



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Simcha Felder

## Felder Fights to Protect Yeshivas Amid Alarming Rise in Anti-Semitism

SIMCHA FELDER November 8, 2023



Applauding Early Release of \$45 Million School Safety Funding, Felder Continues Pushing for Increase to \$90 Million

One month after the devastating October 7th attack on Israel by Hamas terrorists raised security risks for Jewish institutions across the globe, the NYS Education Department announced yesterday, Tuesday, November 7, that \$45 million for Non-Public School Safety Equipment (NPSE) will be released for immediate distribution, six months early. Senator Simcha Felder, together with Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins, Senator

Shelley Mayer, Chair of the NYS Senate Education Committee, and other Majority colleagues had been pushing for weeks to address Jewish schools' urgent need to quickly bolster security.

The \$45 million of funds allocated for private school safety equipment was increased from \$15 million in last year's NYS budget to improve security measures at religious schools in recognition of the precipitous rise of antisemitic incidents. Funds from the 2023-24 budget were scheduled to be available beginning in April 2024, for schools to apply for as reimbursement. With this announcement, schools will now be able to apply for the funds immediately.

With Israel thrust into war with Hamas, the risk to Jewish institutions rose exponentially, prompting Senator Felder to join with Deputy majority Leader Senator Michael Giannaris, to also push for an increase in funding available this year from \$45 million to \$90 million.

Senator Simcha Felder said, "No price is too high when we are talking about protecting children. Safety and security is our top priority! Every yeshiva and Jewish school must have the funds necessary to ensure that to the best of their human ability every student, rebbe and teacher is safe at school and return home to their family at the end of the day."

Senate Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins said, "We stand united in our commitment to ensuring the safety of all students in New York State. I am glad my conference was able to play a crucial role in the early release of \$45 million in funds for non-public schools. This is a crucial step in addressing the concerning rise in anti-Semitism and anti-Islamic threats. We believe in the importance of protecting all religious and independent institutions, fostering a safe and inclusive educational environment for all our children."

Senate Deputy Leader Michael Gianaris said, “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. 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.”

Maury Litwack, Managing Director of the Orthodox Union & Founder, Teach Coalition, said, “This is an important step towards meeting the urgent needs of our Jewish Day School community, which is incurring substantial unanticipated costs simply to ensure that students, staff and families are safe. I’m grateful for the leadership of Majority Leader Andrea Stewart-Cousins and the Senate Democratic Conference for their persistence on this issue and thank Governor Hochul and Commissioner Rosa for ensuring these immediate needs can be met.”