students, really for your
5 bravery to come here in front of us and
6 telling us your experience. Thank you so
7 much.

8 Sofie, you really broke my heart as
9 a mother, as a person of color; this is
10 unacceptable. If I know my children will
11 go through something like this that you
12 are going through. This is absolutely
13 unacceptable. The school has to do a
14 better job to make sure something like
15 this never going to happen. And I promise
16 you, this committee, we're going to get
17 together, we're going to be with you and
18 we're going to fight together.

19 Thank you.

20 MS. PERLMUTTER: I'm Mindy
21 Perlmutter. I'm the executive director of
22 the Jewish Community Relations Council.

23 A few of you mentioned the securing
24 of a building for safety purposes. I just
25 want to make sure everyone here has this

1
2 knowledge and you can pass it along to
3 others as well.

4 Through my organization, we have a
5 program called the Community Security
6 Initiative. Members of that program go
7 out to whether it be synagogues, we've
8 actually expanded it to various places of
9 worship, day schools, JCCs, and we'll do
10 an assessment of your building and they
11 will help you with the grant writing for
12 getting better security for your
13 building. So I just want to make sure
14 that you are aware that we do that.

15 You do need an assessment for those
16 grants. And I will tell you, while we
17 definitely do that, I want to also
18 mention the Nassau County Police
19 Department does that as well. Those are
20 always free of charge. So I just want to
21 make sure that you are aware of that as
22 well. Every year they will come up. So
23 it's not too late to start with next year
24 and that way that the security can start.
25 These grants do take a long time to

1
2 write. So it's not like you're going to
3 do this in one day and in the next day
4 you'll get the money. The grants come
5 out usually on a yearly basis. It's
6 depending on where the budget goes. But
7 this year there was a tremendous amount
8 of money actually put in because of the
9 level that we're seeing with
10 antisemitism.

11 And I just want to make sure that
12 you're aware, if you didn't get them this
13 year, they're going to hopefully be
14 available again next year as well. But
15 even if it's not about a grant, please
16 know it's not always money that's needed
17 to secure a building. Sometimes the
18 simplest things that a person may not
19 realize. You bring in a security expert,
20 whether it be the Nassau County PD,
21 whether it be someone like my security
22 personnel, and they will show you just
23 various small things. And sometimes a
24 lock or something might be changed, which
25 doesn't cost a tremendous amount of money

1
2 at all. Please use your resources that
3 are available to you.

4 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Mindy, what
5 website can people go to?

6 MS. PERLMUTTER: So I will say,
7 please, as I said, I'm the Jewish
8 Community Relations Council. So if you
9 went on my website, it's JCRCLI.Org. You
10 can also, if anyone wants to come up to
11 me afterwards, I will give you my card
12 and you can reach out to me personally.

13 LEGISLATOR MULE: Do we have a way
14 of posting all of this information so
15 that people have access to that? Is
16 there a site on on the County page for
17 this task force?

18 RABBI WEINSTOCK: Not yet.

19 LEGISLATOR MULE: Okay. So we'll be
20 working on that, right? It would be a
21 good way to disseminate the information.

22 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Legislator
23 Philip put something out that was very,
24 very helpful. You put the notice of this
25 meeting out?

1

LEGISLATOR PILIP: We did.

2

3

LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: We have to do something so that it's a little bit more comprehensive.

4

5

6

LEGISLATOR PILIP: Will do.

7

Absolutely.

8

9

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11

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18

MR. CUSHING: Mr. Chairman, as the representative of the County from the County Executive's office, I will bring that to the County Executive's attention, and I'll see if we can make sure that all that information is put up in a timely manner so that people will be able to connect to those particular links.

19

20

21

22

23

24

25

At the same time, I'd like to thank everybody who testified, especially the young people.

One of the words that was used today is something that's used quite a bit. I write for *The Times of Israel* on antisemitism and the two young people as well as Yoav and Caroline. Normalization. Normalization. And that's a problem because once it's normalized and it's

1
2 accepted, there's no penalty. People
3 don't understand the severity. So I
4 believe that that's a very important word
5 in the vocabulary of Jew hatred, because
6 once it's mainstream and once a person
7 like Kanye West puts it up on Twitter and
8 that, therefore, it's retweeted, it's
9 somehow okay and it's not okay.

10 So, quite frankly, the young
11 people's testimony today was very
12 powerful because you used something that,
13 quite frankly, some of us older folk
14 don't quite realize, and that is we hear
15 about it through word of mouth. You do it
16 by scrolling, by tapping the like, by
17 retweeting, by reposting. So once we go
18 after normalization and explain how
19 severe it is, I think that that's a very
20 positive step in the right direction and
21 going after those social media platforms
22 that allow the normalization of this to
23 happen.

