

Congress of the United States
Washington, DC 20515

March 3, 2017

Speaker Paul Ryan
H-232 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20515

Majority Leader Mitch McConnell
S-221 The Capitol
Washington, DC 20510

Dear Speaker Ryan and Majority Leader McConnell:

As members of the New Jersey delegation, we are deeply concerned about the recent rash of heinous violence targeting Jewish cemeteries, educational institutions, and community centers across the state. Given those threats, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the Department of Justice (DOJ), and federal law enforcement agencies must have the critical resources needed to protect our communities from lone wolf and homegrown terrorists and extremists. For this reason, we request a measure to provide funding for the DHS and DOJ to provide desperately-needed support, preparedness planning, and resources for law enforcement to address this outbreak.

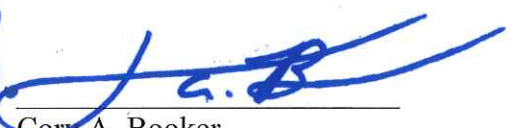
Jewish Community Centers (JCC) and synagogues are bedrocks of religious and civic life for Jewish communities across the United States. They house preschools for children and a range of religious, educational, and social programs for families and seniors. Yet, the safety and well-being of these communal spaces are being threatened. According to the JCC Association of North America, there have been more than 100 threats across thirty-three states, with thirty-one of those on Monday alone. In New Jersey, recent data from the New Jersey Suspicious Activity Reporting System shows there have been nineteen incidents at religious facilities. There have been eight bomb threats targeting six Jewish community centers in New Jersey. These are not cases of random hatred; they are part of a deeply disturbing national trend that requires immediate and comprehensive action.

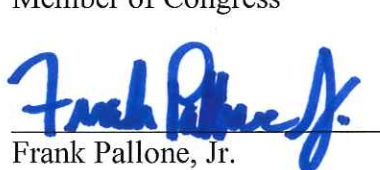
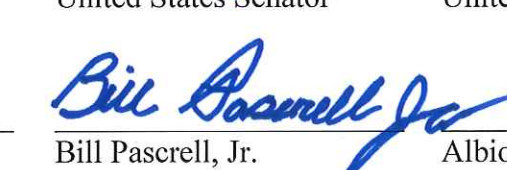
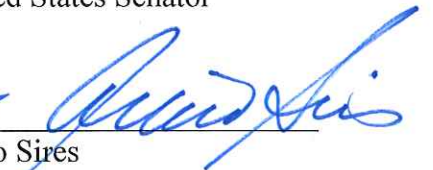
We have full faith in our local law enforcement and commend them for acting quickly in each of these cases to sweep facilities and protect members of the public. However, they are operating without fully-functional federal resources. This includes critical programs like DHS's Nonprofit Security Grant Program, which helps fund essential security enhancements such as barrier and screening tools, improvements, and preparedness training for nonprofit institutions like JCCs. Because the DHS and DOJ are operating under a temporary continuing resolution (CR) that funds the government through April 2017, agencies are in a holding pattern that prevents them from effectively stemming the violence.

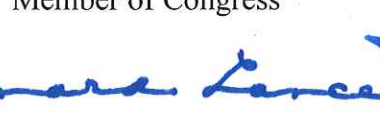


When it comes to Homeland Security, the stakes are simply too high for us to ask our local families and community institutions to fend for themselves in the face of homegrown terror. Anti-Semitism does not just impact the Jewish community; but when it is tolerated, it destabilizes entire communities and can lead to attacks on other religious and ethnic groups.


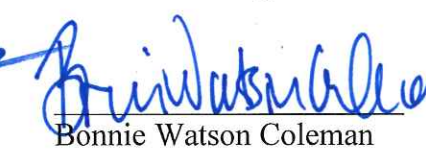
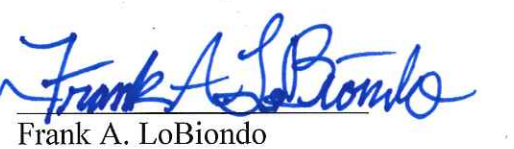
Keeping our families and communities in New Jersey and around the country safe is our most fundamental responsibility as their representatives. We urge your swift action to address these ongoing threats to our children and families.

Sincerely,

 Josh Gottheimer Member of Congress	 Robert Menendez United States Senator	 Cory A. Booker United States Senator
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 Frank Pallone, Jr. Member of Congress	 Bill Pascrell, Jr. Member of Congress	 Albio Sires Member of Congress
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 Leonard Lance Member of Congress	 Donald M. Payne, Jr. Member of Congress	 Donald Norcross Member of Congress
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 Thomas MacArthur Member of Congress	 Bonnie Watson Coleman Member of Congress	 Frank A. LoBiondo Member of Congress
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