

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 7, 2017

The Honorable John F. Kelly
Secretary
U.S. Department of Homeland Security
3801 Nebraska Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20016

The Honorable Jeff Sessions
Attorney General
U.S. Department of Justice
950 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20530

The Honorable James B. Comey
Director
Federal Bureau of Investigation
935 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW
Washington, DC 20535

Dear Secretary Kelly, Attorney General Sessions, and Director Comey:

We write to underscore the need for swift action with regard to the deeply troubling series of anonymous bomb threats made against Jewish Community Centers (JCCs), Jewish Day Schools, Synagogues and other buildings affiliated with Jewish organizations or institutions across the country. We thank you for your recent efforts and ask that you inform us of the actions that your Departments plan to take to address threats against these and other religious institutions. We stand ready to work with you to ensure that these centers can continue to serve their communities free from violence and intimidation.

It has become clear that threats of violence against individual JCCs are not isolated incidents. According to the Jewish Federations of North America, in the first two months of 2017 alone, at least 98 incidents against JCCs and Jewish Day Schools at 81 locations in 33 states have been reported. These cowardly acts aim to create an atmosphere of fear and disrupt the important programs and services offered by JCCs to everyone in the communities they serve, including in our states. In addition to reports of incidents at JCCs and Jewish Day Schools, there have been incidents at cemeteries in both St. Louis and Philadelphia involving the desecration of Jewish headstones. This is completely unacceptable and un-American.

We are concerned that the number of incidents is accelerating and failure to address and deter these threats will place innocent people at risk and threaten the financial viability of JCCs, many of which are institutions in their communities. Your Departments can provide crucial assistance by helping JCCs, Jewish Day Schools and Synagogues improve their physical security, deterring threats from being made, and investigating and prosecuting those making these threats or who may

seek to act on these threats in the future. We encourage you to communicate with individual JCCs, the JCC Association of North America, Jewish Day Schools, Synagogues and other Jewish community institutions regarding victim assistance, grant opportunities or other federal assistance that may be available to enhance security measures and improve preparedness. We also recognize the anti-Semitic sentiment behind this spate of threats and encourage your Departments to continue to inform state and local law enforcement organizations of their obligations under the Hate Crime Statistics Act and other federal laws.

We are ready to work with you to address this pressing issue, and we look forward to your responses about the actions you intend to take to address, deter, and prevent this threat.

Sincerely,



Gary C. Peters
United States Senator



Rob Portman
United States Senator



Bill Nelson
United States Senator



Marco Rubio
United States Senator



Charles E. Schumer
United States Senator



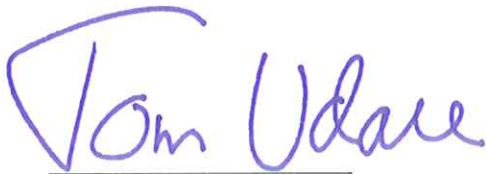
Mitch McConnell
United States Senator



Richard J. Durbin
United States Senator



John Cornyn
United States Senator



Tom Udall
United States Senator



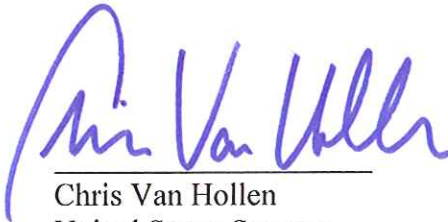
Deb Fischer
United States Senator



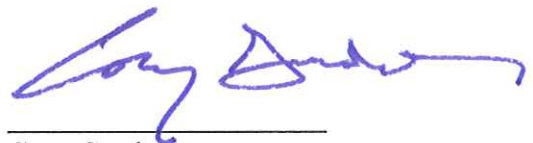
Thomas R. Carper
United States Senator



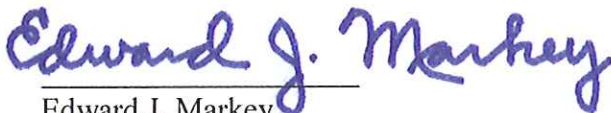
Shelley Moore Capito
United States Senator



