



## **Remarks shared by Senator Sasha Renée Pérez during Every Person Has a Name**

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen, esteemed members of the Jewish Federation of the Greater San Gabriel and Pomona Valleys, and honored guests. My name is Sen. Sasha Renée Pérez, and it is a tremendous honor to be here with you this evening as we come together for this meaningful event.

This occasion serves as a moving reminder of our shared humanity, the value of remembering the past, and the resilience of community.

### **Remembrance of Lives Lost**

As we think about the countless lives that have been changed forever by the darkness of hatred and prejudice, we are reminded that “each name we honor this evening” represents a unique story and a real life, a relative, a loved one.

These names are more than words; they are reminders of laughter and dreams that were violently and systematically stopped and legacies that urge us to prevent genocides from being repeated.

The act of remembering is not merely an exercise; It’s our solemn promise to honor those who died.

### **The Current Climate**

Today, we find ourselves at a crucial juncture in our nation’s history, where antisemitism is alarmingly on the rise.

Under the guise of free speech, we are witnessing an unsettling resurgence that reminds us how fragile our hard-fought freedoms are.

Recent events and the rhetoric from various corners of our society have increased divisions, igniting old fears that we thought were left in the past.

We have witnessed the disturbing emergence of Nazi sympathizers who boldly flaunt their hateful ideology, emboldened by a climate that allows hate to spread unchecked.

This resurgence is a harsh reminder that we cannot afford to grow complacent. It is our responsibility to confront this hatred—every single one of us.

We must hold our national leaders accountable, demanding that they not only condemn these hateful ideologies but also work actively to ensure hate has no free pass in our society.

### **The Value of Community**

As we stand together, we also recognize the richness that each individual brings to the tapestry of our community.

Each name we read today embodies not just a memory but a legacy that inspires us to act with compassion and to embrace our differences.

In a time when division seems so prevalent, let us remember that our strength lies in diversity and in dialogue.

As your elected representative, I am committed to fostering an environment where kindness prevails, where every individual feels valued, and where our differences are celebrated, not merely tolerated.

It's more critical now than ever that we work together across all lines to promote understanding and healing.

### **A Call to Action**

Today, as we hold this vigil, let us pledge to honor their memories through our actions.

Let us refuse to let the hatred of the past creep into our present and future.

We must stand united against all forms of hatred, including the resurgent Nazi sympathizers who threaten the very fabric of our society.

We must protect the principles of inclusivity and acceptance that are the foundation of our democracy.

It is not enough to just remember; we must also act, advocate, and ensure that the ghosts of the past do not overshadow our future.

### **Final Thoughts**

Every name read stands as a testament to someone loved and cherished.

Every name reminds us of our collective responsibility to stand up for one another and the values we hold dear.

Together, let's honor every name and every story. Thank you.