

Congressman Rothman Calls on FBI to Investigate Hate Crimes Against NJ Synagogues

“This is not Damascus or Baghdad. Residential communities, like those here in New Jersey, should never be attacked.”

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

January 11, 2012

CONTACT: Aaron Keyak

office: (202) 225-5061

cell: (202) 905-6361

aaron.keyak@mail.house.gov

Washington, DC – Congressman Steve Rothman (D-NJ) released the following statement:

Today’s attack on Congregation Beth El in Rutherford, NJ is the fourth hate crime targeting a local synagogue in the past month and is being treated as an attempted murder case. The Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) must investigate this latest attack and the disturbing trend of hate crimes against New Jersey synagogues over the past month. I have contacted the offices of FBI Director, Robert S. Mueller III, and US Attorney for the District of New Jersey, Paul J. Fishman, to demand immediate action.

This is not Damascus or Baghdad. Residential communities, like those here in New Jersey, should never be attacked. I demand that the FBI and the US Attorney’s Office pool all of their resources with the outstanding Bergen County Prosecutor’s Office and Rutherford police department to solve this crime.

I want to thank the Rutherford Fire Department for responding so quickly and so ably, and preventing an even more tragic outcome, including the loss of lives. I also commend the Bergen County Prosecutor’s Office, the Bergen County Police Department, the Bergen County Sherriff’s Office, and the Rutherford Police Department for their quick response to this incident.

Earlier this morning, an explosive device was thrown through the bedroom window of Rabbi Nosson Schuman and his wife. The building of Congregation Beth El is a synagogue, school, and home. Thank God, the Rabbi only suffered burns to one of his hands, but this attack endangered the lives of the Rabbi, his wife, his father, and his five children.

In New Jersey, and throughout our nation, we must continue our fight to root out bigotry and hate crimes. Those who perpetrated all of these crimes must be prosecuted to the fullest extent of the law. We are a nation of laws and those laws must be enforced.

I am working with federal, state, and local authorities to make certain that the children, Rabbis, wives, mothers, fathers, all members of the Jewish community, and all of our communities can feel safe once again.

###