Chris Van Hollen
United States Senator



Cory Gardner
United States Senator



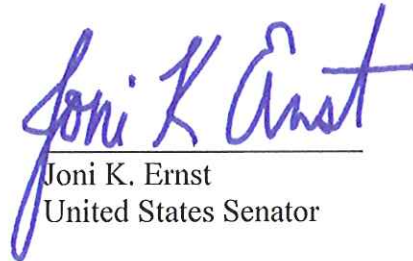
Edward J. Markey
United States Senator



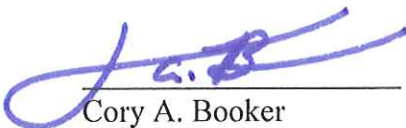
Thom Tillis
United States Senator



Joe Manchin III
United States Senator



Joni K. Ernst
United States Senator



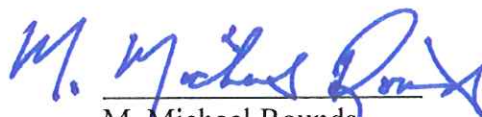
Cory A. Booker
United States Senator



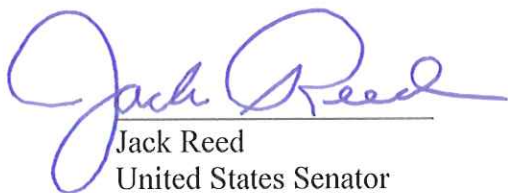
Dan Sullivan
United States Senator

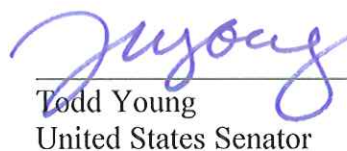


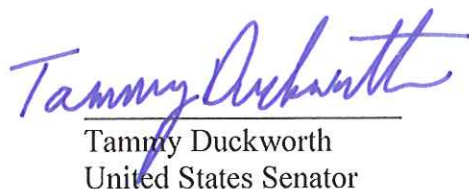
Maria Cantwell
United States Senator

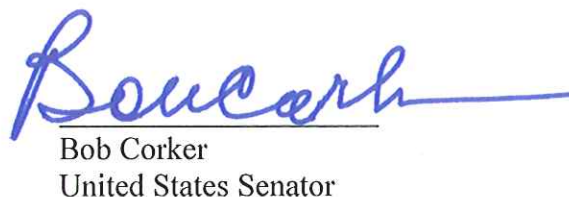


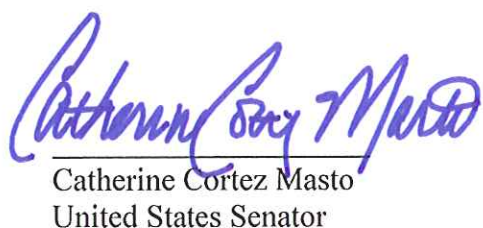
M. Michael Rounds
United States Senator

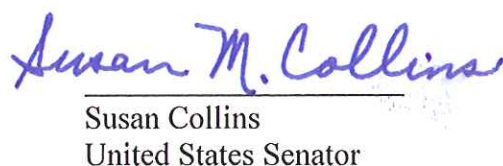

Jack Reed
United States Senator

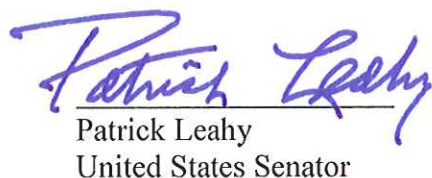

Todd Young
United States Senator

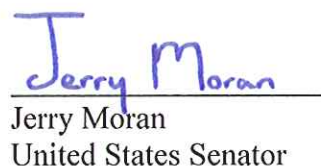

Tammy Duckworth
United States Senator

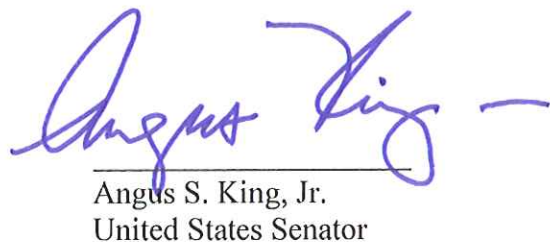

