

Rebecca Seawright



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FROM :

New York State Assembly

Member Rebecca Seawright

Contact: Cory Hasson, c: (845) 596-6364

SEAWRIGHT'S VIRTUAL TOWN HALL TUESDAY ON COMBATING ANTI-SEMITISM



July 31, 2020 -- On Tuesday, July 28, Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright hosted her second annual discussion with leaders in New York State on how to address the alarming rise in cases of Anti-Semitism and hate crimes. The distinguished panel included JCRC-NY President Cheryl Fishbein, Executive Director of the NY Board of Rabbi's, Rabbi Joseph Potasnik, Jewish Insider's Managing Editor and former Campus Director for the Simon Wiesenthal Center Melissa Weiss, and David Pollock and Mitchell D. Silber from the Community Security Initiative of the JCRC-NY. The Virtual Town Hall was Assembly Member Seawright's eighteenth consecutive town hall live streamed on Facebook. View the full town hall at [Facebook.com/RebeccaASeawright/Live](https://www.facebook.com/RebeccaASeawright/Live).

As a member of the New York State Assembly's Caucus of Jewish legislators, Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright is committed to keeping the conversation of tolerance, safety, and the fight against injustices moving forward through advocacy and key legislative measures. Last year, Seawright hosted our first discussion out of the horrific rise of anti-

semitic attacks around the world and in our own neighborhood, including at Asphalt Green where so many neighborhood children play. A swastika was scrawled across the lockers in the locker room. ***"For bigotry to be on display at a place where my children had played for years is frightening and still disturbing. An attack on a center for the community, serving toddlers to senior citizens and people of all races, religions, and backgrounds, is an attack on all New Yorkers!"*** said Seawright. In January, the NYPD released data showing there was an alarming 24% increase in anti-Semitic hate crimes in New York City from 2018 to 2019.

The Anti-Defamation League reports that there has been a rise in Anti-Semitic attacks, with a shocking 51 incidences in New York State since the beginning of the pandemic. This month, A 51-year-old Orthodox Jewish man in Brooklyn reportedly was assaulted and subjected to anti-Semitic slurs as he was walking home on July 12. Three males, believed to be between the ages of 18 and 20, drove next to the Jewish man and started hurling anti-Semitic epithets at him. The perpetrators proceeded to exit the vehicle and repeatedly punched the victim.

Anti-Semitic attitudes, which are just as harmful, have been on the rise. Notably, a Manhattan teen, Mark Shepard, confronted so-called "celebrity Anti-Semitism" on Instagram live, confronting former NBA player Stephen Jackson. Earlier in the month, Jackson had publicly defended anti-Semitic posts on Instagram uploaded by DeSean Jackson, the Eagles wide receiver. ***"This teen is proof that if we see something, we must say something to correct misinformation or ignorance. There is nothing more harmful than perpetuating discrimination by ignoring acts of intolerance. We must call out the stereotypes, prejudices, and discrimination that we see. Let us all take inspiration from Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg who has been subject of anti-semitic graffiti in a New York City subway station. We should all accept the challenge to confront anti-semitic acts and attitudes, taking inspiration from Justice Ginsburg who taught us to never give in, never give up and never forget where we came from!"*** said Seawright.

Tzivia Appleman, a Simon Wiesenthal Center Government Advocacy intern helped to organize this important town hall, and has been working with Seawright's office since the beginning of the pandemic, connecting constituents to resources and doing legislative research. Following the town hall, the Simon Wiesenthal Center issued a statement thanking Assembly Member Seawright, ***"The Simon Wiesenthal Center thanks Assembly Member Seawright for once again including the Simon Wiesenthal Center in this important discussion and for her continued commitment to combating hate."***

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