

For Immediate Release

Contact: Pierce Brix- Senator Toby Ann Stavisky's office (518) 445-3479

Contact: Michael Arena- Assemblymember Rebecca Seawright's office (917) 991-1601



Senator Toby Ann Stavisky and Assemblymember Rebecca Seawright Announce Legislation to Help Combat Hate Crimes in Our Communities

Rego Park, NY- On Monday, May 10th, Senator Toby Ann Stavisky (D-Flushing) and Assemblymember Rebecca Seawright (D-Manhattan), together with Assemblymember Andrew Hevesi and Councilmember Karen Koslowitz held a press conference at Real Good Playground in Rego Park, Queens, to address a recent hate crime against a young Asian American teenager at the park.

Joining the elected officials were Ms. Miaoqing Lu and her 15 year old son who was assaulted and called anti-Asian names. This recent attack is just one example of the rising violence against the Asian American community in our city and across our country. In response, Senator Stavisky partnered with Assemblywoman Seawright and is sponsoring legislation (S6570) that would mandate counseling and education for anyone convicted of a hate crime.

“This young man was attacked by five teenagers, three of whom have been arrested,” **explains Senator Stavisky**. “These perpetrators are being charged and will, I hope, be held accountable for their actions. As legislators we need to be doing more to prevent these acts from occurring and reoccurring. It is not enough to simply punish attackers after their crimes. The ‘fear of the other’ is a tool that has been used to drive division within communities for centuries. This legislation will help educate those who harbor baseless resentments and prevent them from acting out against others in hate.”

Assemblymember Rebecca Seawright: “Hate has no place in New York State. In response to the disturbing rise in hateful acts of violence, including attacks on my district office, I have introduced legislation (A1202) to mandate “anti-hate” training, education and counseling for every person convicted of a hate crime. Education is central to promoting tolerance and respect for others and is essential to keeping our communities safe. I am pleased to stand beside Senator Toby Ann Stavisky as she becomes the Senate Sponsor of our legislation to push for the passage of this critical legislation. This legislation is key to confronting the surge of hate crimes we have witnessed in our city and state of New York.”

Miaoqing Lu, Mother of Victim: “Racial hate hits close to home. Let’s work together to eliminate prejudice and hatred in our hearts and create a friendly and just society for our next generation.”

Leo Lu, Victim: “We must learn to forgive, forgive ourselves, and forgive those who hurt us. Help them grow, which also helps us grow ourselves.”

U.S Rep. Grace Meng (D-Queens): “There are several components to combatting the ongoing hate and violence against Asian Americans, and that includes counseling and education, among other resources. These must be part of the approach as well, and I thank Senator Stavisky and Assemblywoman Seawright for working to make that happen in New York State.”

Councilmember Karen Koslowitz: “Solely incarcerating an individual convicted of a hate crime is not going to change that individual’s mind set. Combining mandatory counseling with whatever penalty the court deems appropriate is truly the only hope for changing the behavior of a perpetrator of a hate crime.”

Assemblymember Andrew Hevesi: ““The uptick in hate crimes against Asian Americans is wholly unacceptable. The attack on this young man should never have happened. I am proud to support legislation introduced by Assemblymember Seawright and Senator Stavisky to require individuals convicted of hate crimes to undergo mandatory training or counseling in hate crime prevention and education. Education, understanding, and standing together to call out hate whenever it occurs are how we will combat this blatant racism”

The legislation S6570 has been referred to the Senate Codes Committee and A1202 was reported out of the Assembly Codes Committee and to the floor for a potential vote.