



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Michael Gianaris

Senate Deputy Leader Gianaris, Assembly Member Hevesi, And Over 80 State Legislators Call For Doubling Security Funding At Jewish, Muslim Schools In Response To Escalating Hate Across New York

MICHAEL GIANARIS November 7, 2023

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In Letters to Governor Hochul, The Two Legislators Lead Their Colleagues Asking for \$90 Million in School Safety Grants for Non-Public Schools

QUEENS, N.Y. – Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris and Assembly Member Andrew Hevesi released a pair of letters today calling on Governor Kathy Hochul to double security

funding for non-public schools across New York. The letters, which urge the Governor to include \$90 million in school security grants in her next budget proposal, were signed by more than 80 other state legislators, including a bipartisan majority of the State Senate.

Senator Gianaris' letter can be read [here](#); Assembly Member Hevesi's can be read [here](#).

Photos of today's press conference are [available here](#).

"Amid rising hate and division fueled by world events, every New Yorker deserves the state's commitment to their safety – especially children in our schools," said **Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris**. "We must combat the increasing dual threats of Antisemitism and Islamophobia spreading around the globe by ensuring the security needs of these schools within our borders are met."

"The attack on Israel on October 7th and the events that have unfolded since, both internationally and domestically, require that we use every available resource to protect Jewish and Muslim communities that have been faced with an increased threat of attacks and extremist hate-crimes. To that end we are requesting an increase to \$90million for the Nonpublic School Safety Equipment (NPSE) Grant funding. I am grateful to Senator Gianaris for his partnership in leading this effort and to every member of the legislature that has signed on in support," said **Assembly Member Andrew Hevesi**

The Nonpublic School Safety Equipment (NPSE) grant program, a streamlined grant for nonpublic school safety and security equipment. That allocation translates into roughly \$100 per pupil. The program was started in the FY 2013-14 budget, originally at \$5 million. It was increased to \$15 million in 2016. Last year, the state budget included \$45 million in security grants for non-public, religious schools. Senator Gianaris and Assembly Member Hevesi are looking to increase that amount to \$90 million and have asked Governor Hochul to include that amount in her budget proposal for next year.

Across New York, there are more than 1,400 nonpublic schools serving 400,000 students – or approximately 15% of the state's student population. 82% of this funding went to religious schools, and 17% was awarded to independent schools.

Maury Litwack, Founder of the Teach Coalition, which advocates for government funding and resources for nonpublic schools, said, "With antisemitism and hate on the rise, many yeshivas and Jewish day schools are being forced to pay out of pocket for additional security measures to ensure our children can continue to learn in safety. This is unsustainable and unfair situation, as families and schools are now supplementing the high cost of these patrols and guards. We at Teach NYS applaud Deputy Majority Leader Michael Gianaris, Assembly Member Andrew Hevesi, and all those who signed their letters, for taking the lead on this important initiative to protect our students."

Imani Moore of the Razi School said, "Just a few weeks ago, we had a student verbally and physically attacked outside our school. These threats and feelings of hate against our community, and others faith-based communities, are real, and this funding will go a long way to ensure we can continue to safely educate our children."

Rabbi Baruch Rothman of Yeshiva Darchei Torah, said "Since the attacks on Oct 7, the issue of security has been heightened by rising antisemitism that has since swept the globe. With the safety of our students our number one concern, we have been forced to implement additional security measures, putting an added burden on our families and our school to supplement these high costs. We thank Deputy Majority Leader Michael Gianaris and Assembly Member Andrew Hevesi, and all those who signed the letter, for their support and understanding during this uncertain time."