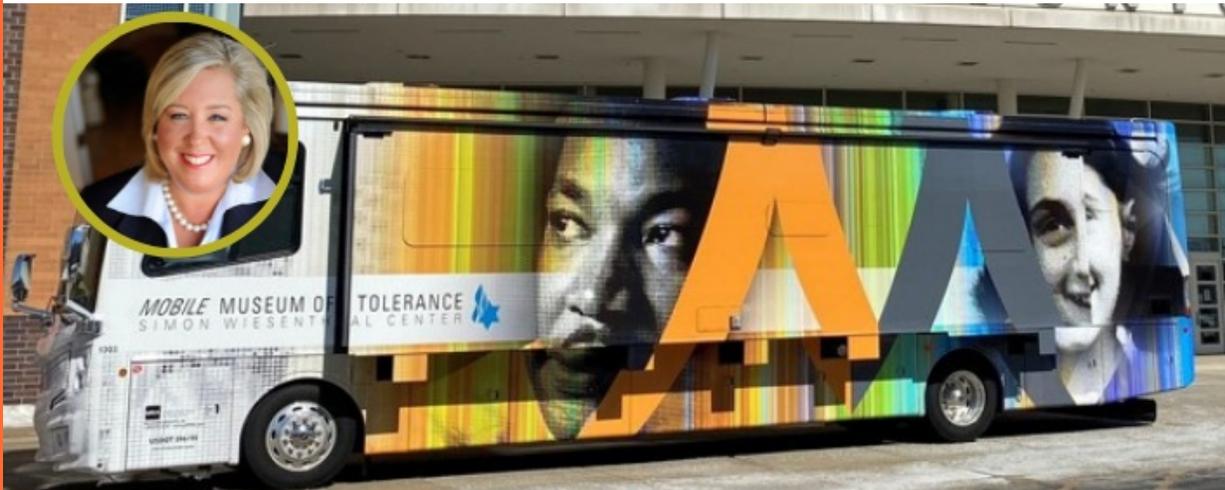


Rebecca Seawright



OUR TOWN 
The local paper for the Upper East Side

Seawright Announces Mobile Museum of Tolerance



As incidents of hate crimes continue to mount, a mobile museum is coming to teach tolerance and combat antisemitism and other forms of discrimination, thanks to \$1.5 million grant to the Simon Wiesenthal Center, Assembly Member Rebecca Seawright announced.

The state-of-the-art mobile education center will use an interactive theater and other technology to teach tolerance and combat all forms of discrimination by focusing on the Holocaust as well as an American civil rights experience as critical teaching moments.

Seawright joined forces with Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie and NYS Assembly Member Helene Weinstein, chair of the Assembly Ways and

Means Committee, to obtain the funding to fight the rising trend of hate crime.

Heastie thanked Seawright for her leadership “in bringing this innovative museum to New York so that people of all ages can learn from the past and celebrate our diverse communities.”

Seawright said: ***“I commend Speaker Heastie for his leadership in prioritizing tolerance and Holocaust education. I look forward to the Mobile Museum of Tolerance visiting the communities I represent on the Upper East Side, Yorkville and Roosevelt Island, areas that comprise the 76th Assembly District.”***

The mobile museum is modeled after the Wiesenthal Center’s hugely successful “Tour for Humanity” mobile tolerance vehicles in Chicago and Toronto, which reached hundreds of schools and thousands of students annually.

The Center is a global human rights organization that confronts antisemitism, hate and terrorism and teaches the lessons of the Holocaust for future generations. It is headquartered in Los Angeles and maintains offices in New York, Toronto, Chicago, Paris, Buenos Aires and Jerusalem. The mobile education museum, currently in the procurement phase, will allow access for tens of thousands of students, educators, law enforcement agencies, faith group and professionals to critical educational training on issues such as antisemitism, racism, bullying, stereotyping, hate and intolerance and promote diversity and human dignity.

Hate Crimes Increasing

Seawright said that reports of hate crimes have been steadily increasing over the past several years, citing recent NYPD statistics, some incidents hitting from close to home.

“In August of 2020, my community office was the subject of an antisemitic attack with white paint and an antisemitic note left at the door, with two more attacks subsequently on my district an campaign offices,” said Seawright.

According to the NYPD, Manhattan led the city’s record rise in hate crimes last year with 199 bias incidents. Brooklyn was next with 119 hate crimes, followed by Queens with 102, the Bronx with 44 and Staten Island with 17. Overall, police recorded 524 hate crimes last year, up 98% from the 260 in 2020.

Incidents of bias crimes against Asians rose most out of any group with 131 cases reported in 2021 compared to 128 in 2020, an increase of 368%. Crimes against Jews continued to lead the category with 191 incidents in 2021, up 40% from 128 in 2020.

In response, Seawright is sponsoring legislation to mandate the training or counseling in hate crime prevention and education for individuals convicted

of a hate crime. This legislation passed the Assembly unanimously with a vote of 145-0.

“Education and training are central to promoting tolerance and respect for others,” said Seawright. “Combined with vigilant law enforcement, this is essential to keeping our communities safe. Our legislation is key to confronting the surge of hate crimes we have witnessed in our city and state.”

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