



Congregation B'nai Avraham

117 Remsen Street, Brooklyn Heights, NY 11201

Phone (718) 596-4840 • Fax (718) 802-1827

www.bnaiavraham.com

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Rabbi Aaron L. Raskin
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Sheldon Silver
Assembly Speaker
Assembly of the State of New York
64th Assembly District
250 Broadway, Suite 2307
New York, N.Y. 10017
Fax: 212-312-1418

CC: Rory Lancman
25th District
77-40 170th St.
Fresh Meadows, N.Y. 11366
Fax: 718-820-0414

Dear Speaker Silver:

As the Rabbi of Congregation B'nai Avraham and head of the Chabad community in Brooklyn Heights, I personally request your full support for the groundbreaking Libel Terrorism Protection Act (Bill No. A9652), to protect New York and American authors from meritless libel charges in foreign courts. Please help it to pass as quickly as possible.

A Saudi billionaire sued Dr. Rachel Ehrenfeld, author of *Funding Evil; How Terrorism is Financed - And How to Stop It*, in Great Britain—although she is a New Yorker and American, and her book was not on sale in the U.K. Since British libel laws are plaintiff friendly, London has become a mecca for libel tourists using the British courts to intimidate authors worldwide. The case against Dr. Ehrenfeld—like 40 previous cases that silenced many other New York and American authors—is an obvious attempt to dilute First Amendment protections of free speech and free press, intimidate and prevent investigations of Saudi terror-financing.

As an Orthodox Rabbi, I consider it extremely important that we obtain immediate passage of New York's Libel Terrorism Protection Act. HaShem helps those who help themselves. It is therefore our duty to fully educate ourselves—and to let the press educate us—concerning our enemies. This is

an important means of preventing another 9/11.

I'm sure you'll agree that this bill is therefore a matter of utmost importance to all New Yorkers, whatever their religious belief.

The law would update the New York state long arm statutes governing business relationships with distant enterprises, to protect the rights of New Yorkers and Americans against spurious foreign libel claims. It would protect citizens' rights to education by a free press, and enable journalists to expose terror funding without fear. It will also set an example for other U.S. states, and provide a template for a powerful potential U.S. federal statute.

Without this legislation, libel standards set by a Saudi billionaire and other libel tourists will prevail. While Saudi plaintiffs' implication in terror-funding has been well-established by reputable sources, they have sued or threatened to sue over 40 journalists in the British courts—and have prevailed in all these libel cases but Ehrenfeld's. Yet not one of those cases was tried on its merits.

Again, I personally appeal to you to raise Judiciary Committee and Assembly-wide support and pass this critical bill.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Aaron L. Raskin". The signature is fluid and cursive, with the first name "Aaron" and last name "Raskin" clearly legible.

Rabbi Aaron L. Raskin