



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Brad Hoylman-Sigal

Letter From Elected Officials to Mayor Adams Regarding Lack of Diversity on Jewish Advisory Council

BRAD HOYLMAN-SIGAL July 10, 2023

| ISSUE: **JEWISH COMMUNITY COUNCIL, JEWISH COMMUNITY, JEWISH, MAYOR ERIC ADAMS**

July 10, 2023

Mayor Eric Adams

City Hall

New York, NY 10007

Dear Mayor Adams:

We are encouraged that you have formed a Jewish Advisory Council to hear about issues of special concern to Jews throughout New York City, but we were troubled to learn that the composition of the council does not reflect the diversity of the Jewish community. We urge you to take a second look at the council and expand the membership to better represent the reality of Jewish demographics in the city.

Of the 37 members appointed to the council, only nine are women, less than a quarter of the total membership. This underrepresents Jewish women by over fifty percent. Jewish women experience many of the same struggles and have many of the same values of their male counterparts, but they also face unique challenges posed by the intersectionality of their gender and religion. Without giving women the full voice they deserve, the council will be less likely to provide advice that reflects the totality of the Jewish community.

Similarly, the council appears to heavily underrepresent non-Orthodox Jews. At least 23 members and as many as 30 members are Orthodox while the majority of Jews in New York City are not Orthodox. The council should not discount the views of Reform, Conservative, Reconstructionist, non-denominational, and non-religious Jews, who can all contribute valuable insights into their different traditions, culture, and worldview.

Finally, the council appears to have no self-identified members of color or LGBTQ members. Jews of color and LGBTQ Jews are doubly at risk of suffering from discrimination and hate crimes in our communities, and their voices would be invaluable to the council.

We are in a precarious time for the Jewish community in New York City and around the country. Hate crimes and hate speech are on the rise, and some political leaders even openly welcome support from avowed antisemites. This Jewish Advisory Council can be a valuable tool for your administration to combat the dire issues facing the community, but for it to be most effective, it must reflect the community's diversity. We once again urge you to revisit the membership of the council and appoint new members representing the full community.

Sincerely,