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| |  |  | | --- | --- | | **For Immediate Release:** | **Contact:** [Neal A. Patel](mailto:neal_patel@heller.senate.gov) | | March 1, 2017 | 202-224-6244 |   **Heller, Heinrich Introduce Legislation To Safeguard JCCs And Other Faith-Based Community Centers** Legislation would add Homeland Security Grant Program funds to be used to safeguard faith-based community centers across the United States and increase the federal penalty against making false bomb threats.  **(Washington, DC)**– U.S. Senators Dean Heller (R-NV) and Martin Heinrich (D-NM) introduced bipartisan legislation to ensure that the Department of Homeland Security provides state and local law enforcement with adequate resources to protect faith-based community centers across the United States.  The Senators have been deeply concerned with the significant number of bomb threats facing Jewish Community Centers (JCCs). In three weeks alone, JCCs saw 63 bomb threats, forcing the evacuations of hundreds across the country.  "Anti-Semitism or any kind of discrimination should never be tolerated. I'm proud to partner with my friend Senator Heinrich to combat the recent threats that have caused havoc and evacuations at Jewish community centers across the country. We must take measures to prevent these actions from occurring. This legislation provides our communities with the resources needed to stop these despicable and hateful acts," **said Senator Dean Heller**.  "Anti-Semitism, or any faith-based targeting, is unacceptable -- period.  Yesterday alone, there were 20 new bomb threats across 11 states.  These threats aim to introduce fear into our communities and must not be tolerated," **said Senator Martin Heinrich**. "This legislation would help ensure that community centers like the JCC's have the added protection they need and can focus on serving the community, while the FBI and our Justice Department track down those responsible."  **Background:**  The bill would provide 20 million dollars in additional funding to the Department of Homeland Security under the existing State Homeland Security Grant Program specifically dedicated to safeguarding faith-based community centers. Additionally, it would double the federal penalty against making fake bomb threats from five years to ten years.  A copy of the bill text is available [here](http://ct.symplicity.com/t/hnh/2216a34d1e61ea6496aeded63107594f/331484213/realurl=http:/www.heinrich.senate.gov/download/billtextfaithbasedcommunitycenters).  ###  [http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_fb.png](http://www.facebook.com/pages/US-Senator-Dean-Heller/325751330177) [http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_tw.png](http://twitter.com/SenDeanHeller) [http://www.heller.senate.gov/public/vendor/_skins/heller/images/newsletter/icon_yt.png](http://www.youtube.com/user/SenDeanHeller) |