

I'm Rabbi Mark Rosenberg & I serve as the Chief Chaplain of the Florida Highway Patrol, Florida Department of Law Enforcement, Miami-Dade Sheriff's Office, Chaplain with Miami-Dade Fire Rescue, Senior Chaplain with the North Miami Beach Police, Clergy to the Miami Dade Medical Examiner's Office, Chairman of the Interfaith Advisory Board of Miami Dade-County and Senior Advisor to the Sheriff of Miami Dade-County, Sheriff Rosie Codero-Stutz. In addition to my role in these great-agencies, I also serve as the Director of Chesed Shel Emes of Florida, aka CSE. Our main focus is to ensure that every Jew who passes away gets a proper burial in line with Jewish tradition but we are involved in every facet of Jewish life. Through this effort, and by dealing with end-of-life crises, I have direct interaction with the elderly population on very sensitive matters. Correspondingly, we have forged strong relationships with numerous synagogues/temples, Jewish Schools, old age homes, senior citizens centers, retirement communities, hospitals, & other institutions in addition to the countless individuals that we come across in our lines of work. CSE is always available to help families in times of crisis & with the daily needs of the communities as well. These efforts allow us to present an accurate portrayal of the Jewish collective & its considerations, concerns, & interests to those higher institutions whom I work for. I hope to present an accurate portrayal to the Senate Body as well.

The rise of antisemitism is a topic that is discussed way too often when speaking with individuals, community leaders, & establishments as people are genuinely concerned about their safety due to the online cesspool of antisemitism. When hate is allowed to simmer online, it often spills into the streets where there are incidents that confirm people's worst anxieties. But there is one community who's fear is more palpable than all others. The aging population has long held on to the hope that the hatred they witnessed in their youth was a subject of history. A burden that they need not & should not put onto their descendants. So, they stayed silent. Why stress your children & grandchildren if their present reality does not represent the trauma from the old world. But on October 7th, Holocaust survivors saw their grandchildren slaughtered for being Jewish. The elderly came face to face with the horrific news that perhaps the past they thought they left behind will be the future.

---

Perhaps the burden they thought was an unnecessary load to carry was just an illusion & the iron grip of evil will once again take hold of this world. They worry about the college campuses & what their descendants will experience. They fear that the country that gave them unprecedented freedom of religion can be usurped by those with a sinister agenda.

So what will calm their fears that the old world is not the new world?

Consequences. It's simple really, if my child runs into the street & I remain silent - I may not support it, but I guarantee it will happen again. If there are no consequences for those that intimidate & bully under the guise of free speech, then they will be emboldened & take more ground until we get to a dark place. The holocaust didn't start in the mid-20th century; it was the conclusion of antisemitism that had fermented for centuries.

- We must accept that NEVER AGAIN is now.
- We must accept that staying silent is really enabling those who hate.
- We must accept that the aging community is re-living the trauma that should've never happened, let alone forgotten.
- We must accept that **there are holocaust deniers**, and we cannot deny the deniers existence.
- We must accept that the Oct 7th atrocities, murder, rape, burning of families & babies & other horrific acts actually happened. We cannot allow these crimes to be whitewashed as just another conflict in the Middle East.
- We must accept that 250 hostages were taken, some of them being elderly and Holocaust survivors, who are still waiting for their grandchildren to be released by the Hamas terrorist organization.
- We must guarantee the elderly that the United States Government **will not** allow this to continue.

For too long, people filled with hatred felt safe enough to show up to synagogues, educational facilities, & public spaces spewing hate & antisemitism in the name of free speech & there was no legal consequence to stop them. They would bully, intimidate, harass & threaten in the hope of provoking a reaction. In Florida, under the Governorship of Rick Scott, many laws have been instituted to help halt acts such as these. This includes Florida House Bill 269 - which has helped in a tremendous manner. It provides consequences for those that harass based on religion or ethnic heritage, it protects synagogues, schools, & campuses, & even includes felony charges

---

for hate mail & projections of images onto buildings. The bill is referenced below. If we take legitimate action like this today, then we can stop hate & antisemitism before it spirals out of control like it has so many times in history. We can show our aging population that their trauma will not be their grandchildren's trauma. We can show them why America is the land of the free but also the land of consequences for those that deserve them.

Thanks to Chairman Rick Scott of the Senate Special Committee on Aging, Ranking Member Kirsten Gillibrand, Senator Ashley Moody and the other members of the committee for giving me the opportunity to testify on this matter at the hearing on April 30th, 2025. I hope & I have full confidence that the Senate body will do whatever they can to implement the consequences necessary to ensure this runaway train of antisemitism is pushed off the tracks before it is too late. Once again, thank you to the Special Committee on Aging & the Senate body for ensuring "Never Again" actually never ever happens again.

Rabbi Mark Rosenberg

### **Florida House Bill 269**

#### **Harassing Based on Religion or Ethnic Heritage**

784.0493, F.S.; providing definitions; prohibiting a person from willfully and maliciously harassing, threatening, or intimidating another person based on the person's wearing or displaying of any indicia relating to any religious or ethnic heritage; A person who violates subsection (2) commits a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable. A person who violates subsection (2), and in the course of committing the violation, makes a credible threat to the person who is the subject of the harassment or intimidation, commits a felony of the third degree.

#### **Synagogues and Schools**

871.01 assemblies--5. Subsection (1) of section 871.01, Florida amended to read:

Disturbing schools and religious and other Whoever willfully and maliciously interrupts or school or any assembly of people met for the worship of God, any

---

assembly of people met for the purpose of acknowledging the death of an individual, or for any other lawful purpose commits a misdemeanor of the first second degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083. (b) If a person commits a violation of paragraph (a) and in doing so makes a credible threat, as that term is defined in s. 784.048(1), he or she commits a felony of the third degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082, s. 775.083, or s. 775.084.

### **Campus**

810.098, F.S.; prohibiting a person who willfully enters the campus of a state university or Florida College System institution for the purpose of threatening or intimidating another person from remaining on such campus after being warned to depart. Whoever, without being authorized, licensed, or invited, willfully enters the campus of a state university or Florida College System institution for the purpose of threatening or intimidating another person, and is warned by the state university or Florida College System institution to depart and refuses to do so, commits a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.

### **Hate Mail**

403.413, F.S.; prohibiting a person from distributing onto private property any material for the purpose of intimidating or threatening the owner, resident, or invitee of such property; providing criminal penalties; prohibiting a person from distributing onto private property any material which contains a credible threat to the owner, resident, or invitee of such property;

If a person violates subparagraph 1. by intentionally dumping litter onto private property for the purpose of intimidating the owner, resident, or invitee of such property and such litter contains a credible threat, the person commits a felony of the third degree.

### **Projecting Images on Buildings**

806.13, F.S.; prohibiting the display or projection of images onto a building, structure, or property without permission.

(a) A person who violates this subsection commits a misdemeanor of the first degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082 or s. 775.083.

(b) A person who violates this subsection by displaying or projecting an image that contains a credible threat, as that term is defined in s. 784.048(1), commits

---

a felony of the third degree, punishable as provided in s. 775.082, s. 775.083,  
or s. 108 775.084.