



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Chris Jacobs

## Jacobs, Schimminger Announce Funding for Buffalo Religious Arts Center

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(Buffalo, New York) - New York State Senator Chris Jacobs (60<sup>th</sup> SD) and Assemblyman Robin Schimminger (140<sup>th</sup> AD) announced that they have secured \$100,000 to support much needed capital improvements to the Buffalo Religious Arts Center (BRAC) in the heart of the city's Black Rock neighborhood.

Located in the former St. Francis Xavier Church on East Street, the Art Center has weathered through 105 years of harsh Buffalo winters, and the funding will enable them to better protect and secure the stained glass windows that were manufactured in Munich, Germany in 1911.

“The Buffalo Religious Arts Center is the perfect blend of cultural tourism and historic preservation, and I am very happy to be able to secure funding for the restoration of the beautiful stained glass windows at their home in the former St. Francis Xavier Church,” said Senator Jacobs. “At a time when cultural tourism is having such a positive impact on our region’s economy, this investment will help drive the continued resurgence of the Black Rock neighborhood.”

“With the closings of places of worship throughout Western New York, it is important to preserve the historic and beautiful pieces of art they once housed,” said Assemblyman Schimminger. “I have been pleased to contribute funding to the effort to ensure that these masterpieces from many denominations remain on display for people of all ages to enjoy and appreciate for their aesthetic value.”

The BRAC was established in 2008, and in addition to preserving the former church, the Art Center’s mission is to collect and preserve fine art from the many houses of worship that were forced to close over the years. The Arts Center is one of the few galleries in the United States housed in a former church and dedicated to the preservation of religious art. The stained glass windows, statuary, artwork and artifacts collected provide a unique insight into Buffalo's culture and artistic history as it was created by thousands of European immigrants centuries ago.

“The Committee for the Buffalo Religious Arts Center and our volunteers would like to thank New York State Senator Chris Jacobs and Assemblyman Robin Schimminger for this

much needed funding,” said BRAC President Mary Holland. “If this site had not been purchased and placed in capable hands it would have been a drain on the City of Buffalo's financial resources. Due to costly repairs needed to preserve this building, BRAC cannot support this project on its own. These funds will be used to protect the historic stained glass windows which grace the interior of this former church building.”

***About the Buffalo Religious Arts Center - The Buffalo Religious Arts Center, the former St. Francis Xavier Church is located on 2.24 acres in the City of Buffalo. The preservation and restoration of this building positively influences the overall health of the neighborhood. The approach to preserving this site is community centered, looking to the needs of the surrounding community and the larger economic interests of Buffalo and tourism for the Western New York Region.***