



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Todd Kaminsky

## Kaminsky brings together religious and civic leaders for Emergency Interfaith Summit

TODD KAMINSKY December 13, 2016

| ISSUE: **HATE RELATED CRIMES**



Today, Senator Todd Kaminsky convened a round table of more than 50 religious and civic leaders for an Emergency Interfaith Summit to discuss recent bias, anti-Semitic, and hate crime incidents that have occurred at Nassau Community College and across Long Island.

Held at Temple Am Echad in Lynbrook, the meeting lasted an hour and leaders agreed to stand united against crimes motivated by racial and religious prejudice. They also discussed

how they can be most effective in tackling the recent spike and pervasiveness of these bias hate crimes in our community. Participants agreed to continue their conversation and expand their dialogue to their various congregations and communities so as to expand the fight against hate crimes on Long Island.

“Today, we came together to reaffirm our commitment to fighting these vicious, deplorable hate crimes, and renewed our mutual respect for our communities,” **said Kaminsky**. “We denounce these recent bias and anti-Semitic crimes that have occurred at Nassau Community College and across Long Island, and any and all hate crimes which seek to terrorize an individual’s right to live freely and peacefully. The South Shore will not be frightened. We stand for the right of all to worship and live without fear of intimidation or bias, always.”

**Kaminsky continued**, “It is astonishing, yet true, that there is less dialogue between leaders of different faiths than you might think. Fostering such cross-religious dialogue is important for understanding, and I was glad that we initiated that today.”

Kaminsky also announced the formation of an ongoing interfaith working group which will meet continuously to discuss pertinent community and faith-based matters.

**Sen. Kaminsky added:** “The fight against hate-crimes must be multi-dimensional. It requires aggressive police, strong prosecutions, and consistent discussion, learning, and understanding. I look forward to continuing an inclusive dialogue with the interfaith working group.”

“Temple Am Echad is truly honored to host such a significant gathering of community and interfaith leaders coming together to take a stand against hatred and bigotry,” **said Rabbi Sandra M. Bellush of Temple Am Echad**. “Not only must we speak out against all acts of

violence and intolerance, it is incumbent upon us as clergy to teach by example and make welcome into our community all people of every race, religion, ethnicity, sexual orientation and gender expression. We must speak out and not stand silently by when others act out of ignorance and hate.”

**Rev. Mark Lukens of Bethany Congregational Church** said, “I am very grateful to Senator Kaminsky for putting together this forum and launching an affirmative movement. This is the essence of what our faith is all about – people working together, knowing that we are strengthened and empowered by our diversity. We will not stand still for any acts of violence against any human being.”

“There are winds of hate blowing across America,” said **Rob Solomon of the Jewish Community Relations Council**. “This is the start of blowing back against those winds. We all stand together and the JCRC is proud to be part of the Summit that was put together by Senator Todd Kaminsky.”

“Today’s event was a great event that brought together many different people of many different backgrounds,” said **Karim Mozawalla of Hamza Masjid**. “This is just the beginning of a long battle in culture and society which is being changed slowly. We need to get together and get to know each other, that’s the first step in combating this culture of hate, of division. We need to get back to a culture of unity and oneness and equal rights for all. That’s the greatest part of America and what it really stands for.”

“I thank Senator Todd Kaminsky for putting this event together,” said **Pastor Emmanuel Asse, Gateway Christian Center**. “I believe that today sent a message that we have a vision and a goal. And this is not just about today, but we must promote justice everyday. We won’t allow division in our community. We won’t allow anyone to come in and destroy our community. We look forward to continuing to work with Senator Kaminsky and everybody here today to promote justice and peace.”