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## Governor Christie Announces Increased Patrol, Training and Outreach Efforts Following Recent Bias Incidents

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### ***Attorney General's Office Offers \$10K Reward for Tips Leading to Bias Crime Conviction***

**Trenton, NJ** – Governor Chris Christie today joined national and local officials, advocates and community leaders at the Kaplen JCC to show solidarity with New Jersey's Jewish community following a recent increase in threats made against Jewish Community Centers throughout New Jersey and the country. Under the direction of Governor Christie, in coordination with Attorney General Christopher S. Porrino, the New Jersey State Police and the Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness (OHSP) have increased patrol efforts at houses of worship, faith-based institutions, community centers and cemeteries throughout the state.

"We live in a world where hostilities have become part of our everyday lives and are directed at what makes us as New Jerseyans and Americans so unique – our diversity," said Governor Christie. "We are coming together today to stand as one New Jersey – committed to furthering understanding and tolerance throughout our diverse communities. We will not stand for anything less. We are committed to ensuring that our citizens feel safe and secure because there is no place in our society for intolerance, hatred or prejudice. More importantly, we must never relent on the basic rights and principles we embrace as a state and a nation."

Over the past several weeks, State Police have been conducting target-hardening measures at religious institutions and OHSP has been providing increased security training at houses of worship. In addition, the Attorney General's Office is now offering a \$10,000 reward for tips from the public leading to a bias crime conviction. These measures are part of the Office of the Attorney General's comprehensive plan to combat bias crimes. The Division of Criminal Justice (DCJ) has conducted training on reporting and responding to bias crimes for over 100 law enforcement officers and representatives from State Police, federal agencies and all 21 County Prosecutors. The County Prosecutors, in turn, are responsible for providing the same training to municipal police departments, and have designated bias crimes liaisons.

"Given the recent threats and other hateful messages directed against our Jewish, Muslim and African American friends, among others, our office is taking action on multiple fronts to protect the public and alleviate fears," stated Attorney General Chris Porrino. "As Attorney General, I can assure you that my office shares the community's concern over the despicable and cowardly acts that have been reported. We are committed to identifying and prosecuting anyone engaged in such acts of hate, and we urge the public at large to take advantage of our new reward program by being vigilant in providing tips and leads through our hotline and our web portal."

The plan also includes education and outreach to the general public as well as community and faith-based leaders throughout the state. Among other efforts, representatives from the Division on Civil Rights recently spent four days on the campus of Rutgers University talking with students about state discrimination laws and how to report bias incidents. Porrino noted that an educational flier containing frequently asked questions about bias activity and how to report it has been distributed as part of focused community outreach, and is also available to the public at [www.nj.gov/oag/bias](http://www.nj.gov/oag/bias).

"Our day-to-day vigilance of critical infrastructure around the state is constantly supported by current threats and trends," said Colonel Rick Fuentes Superintendent of the New Jersey State Police.

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OHSP is providing threat intelligence briefings, security trainings, and free site assessments to religious facilities in New Jersey to help identify vulnerabilities, provide recommendations on protective measures, and mitigate risk. OHSP also facilitates the Non-Profit Security Grant Program (NSGP), which provides funding support for target hardening and other physical security enhancements to nonprofit organizations that are at high risk of a terrorist attack. Last year, New Jersey received over \$4.2 million in federal grant funding for 58 nonprofit organizations and religious institutions. OHSP is hosting a grant writing workshop on March 16 for those eligible to apply under the FY17 NSGP. To register, visit [www.njohsp.gov](http://www.njohsp.gov).

"We take these threats very seriously, and our first priority is to ensure we are engaging the community through a variety of mechanisms such as the statewide Interfaith Advisory Council, which brings together faith-based leaders and government representatives at the federal, state, and local levels," said OHSP Director Chris Rodriguez. "During these trying times, we remain united in a common purpose to ensure every citizen can gather and worship in a safe and secure way."

To report a bias incident, the public should contact local police or their county prosecutor. Bias incidents should also be reported to the New Jersey Division of Criminal Justice at 800-277-BIAS or [www.nj.gov/oag/bias](http://www.nj.gov/oag/bias).

Additional information about the reward is available at [www.nj.gov/oag/bias](http://www.nj.gov/oag/bias). Reward funds are being made available through criminal forfeiture assets.

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**Photo Caption 1:** First Lady Mary Pat Christie speaking at the Lincoln & Olden exhibit reception

**Photo Caption 2:** Portrait of President Lincoln on display at Drumthwacket

**Photo Caption 3:** Veil worn by Mary Todd Lincoln to Ford's Theatre the evening of President Lincoln's assassination

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