Bob Corker
United States Senator


Catherine Cortez Masto
United States Senator


Susan Collins
United States Senator

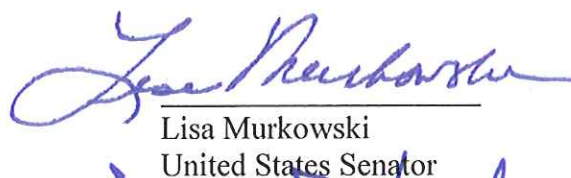

Patrick Leahy
United States Senator

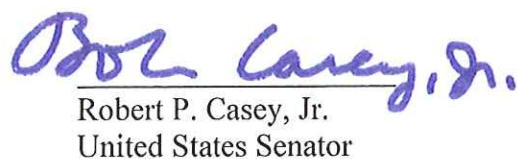

Jerry Moran
United States Senator

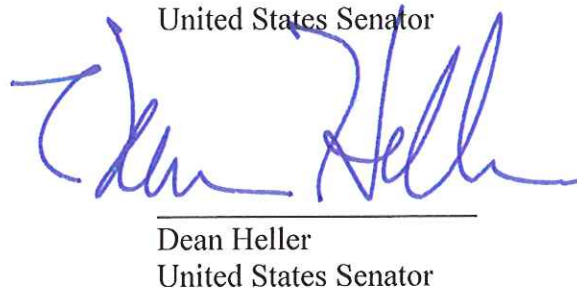

Angus S. King, Jr.
United States Senator


Roy Blunt
United States Senator


Sheldon Whitehouse
United States Senator


Lisa Murkowski
United States Senator


Robert P. Casey, Jr.
United States Senator


Dean Heller
United States Senator



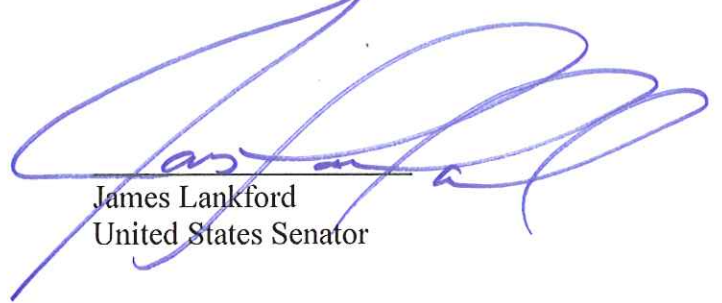
Debbie Stabenow
United States Senator



Ron Johnson
United States Senator



Robert Menendez
United States Senator



James Lankford
United States Senator



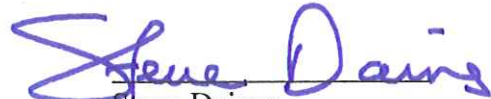
Margaret Wood Hassan
United States Senator



Johnny Isakson
United States Senator



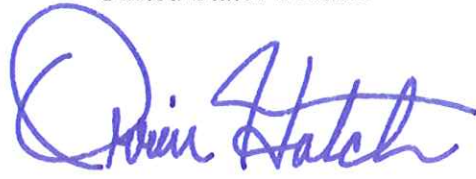
Kirsten Gillibrand
United States Senator