24 So thank you very, very much.

25 MR. WIESENFELD: When my colleague

1
2 earlier spoke about accountability and
3 also when Legislator Kopel brought up a
4 memory. I want to share with you one
5 memory for a particular reason. I want to
6 show you what happens when there is no
7 accountability when elected officials are
8 not held responsible for countenancing
9 antisemitism, when school administrators
10 are not held accountable, when
11 superintendents are not held accountable,
12 when all of those who are in charge are
13 not held accountable, what you get is
14 what my friends and I did many years ago.

15 It was 1975 at Queens College. Many
16 of you may remember after the Yom Kippur
17 War, if you lived in the city, not out
18 here unless you saw it out here, too. I
19 don't know. There appeared posters and
20 bumper stickers anonymously all over the
21 city: "We need oil, not Jews". Because of
22 Israel's late victory in the Yom Kippur
23 War, after she was almost conquered the
24 Arab oil embargo was used as a vehicle
25 for antisemitism. And so a few friends of

1
2 mine were in the Jewish Student Union,
3 which was housed in the student union
4 building on Kissena Boulevard in Queens.
5 And we had a meeting, we were planning an
6 event. I don't even remember what the
7 event was. And there were three of us
8 left at the end and we came out of the
9 building and we see in the distance --
10 it's not important what they were -- but
11 ostensibly Middle Eastern appearing young
12 people were placing stickers on the
13 lampposts that go down to Kissena
14 Boulevard. We didn't give it any thought
15 and they left. There was a parking area
16 on Melbourne Avenue where students
17 parked. There were four of them, three of
18 us. And as we passed the lamppost, lo and
19 behold, "We need oil, not Jews".

20 So I'm not going to censor myself.
21 The three of us versus the four of them.
22 We went around the corner as they got
23 into the car. They didn't get into the
24 car. We beat the shit out of them. Excuse
25 me. And they struggled to get into the

1
2 car and depart.

3 And the reason I tell this story is
4 because there really was no one to speak
5 to. And this was more acceptable behavior
6 40, 50 years ago. And that's what happens
7 when you don't have accountability, you
8 get vigilante justice. I certainly felt
9 well, I don't think I would have felt as
10 as good as if an administrator had taken
11 action. But the point I'm making is when
12 society does not have accountability, it
13 breaks down and it gets very bad.

14 When the German law broke down and
15 the Nazis came to power, the Jews had no
16 recourse. All they could do was try to
17 escape or resist. But the resistance was
18 often, as you know, from the Warsaw
19 ghetto, futile in the end. So that's why
20 I think the most potent comment from my
21 personal point of view was that made by
22 my colleague regarding accountability.

23 LEGISLATOR GIUFFRE: So I want to
24 thank my colleague, Arnie Drucker, but in
25 particular, though, Legislator Pilip, for

1
2 all that she did putting our task force
3 together, helping it get off the ground.
4 You all worked very hard to do that.

5 One phone number for you: The
6 Nassau County Police Department will
7 conduct a safety assessment of your
8 facility. The number is (516) 573-9788.
9 So if you'd like your schule or any other
10 business to to be professionally assessed
11 for safety concerns.

12 I wanted to join the task force
13 because not being Jewish, there has
14 always been a special place in my heart
15 for the Jewish people. I grew up in
16 Flushing. I was born in Brooklyn. I grew
17 up in Flatbush, no less. But I was raised
18 in Flushing and we were in a mixed
19 neighborhood. And we had neighbors who
20 lived across the street that my parents
21 were very close with. They were a Jewish
22 couple, a few years older, and we called
23 them aunt and uncle. And that early
24 experience in living in a mixed
25 neighborhood taught me a lot.

1
2 And then when I was in school,
3 especially in middle school, we had kids
4 coming from Bay Terrace and Bayside, and
5 that's where I had some of my closest
6 friends, Danny Wideman (phonetic) and
7 Mitchell Feig (phonetic) and others, and
8 the rise in antisemitism was a concern.

9 And the value of the task force is
10 what we're doing right now because it is
11 the conversations that we have. The
12 conversation that I have with Norm -- I
13 had coffee with Norm before we came here,
14 so thank you for that, Norm. The
15 conversations that we have are not part
16 of our relationship. The conversation is
17 the relationship. And so to be able to
18 have a conversation so that we can
19 understand one another and understand the
20 concerns.

