

# Maryland Jewish Advocacy

DAY & RECEPTION 2018



## ***Operating Budget - \$2 Million for the School Safety Grant Program***

### ***What is the School Safety Grant Program?***

The School Safety Program is a new grant in the Governor's proposed FY19 budget. It was established because of successful legislation requested by Maryland's Jewish Community and introduced by Senator Manno and Delegate Pena-Melnyk in FY18. The Governor allocated \$2 million for this initiative in his proposed FY19 budget through the Governor's Office of Crime Control and Prevention. These grants will be used for infrastructure upgrades and security personnel for schools and childcare centers deemed at-risk for hate crimes or attacks, as determined by the Maryland Center for School Safety.

### ***Why is the School Safety Grant Program Good for Maryland?***

This grant aims to directly address the recent climate of fear and intimidation caused by rising hate/bias incidents in Maryland. According to the 2016 State of Maryland Hate/Bias Report authored by the Maryland State Police, reported hate crimes rose by 40% from 2015 to 2016. These reported incidents not only targeted individuals but attacked some of our state's most vital arenas for community engagement, including schools, community centers, and childcare facilities. Many of these are small and locally run organizations which do not have the funding available to implement necessary physical and technological changes to upgrade their security, leaving those who need their services at-risk. Through the grants implemented by the School Safety Grant Program, schools and childcare facilities can create a safer environment for children, both mitigating future threats and diminishing the climate of fear which has manifested among some of Maryland's targeted communities.

### ***How Does the School Safety Grant Program Impact Maryland's Jewish Community?***

Last year, Maryland's Jewish community faced a frightening string of bomb threats against its day schools and community centers, including several local preschools housed within Jewish Community Centers. These incidents were only one part of a larger trend. In 2016, the Jewish community was the 2<sup>nd</sup> most common target of hate/bias incidents reported to the Maryland State Police, with anti-Semitic incidents accounting for 18.6% of reported crimes. It is our duty therefore to protect our community's most vulnerable members in preparation for a potential incident. These protections, such as adding security personnel, installing cameras, or improving lighting, will be funded through the School Safety Grant Program.

### ***What Can Be Done?***

Tell your legislator that you support The School Safety Grant Program's \$2 million allocation in the Governor's proposed FY19 budget.