



NEW YORK STATE SENATOR

Joseph A. Griffo

Griffo legislation would offer additional protections against antisemitic acts

JOSEPH A. GRIFFO May 26, 2021

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As antisemitic attacks have reportedly taken place with increased frequency in cities throughout the nation, state Sen. Joseph Griffo, R-I-C-Rome, is advocating for legislation he has introduced that would provide more protections against antisemitism in New York State.

While discrimination and attacks have been unfairly and wrongfully levied and directed against the Jewish people and their faith for generations, the Anti-Defamation League, a Jewish civil rights group, recently reported that there has been an increase in online and real-world incidents of antisemitism in the United States.

Incidents have included an assault on a Jewish man in Times Square in New York City, synagogues vandalized in Arizona, Illinois and New York and Jewish diners targeted at a Los Angeles restaurant.

Sen. Griffo's bill (S4563) would amend state human rights law and the penal law to properly provide protections through the appropriate codification of the definition of antisemitism. Further, acts of antisemitism that incite, cause or result in any act of violence or injury to a person, or the damage to or destruction of real or personal property will be considered a hate

crime.

“We continue to see antisemitic threats, attacks and vandalism here in New York State and throughout the country,” Sen. Griffo said. “My legislation will provide additional protection to those of the Jewish faith and ensure that the perpetrators of antisemitic activities face real consequences and are held accountable for their actions.”

“On behalf of the Jewish Community Federation of the Mohawk Valley, I wish to thank Sen. Joseph Griffo for submitting a bill to our New York State Senate that would classify acts of violence committed against Jewish people in New York State, motivated in whole or in part by the fact that they are Jewish, as a ‘Hate Crime’ as defined by the Penal Code of New York State,” said Victor Pearlman, executive director of the Jewish Community Federation of the Mohawk Valley. “Any action our New York State government can take to curtail these horrendous acts, whose numbers have grown ‘out of control’ in recent years, is greatly appreciated. Our people have suffered terribly from acts of hate for so many years, and it is about time our State took action to curtail such behavior.”

Sen. Griffo’s legislation is in the Senate’s Investigations and Government Operations Committee. A companion bill (A4562) has been sponsored in the Assembly by Assemblyman Charles Lavine, D–Glen Cove. That bill is in the Assembly’s Governmental Operation’s Committee.