21 Sofie, my heart broke with some of
22 the stories you were telling. I was
23 shocked actually, that you have to go
24 through that today, should not be. But
25 the value of the task force lies in the

1
2 fact that we can have the conversation,
3 and that we can have the relationship,
4 and that we can set boundaries as to what
5 is acceptable and unacceptable behavior
6 words in a civilized society.

7 And so I'd like to thank all of my
8 colleagues on the Legislature,
9 particularly Legislator Ford, who I have
10 a special place in my heart for. We will
11 miss you.

12 Anyway, thank you.

13 DR. PIZZO: Hi. My name is Dr.
14 Patrick Pizzo.

15 I think a big part of the problem
16 that we're trying to take on here is
17 people who can maybe make a difference,
18 staying silent. I can't sit here and stay
19 silent because I'm a member of the East
20 Meadow community, I'm an administrator in
21 East Meadow, and I'm absolutely appalled
22 by some of the things that have gone on
23 and I will not sit here and silence.

24 Some of the things that I've been
25 doing, I'm the education chair of the

1
2 Hempstead branch of the NAACP. I'm also
3 the president of Equity for Long Island
4 Youth. And I'm also very proud to be a
5 member of this task force.

6 All of these issues related to hate,
7 I think, are all interconnected. We're in
8 a terrible time, but people need to stand
9 up and not be quiet and not wait for
10 somebody else to speak up.

11 We have a great deal of good people
12 in East Meadow, many more than the people
13 who hate. But we need to have the people
14 who are good, who are looking to do the
15 right thing to stand up collectively. And
16 I just want to let everyone know here on
17 this committee that I pledge to do
18 everything I can to make East Meadow into
19 the place that it traditionally has been
20 and will be again.

21 Thank you.

22 RABBI WEINSTOCK: Please go up to
23 the microphone. And your name, please.

24 MS. DECKER: I'm Leslie Decker. I'm
25 a co-chair of ADL, Long Island activist

1
2 group.

3 We just got word of this meeting two
4 days ago. Perfunctorily. I mean, we
5 nobody knew about this. So what I would
6 like to say is, I love what I hear here
7 tonight, and I hope that you'll be more
8 vocal and more visible. Because as
9 somebody said before, the lady from
10 Schechter School, that if the wider
11 community knew about this meeting
12 tonight, you would have had this room
13 packed. If this message went out to
14 synagogues, to all kinds of groups. There
15 are many activist groups on the island
16 very concerned about these issues. And
17 you have a handful of people here whose
18 stories are all very relevant and very
19 terrific. But I'd love to see you come
20 forward and notify Long Island what
21 you're doing, because it's a great job
22 you're doing. But you could have so many
23 hundreds of people behind you and
24 widening the scope of this.

25 So this is a great beginning, but

1
2 I'd love to see you use various ways to
3 get the message out there in any way you
4 can. So that's all I want to say.

5 RABBI WEINSTOCK: Thank you. And
6 duly noted.

7 LEGISLATOR DRUCKER: Rabbi
8 Weinstock, I would just like to say that
9 based on the comments we're hearing
10 tonight, I think it's imperative and it's
11 behooves us to try to do another public
12 public hearing or at least another 1 or 2
13 of them. At this time, I think we can
14 learn from the comments here to get the
15 word out so that we can have a wider
16 range of people who want to participate
17 in this.

18 So I think, as I said in the
19 beginning of my comments, the impetus for
20 my introducing this legislation was to
21 get at the root cause of the hatred, the
22 Jew hatred, and the way to get to it is
23 learning about it from the community,
24 learning about it from our kids, from the
25 residents that we have here. So I think

1
2 we should endeavor to do that again and
3 this time try to be a little bit more
4 successful in getting it out there,
5 getting the word out there.

6 Thank you, Rabbi.

7 RABBI WEINSTOCK: A perfect closing
8 sentiment that as the Mishnah Jewish
9 Talmud teaches, that the day is short and
10 the work is long. We have not yet begun
11 to fight and our work will continue. I
12 thank all of you for coming, all of those
13 who spoke, my colleagues on the task
14 force. And we endeavor to carry this
15 forward and move forward in addressing
16 this issue with the comments we're
17 hearing and the work that we'll be doing.

18 Thank you, everyone, and good night.

19
20 (Whereupon, above matter
21 concludes, 7:34 p.m.)
22
23
24
25

C E R T I F I C A T E

STATE OF NEW YORK)
 : SS.:
COUNTY OF NASSAU)

I, KAREN LORENZO, a Notary Public for and
within the State of New York, do hereby
certify:

That the above is a correct transcription
of my stenographic notes.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set
my hand this 11th day of May, 2023.

Karen Lorenzo
KAREN LORENZO

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