

Ohio Jewish Caucus urges vigilance after Michigan attack

CASEY COUCH

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Members of the Ohio Jewish Caucus gathered at the Mandel Jewish Community Center in Beachwood on March 12 – hours after the attack on Temple Israel in West Bloomfield, Mich. – for a community meeting, in which they encouraged constituents to remain vigilant and communicative about their needs in the state.

In attendance were: Rep. Eric Synenberg, D-Beachwood; Sen. Casey Weinstein, D-Hudson; House Minority Leader Dani Isaacsohn, D-Cincinnati; Rep. Beryl Brown Piccolantonio, D-Gahanna; Rep. Karen Brownlee, D-Symmes Township; and Rep. Christine Cockley, D-Columbus, who all spoke on the collective responsibility they carry representing the Jewish community in Congress during the program. Marc Ashed, assistant vice president

CAUCUS | CONTINUED ON PAGE 4



▲ Moderator Marc Ashed poses for a photo with members of the Ohio Jewish Caucus. From left is Sen. Casey Weinstein, Rep. Beryl Brown Piccolantonio, House Minority Leader Dani Isaacsohn, Rep. Karen Brownlee, Rep. Christine Cockley and Rep. Eric Synenberg. | CJN Photo / Casey Couch

THE IMPACT OF HATE

A community under strain: An opportunity to choose hope and resilience

PART 2 OF 2

“Whoever fights monsters should see to it that in the process he does not become a monster.”
– German Philosopher Friedrich Nietzsche

DAVID HERTZ

Special to the CJN

The rabbi’s email questioned how Oberlin College and Conservatory handled a short protest in May 2025 on the Israel-Gaza conflict. In my capacity as chief of staff at Oberlin, I offered a response meant to be measured and

reassuring. His reply took me aback.

“To be honest, I wasn’t expecting a response at all,” he wrote. “However, if I were going to get a response, I would have liked it to be from one of the non-Jewish people to whom I sent my email – and not from the designated Jew.”

Designated Jew. The insult stung with special poignance. It came from within the Jewish community. From a spiritual teacher. And it raised questions about how deeply hate had cut into the Jewish community’s reservoir of civility, depriving Jews of their ability to debate without hate, animosity, or insult.

In the second of this two-part series,

Middlebury College sociologist Ted Sasson sees a growing reluctance within the Jewish community to bridge differences, to break bread at the Shabbat table with people who hold vastly different political views, particularly about Israel.

Are his comments isolated observations about a community that is proud of its ability to discuss differences even as it unites against antisemitism? As Jews approach Passover, are we destined to dread debates about Israel around the seder table, even as we retell the story of our ancestor’s liberation?

Lee C. Shapiro, regional director of the American Jewish Committee in Cleveland, holds

out hope that members of the American Jewish community continue to embrace one another, even as they may engage in strong debate.

“Like many Jews, I have family and friends who disagree on Israeli policy,” she recently told the Cleveland Jewish News. “Whether at a holiday meal, a Shabbat dinner, or a chance meeting at the grocery store, we talk, we argue, we disagree – sometimes we agree to disagree. But, at the end of the day, we believe in Israel’s right to exist in safety and security. And, we

HATE | CONTINUED ON PAGE 6

INSIDE

Rabbi resigns after being banned from college campus. **Page 10**

Rep. Miller receives antisemitic death threat. **Page 13**

University Heights State of the City address. **Page 14**

Beachwood State of the City address. **Page 16**

Advertising special sections. **Starting on Page 35**