

THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF PENNSYLVANIA

SENATE RESOLUTION

No. 44

Session of
2017

INTRODUCED BY WAGNER, SCARNATI, EICHELBERGER, RESCHENTHALER,
LEACH, REGAN, LANGERHOLC, MARTIN, SCAVELLO, FONTANA,
SABATINA, DiSANTO, ARGALL, GREENLEAF, AUMENT, BROWNE,
McILHINNEY, BROOKS, MENSCH, VOGEL, KILLION, VULAKOVICH,
FOLMER, STEFANO, HUTCHINSON, RAFFERTY, BARTOLOTTA AND COSTA,
MARCH 22, 2017

REFERRED TO RULES AND EXECUTIVE NOMINATIONS, MARCH 22, 2017

A RESOLUTION

1 Condemning acts of hate and vandalism against the Jewish
2 community.

3 WHEREAS, Individuals who show cultural insensitivity and an
4 animus to a particular group of people are harming all
5 Pennsylvanians; and

6 WHEREAS, There has been a recent alarming increase in the
7 number of acts of hate toward members of the Jewish faith and
8 this increase cannot be ignored; and

9 WHEREAS, Recent acts of hate number more than 150, since the
10 beginning of 2017, and include bomb threats or acts of vandalism
11 against museums, houses of worship, advocacy groups and
12 cemeteries; and

13 WHEREAS, This disturbing trend has occurred both in this
14 Commonwealth and across the nation; and

15 WHEREAS, In late February 2017, vandals toppled more than 100
16 gravestones at Mount Carmel Cemetery in Philadelphia, a historic

1 cemetery that dates back to the 1890s; and

2 WHEREAS, Families and loved ones had to endure the emotional
3 trauma of seeing desecrated headstones and come to terms with
4 such horrific acts of hate; and

5 WHEREAS, The perpetrators of these acts have not been
6 apprehended and the families affected continue to suffer from
7 these acts of cowardice and hate; and

8 WHEREAS, In early March, multiple Jewish community centers
9 across the country, including one in York and one in Harrisburg,
10 were evacuated after receiving threats; and

11 WHEREAS, Staff at the York Jewish Community Center (JCC)
12 received a call from a man who claimed there was a bomb in the
13 building; and

14 WHEREAS, The JCC staff evacuated the building and allowed the
15 authorities to sweep the building with bomb-sniffing dogs; and

16 WHEREAS, Children in the JCC's day care were evacuated as
17 parents were contacted and felt a sense of panic; and

18 WHEREAS, The families who endured threats remain fearful of
19 the possibility of another similar act; and

20 WHEREAS, The community in York, the York authorities, the
21 Department of Justice and the Federal Bureau of Investigation
22 continue to investigate these acts and remain determined to
23 bring those responsible for these acts to justice; and

24 WHEREAS, Throughout the country, police have reported threats
25 to Jewish institutions; and

26 WHEREAS, Most recently over the Purim holiday, the Louis S.
27 Wolk Jewish Community Center in Rochester, New York, was
28 evacuated on the morning of Sunday, March 12, for the second
29 time in less than a week as the Rochester JCC served as a
30 warming center for people whose homes had lost power due to a

1 windstorm; and

2 WHEREAS, These acts reflect a continuing and disturbing
3 pattern of intimidation and hate; and

4 WHEREAS, We all stand united against such cowardly acts; and

5 WHEREAS, Our Commonwealth cannot be defined by these acts but
6 rather should be defined by our residents' response to these
7 acts; therefore be it

8 RESOLVED, That the Senate condemn acts of hate and vandalism
9 that have been committed against the Jewish community; and be it
10 further

11 RESOLVED, That the Senate encourage all Pennsylvanians to
12 remain steadfast in rejecting cultural insensitivity and use
13 this time as a moment when we can come together and begin
14 educating young people and adults on understanding and
15 appreciating all members of our community and residents of this
16 Commonwealth.