



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Steven D. Rhoads

## New York State Senator Steve Rhoads & Senate Republicans Introduce Legislation to Battle Antisemitism on College Campuses

STEVEN D. RHOADS May 21, 2024

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Rhoads along with his colleagues in the Senate and Assembly, announced the introduction of legislation aimed at addressing the alarming increase of antisemitism on college campuses throughout our state with the clear message: hate has consequences.

On Wednesday, May 15th New York State Senator Steve Rhoads, along with Senator Bill Weber and Senator Patricia Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick, and members of the Senate and Assembly Republican Conferences, announced the introduction of several pieces of legislation aimed to curb the dramatic increase of antisemitism on college campuses throughout New York

State.

At the “Hate Has Consequences” press conference held at the New York State Capitol, legislators outlined new bills to help combat the rise in antisemitism in New York State schools, including proposals that would:

- prohibit state funding for any degree-granting institution of higher education if they permit certain pro-terrorist groups on campus, and any group or organization on such campuses that engage in or promote terrorist activities (S.9193, Senator Rhoads);
- establish new crimes of deceptive wearing of a mask, and aggravated assault while wearing a mask, a class B misdemeanor and class A misdemeanor, respectively (S.9194, Senator Rhoads); and
- prohibit state funding for any college where a member of such college’s instructional staff directly or indirectly promotes, encourages, advocates or engages in any activity on campus in support of a terrorist organization (S.9600, Senator Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick).

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*“In the face of escalating antisemitism on New York State college campuses, bold action is needed to confront rampant discrimination due to failed university leadership and restore academic integrity, civility, and respect. University administrators have turned a blind eye to the problem, allowing terrorist sympathizers to thrive and create a hostile environment for Jewish students. Hate has consequences and the time for action is now. I’m proud to roll up my sleeves to provide meaningful solutions to fight against antisemitism, ensure accountability for terrorist sympathizers, keep our students safe, and refocus the priorities of our institutions of higher learning - on actual learning - to better serve our students. The*

*legislative package unveiled today provides a critical roadmap for combating antisemitism on college campuses in New York State. The fight against hate requires collective action, and this legislative package is a powerful step in that direction,” stated Senator Steve Rhoads.*

“In the face of rising antisemitism, we stand united to ensure that hate has consequences. New Yorkers should not be expected to foot the bill for colleges that allow educators to promote the actions of terrorist organizations. Administrators of institutions of higher learning must do more to put a stop to our Jewish students from being targeted with harassment and violence. Our legislative package represents a significant step forward in protecting our students and communities against all forms of discrimination and intolerance,” **stated Senator Patricia Canzoneri-Fitzpatrick.**

“The Republican conference has diligently conducted our research. We convened an Antisemitism Working Group, meticulously collected data, and published a comprehensive report detailing our findings. Furthermore, we've taken proactive steps by introducing legislation aimed at tackling Antisemitism head-on. It's imperative for moderate Democrats within the majority conference to either collaborate with us in this crucial fight against hatred or present their own initiatives. It's time for them to finally break free from the radical progressives within their ranks,” **stated Senator Weber.**

“Amidst a dramatic rise in antisemitism, and the increase of hateful speech and rhetoric on college campuses here in New York and throughout the nation, it is imperative that the Legislature act to protect Jewish New Yorkers. This is the single most pressing issue we are

faced with, and I'm disappointed in the lack of action by New York Democrats. I commend my colleagues in the Senate and Assembly Republican conferences for their work and continuing to bring attention to the need for the Legislature to act," **said Senate Republican Leader Rob Ortt.**

"Protecting the first amendment right to assembly is important but protecting public safety is paramount. The recent surge in protests at college and university campuses across the country have made that difficult to balance -- but not impossible. Our legislation to ban deceptive mask wearing for those attending protests and other public assemblies achieves both in a responsible way," **stated Assemblyman Mike Reilly.**

"Pro-terrorist groups have infiltrated our college and university campuses and are spreading their venomous anti-american, antisemitic ideology under the guise of free speech. Make no mistake, we cannot and will not tolerate this threat to our national security and the safety of our students. That is why I, along with Sen. Rhoades, proudly introduce bill S.9193, which sends a clear and unequivocal message: New York state will not stand idly by and watch our colleges and universities become breeding grounds for terrorism. This bill prohibits state funding for any degree-granting institution of higher education that fails to uphold its duty to protect our students and our country. If these institutions allow terrorist activities to fester on their campuses, they will no longer receive a dime of taxpayer money. This is about drawing a line in the sand and saying "enough is enough," **stated Assemblyman Ari Brown.**

The bills introduced are the latest in a series of legislative proposals first unveiled in a report by the Senate Republican Working Group on Antisemitism and members of the Senate

Republican Conference to address the dramatic increase in antisemitic incidents in the wake of the horrific Hamas terrorist attacks in Israel on October 7th.