



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

Griffo, Senate Republicans announce creation of antisemitism working group

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO March 1, 2023

| ISSUE: **ANTISEMITISM**

New York State Sen. Joseph Griffo, R-C-Rome, and the Senate Republican Conference today announced the creation of an antisemitism working group that will hold roundtables throughout the state to hear from stakeholders and make recommendations on ways to best address the alarming rise in antisemitic incidents in New York.

Sen. Griffo will serve as a member of the working group. Other members include Sen. Patricia Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick, Sen. Peter Oberacker, and Sen. Bill Weber. Sen. Jack Martins will serve as Chair.

Sadly, attacks on Jewish communities are on the rise in New York. For example, on [May 20, 2021](#) a Jewish man named Joseph Borgen was brutally beaten while on his way to a pro-Israel demonstration near Times Square. In yet another reflection of the broken criminal justice system, his perpetrators were given a slap on the wrist at their sentencing last month.

Antisemitic incidents reached an all-time high in the United States last year, according to a recent report by the Anti-Defamation League (ADL) and a recent poll by the ADL. Most recently, a report was conducted by the [AJC State of Antisemitism in America Report 2022](#)

outlining five key takeaways:

- More Jews feel less secure in America.
- American Jews are proud but altering behavior out of fear.
- Antisemitism online and on social media is a continuing threat. But young American Jews experience it differently.
- American Jews pursuing higher education are experiencing some lows.
- Americans know antisemitism is a problem for society, but more can be done.

The working group will hold a series of discussions throughout the state, hearing testimony from stakeholders who have experienced and witnessed antisemitism, and those who work to educate about antisemitism. At the conclusion of the roundtables, the working group will issue a report and make a series of legislative recommendations.

The first roundtable will be announced soon.

“We continue to see antisemitic threats, attacks and vandalism in New York State and throughout the country,” **Sen. Griffo said.** “These reprehensible, unacceptable and inexcusable threats and actions have spread fear throughout the Jewish community. Those of the Jewish faith should not have to live in fear to practice their religion or to go about their daily lives. By using the input that we receive from these roundtable discussions, we can provide important recommendations and potential solutions to help prevent antisemitic incidents from occurring in the future.”

Sen. Griffo has introduced legislation (S3275) that would amend state human rights law and the penal law to properly provide protections through the appropriate codification of the

definition of antisemitism. Further, acts of antisemitism that incite, cause or result in any act of violence or injury to a person, or the damage to or destruction of real or personal property will be considered a hate crime.

A companion bill has been sponsored by Assemblyman Charles Lavine, D-North Shore.

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