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Governor Phil Murphy

Governor Murphy Signs Legislation to Bolster Security Funding for At Risk Non-Profit Organizations

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Governor Also Signs Legislation to Classify Certain Hate Crimes as Domestic Terrorism

TRENTON – Governor Phil Murphy today signed two bills to provide security funding for non-profit organizations at risk of terror attacks and expand the definition of domestic terrorism following the December 2019 attacks in Jersey City. A6123 supplements the FY2020 Appropriations Act to provide funding towards bolstering security measures at eligible non-profit organizations, while A3087 expands the definition of the crime of terrorism in New Jersey law.

“Our state and our nation are facing a rising tide of anti-Semitism and other forms of hatred,” **said Governor Murphy**. “We recently bore witness to how this can manifest itself in violence, with the attack on our Jewish community in Jersey City. We must stand together against terrorism and recommit to the elimination of hate in all its forms in order to protect New Jerseyans and our country. This legislation is crucial to making it clear that hatred will not be tolerated in our state.”

“We thank Governor Phil Murphy for his leadership in signing today’s legislation, which bolster the resources available to NJOHSP as it works to both prevent and respond to acts of terrorism throughout the State,” **said Jared M. Maples, Director of the New Jersey Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness**. “By expanding what constitutes terrorism and allocating grant funding to eligible nonprofit organizations, the Governor has reaffirmed his commitment to the Interfaith Advisory Council and strengthening security for religious communities across all 21 counties in New Jersey.”

“The Murphy Administration is absolutely committed to doing everything in our power to keep New Jerseyans safe from harm,” **said Attorney General Gurbir Grewal**. “We will use whatever tools the Legislature gives us to hold terrorists accountable, just as we have used the tools given to us in the past.”

A6123 supplements the FY2020 Appropriations Act by appropriating \$1 million to the Office of Homeland Security and Preparedness for the New Jersey Nonprofit Security Grant Pilot Program. This program provides funding to eligible nonprofit organizations across New Jersey at the greatest risk of terrorist attacks.

Primary sponsors of A6123 include Assemblymembers Gary Schaer, Annette Quijano, Lisa Swain, and Senate President Sweeney, and Senator Joseph Cryan.

“Hate and terror are devastating our communities like never before. The rise of anti-Semitic domestic terror attacks like those in Jersey City, Monsey and too many others all across the country are frightening,” **said Assemblyman Schaer**. “As we work to change attitudes, we have a responsibility to protect those communities left vulnerable by this incessant culture of violence.”

“Hate crimes have risen for a third consecutive year in New Jersey,” **said Assemblywoman Quijano**. “We have residents living in fear and no apparent end to the violence-inciting rhetoric in sight. Increasing the accessibility of security helps us assure groups are equipped to fight violence in all its forms, as we work

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toward a more peaceable future.”

“In a time when there is so much hate and violence permeating throughout our communities, the need to fortify security for nonprofit organizations at risk of becoming targets of hate crimes and terrorism has never been more critical,” **said Assemblywoman Swain**. “Expanded safety mechanisms, under this law, could prove to save many lives making perpetrators think twice before acting.”

“No individual, group or organization should be left vulnerable to any threats or acts of violence because of their race, religion or heritage,” **said Senate President Sweeney**. “Places of worship and any other locations that bring people together will be better protected with this support. We won’t allow bias or hate to intimidate anyone from practicing their religion or honoring their ethnic pride.”

“We have witnessed a disturbing increase in the number of incidents of hate and bigotry based on race, religion and ethnicity,” **said Senator Cryan**. “We can’t ignore these threats and we should not tolerate any acts of violence or intimidation. These incidents are a daily challenge for houses of worship, community centers and other non-profit institutions that are most vulnerable.”

A3087 expands the crime of terrorism to include persons who commit certain crimes with the purpose to influence or incite an act of terror against an individual based on the individual’s race, religion, sexual orientation, gender, or creed.