Steve Daines
United States Senator



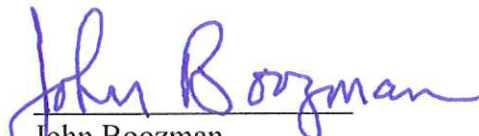
Mazie K. Hirono
United States Senator



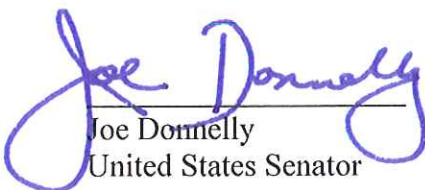
Orrin Hatch
United States Senator



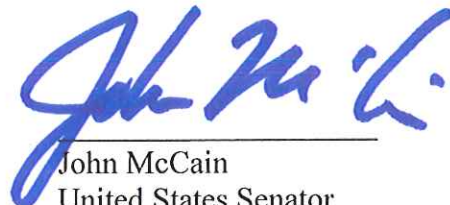
Sherrod Brown
United States Senator



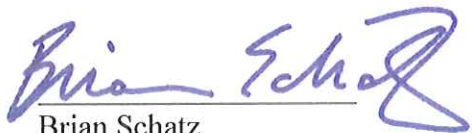
John Boozman
United States Senator



Joe Donnelly
United States Senator



John McCain
United States Senator



Brian Schatz
United States Senator



Bill Cassidy, M.D.
United States Senator



Richard Blumenthal
United States Senator



James M. Inhofe
United States Senator



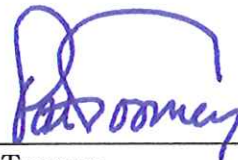
Jeanne Shaheen
United States Senator



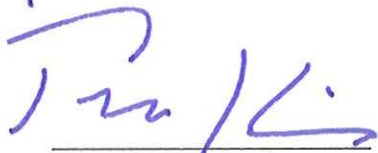
Tom Cotton
United States Senator



Elizabeth Warren
United States Senator



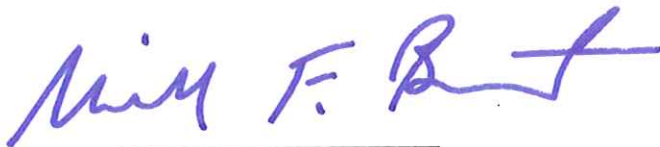
Pat Toomey
United States Senator



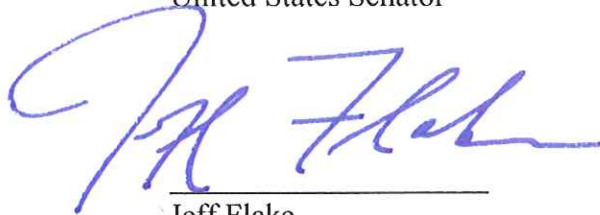
Tim Kaine
United States Senator



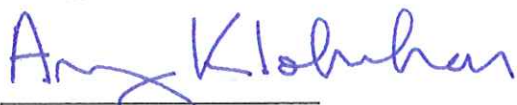
Lindsey O. Graham
United States Senator



Michael F. Bennet
United States Senator



Jeff Flake
United States Senator



Amy Klobuchar
United States Senator



Lamar Alexander
United States Senator



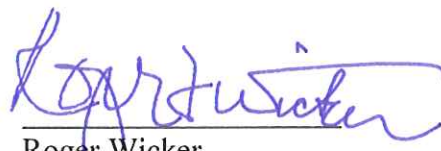
Bernard Sanders
United States Senator



John Kennedy
United States Senator



Martin Heinrich
United States Senator



Roger Wicker
United States Senator



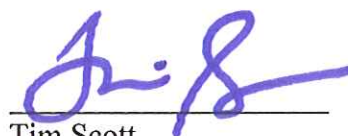
Jeffrey A. Merkley
United States Senator



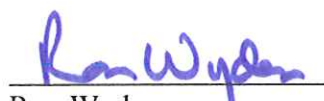
John Thune
United States Senator



Tammy Baldwin
United States Senator



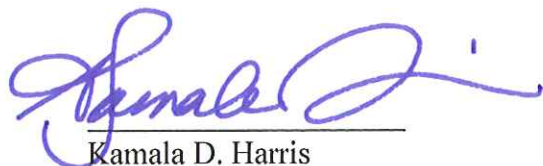
Tim Scott
United States Senator



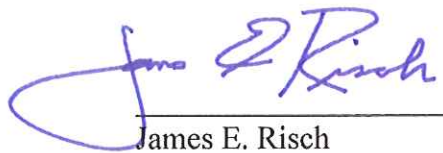
Ron Wyden
United States Senator



Pat Roberts
United States Senator



Kamala D. Harris
United States Senator



James E. Risch
United States Senator



Claire McCaskill
United States Senator



Richard Burr
United States Senator

Christopher A. Coons
United States Senator

John Hoeven
United States Senator

Patty Murray
United States Senator

David Perdue
United States Senator

Al Franken
United States Senator

Luther Strange
United States Senator

Benjamin L. Cardin
United States Senator

Thad Cochran
United States Senator

Jon Tester
United States Senator

Richard Shelby
United States Senator

Mark R. Warner
United States Senator

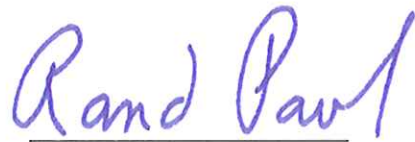
Charles E. Grassley
United States Senator

Dianne Feinstein
United States Senator

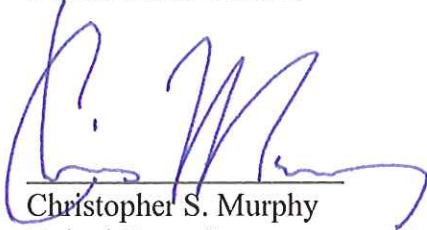
Ted Cruz
United States Senator



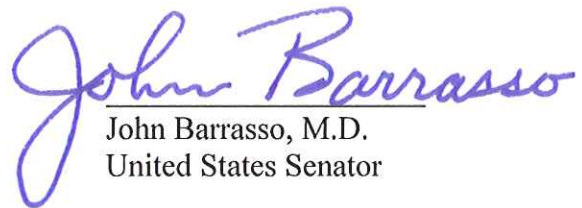
Heidi Heitkamp
United States Senator



Rand Paul
United States Senator



Christopher S. Murphy
United States Senator



John Barrasso, M.D.
United States Senator



Ben Sasse
United States Senator



Mike Crapo
United States Senator



Michael S. Lee
United States Senator



Michael B. Enzi
United States Senator