



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Alessandra Biaggi

## SENATOR ALESSANDRA BIAGGI AND ASSEMBLYWOMAN AMY PAULIN CONDEMN ANTISEMITIC INCIDENT AT PELHAM MIDDLE SCHOOL

ALESSANDRA BIAGGI October 3, 2019

**PELHAM, NY** – Yesterday, State Senator Alessandra Biaggi and Assemblywoman Amy Paulin were notified of a recent hate crime, involving three swastikas found inside Pelham Middle School.

**State Senator Alessandra Biaggi (D-Bronx/Westchester) issued the following statement:**

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*“First and foremost, I want to extend my condolences to the Jewish residents of Pelham, and acknowledge the pain that this act of hate has caused for the entire Pelham community, particularly during the high holidays. The swastikas found inside Pelham Middle School are violent symbols of anti-semitism, and do not have a place in our community, our state, or our country. Any action fueled by hate is unacceptable and will not be tolerated in District 34, and any iteration of white supremacy or bigotry will be condemned. Every person – regardless of their religion, race, gender, or creed – deserves to be treated with respect, and to live free of symbolic or physical threats to their safety. I am very grateful to the Superintendent of Schools Cheryl H. Champ and Pelham Middle School Principal Lynn M. Sabia for their swift response to this appalling incident, and for being proactive to ensure cultural proficiency trainings are provided to teachers, staff, parents, and students. The recent rise in acts of anti-semitism in Westchester County among young people is a cause for concern. We all have a responsibility to teach and practice the principles of acceptance and*

*inclusivity, and lead by example for our children and students.”*

**Assemblymember Amy Paulin (D-Scarsdale/Pelham) issued the following statement:**

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*“I am deeply thankful to Dr. Champ, Principal Sabia, and all of the faculty at Pelham Middle School for their swift, clear, and comprehensive response to the anti-Semitic graffiti that was discovered on school grounds. I join what I'm sure are the overwhelming majority of our neighbors and residents in a reaction of outrage and deep sorrow that symbols of hate have once again begun to intrude in what should be a safe space of learning for our children. This sorrow is not abstract for me. I remember when I was a young adult and moved into a neighborhood that was not predominately Jewish for the first time. I remember how frequently I was shocked by the often casual and unthinking anti-Semitic remarks and attitudes I encountered in the stores, on the streets, and in the neighborhood. Even as a youth, it made me feel uncomfortable, unwelcome, like an outsider, and that I didn't want to live there. I know our community is strong and is prepared to come together to educate ourselves and our young people on how we can heal the fresh wounds that this incident may have caused, stand fast against hate speech and against religious and ethnic bigotry in all its forms, and reaffirm ourselves to the ideals which our community stands for.”*