



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Jose M. Serrano

Statement by Senator Serrano Regarding the Passing of Emily Kessler

[JOSE M. SERRANO](#) May 9, 2016

“I was deeply saddened to learn of the passing of a truly amazing individual, Emily Kessler, who passed away yesterday at the age of 99. Emily, an Upper West Sider, was a Holocaust survivor who escaped the horrors of a Ukranian concentration camp before immigrating to New York City when she was 60 years old. Talented musically, Emily taught herself to play the mandolin, becoming so well regarded that she was invited to perform at Lincoln Center’s Avery Fisher Hall in 2014 at the age of 97.

Emily Kessler was a truly inspirational individual whom I was very fortunate to have gotten to know. Last year, I had the honor and pleasure of presenting her with the New York State Senate 2015 Women of Distinction Award for her amazing life's work. My greatest honor was having the opportunity to listen to Emily as she played the mandolin and sang her beautiful songs for me. She conveyed such joy and passion for life and brought happiness to all she knew. Emily was the epitome of a survivor, facing all her obstacles with unrelenting strength and passion, while never losing sight of all the beauty that surrounds us every day.

Many thanks to all of Emily’s family and friends who cared for her with love and dedication. I would like to extend my deepest condolences to her family and friends during this difficult time. May she rest in peace.”



Read more about Emily Kessler's life [here](#).