Primary sponsors of A3087 include Assemblymembers Gary Schaer, Valerie Vainieri Huttie, and Annette Quijano, and Senators James Beach and Joseph Lagana.

“Terroristic violence is on the rise across the country. In Charleston, Dylan Roof shot nine African American members of Emmanuel AME as they prayed. In Charlottesville, James Fields Jr. drove into a crowd of protestors, murdering an innocent bystander. In Pittsburgh, Robert Bowers entered the Tree of Life synagogue and massacred eleven worshippers. In Poway, John Earnest killed one, when he open fired within the Chabad synagogue during Passover. In El Paso, Patrick Crusius slaughtered twenty-two people shopping for school supplies in a Walmart. And right here in New Jersey, a heroic police officer and three innocent people tragically lost their lives in an attack on a kosher marketplace in Jersey City,” **said Assemblyman Schaer**. “Each of these acts was done to sow fear within communities, and to inspire more acts of violence. There is only one word for all of these acts: terrorism.”

“The tragedy we witnessed in Jersey City last month is sadly just one example of hate-induced terror plaguing our state and our nation,” **said Assemblywoman Vainieri Huttie**. “There were 569 bias incidents reported in New Jersey in 2018, marking the third straight year that the number of incidents went up. We also know that there are 18 active hate groups in New Jersey as of 2018. Should they commit an act of terror, we need to be prepared to hold individuals accountable and bring them to justice. By redefining the crime of terrorism under the law, a person who commits a hateful act will receive a much harsher punishment.”

“We cannot ignore the facts; crimes committed towards a certain group because of how they look or their way of life is indeed an act of terror,” **said Assemblywoman Quijano**. “Our State laws should reflect this so that we may prosecute terrorists to the fullest extent of the law. Let’s be perfectly clear. This kind of hatred and bigotry cannot, and will not, be tolerated in New Jersey.”

“In New Jersey, bias incidences increased by 32 percent between 2016 and 2017,” **said Senator Beach**. “Just last month we saw disturbing anti-Semitic violence in Jersey City and across the border in Monsey, New York. This law will improve safety by holding everyone responsible for terrorist acts accountable, including both the people who carried out the violence as well as those who incited action.”

“New Jersey must stand strong against all acts of terrorism, including crimes that incite it. We are a diverse and accepting state, who welcome people from all over,” **said Senator Joe Lagana**. “We will not be subjected to fear and hate that others try desperately to spread. Now more than ever, we need to come together as one community to overcome those who seek to divide us.”

“We have witnessed a disturbing increase in the number of incidents of hate and bigotry in New Jersey. No individual, group or organization should be left vulnerable to any threats or acts of violence because of their race, religion, country of origin, sexual or gender identity,” **said Joshua Cohen, Director of Government Relations and External Affairs for the Jewish Federations of New Jersey**. “We are grateful to our

legislative leaders in the Assembly and Senate for championing initiatives which provide the necessary funding and protections our communities need most. We thank Governor Murphy for signing these bills into law, demonstrating that fighting hate is a shared value of all New Jerseyans.”

“Thank you to Governor Murphy, Attorney General Grewal, and Director Maples for taking a proactive approach to prevent more tragedies from taking place,” **said Rabbi Aaron Kotler, President of Beth Medrash Govoha.**

“Not only am I grateful for Governor Murphy to understand and speak out on security related issues and for taking a strong stand,” **said Rabbi Abe Friedman, Community Leader and New Jersey State Police Chaplain,** “but today I am very grateful that he put words into action by signing these two bills that will enhance the safety and security of the community, and provide a sense of relief to the faith-based community.”

“The two bills signed into law by Governor Murphy today represent an important step forward in enhancing the security of religious and non-profit communities in New Jersey,” **said Evan Bernstein, Vice President of the Northeast Division of the Anti-Defamation League (ADL).** “It is now incumbent upon state officials and local law enforcement agencies to implement these laws in a legally sound and equitable manner.”

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