

# Press



# Release

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## For Immediate Release

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### **Legislator Wieder Among Those Working To Aid Bronx Fire Victims**

#### **‘We Can All Help Those Who Lost Everything They Owned’**

Tragic Fire Claimed 17 Lives, Including Eight Children

*Working With Masbia Nonprofit Relief Organization, Food, Clothing, Household Items, And More Provided To Recovering Families*

New City, NY (Jan. 21, 2022) – Rockland County Legislator Aron Wieder is among those working to bring relief to families devastated by the tragic Bronx fire that claimed 17 lives, including eight children.

Joining with the nonprofit Masbia relief organization, Legislator Wieder has helped deliver food, water, and other items to a local mosque where many residents took refuge after being forced from the apartment building where they lived.

Legislator Wieder also joined in helping families replace lost items during a shopping trip to Target, including new clothing, household goods, toiletries and more.

“It’s not just about the stuff,” Legislator Wieder said. “The purpose is to show that we have sympathy, compassion. We’re all in this together. Any one of us could find ourselves in this situation – homeless and with just the clothing we were wearing when we escaped the fire. I am grateful for the opportunity to be able to help and to send a message that I, and the entire community, care about our neighbors.”

Among those stepping up immediately to assist the fire victims was Masbia Soup Kitchen, also referred to as Masbia Relief, a Brooklyn-based nonprofit organization that describes its mission as a Jewish community response to bring relief to people affected by disasters.

Legislator Wieder partnered with Masbia and its CEO, Alex Rapaport, as well as numerous other members of the Jewish community last summer to launch a massive relief effort for the benefit of the people of Haiti following the devastating earthquake there. The effort was launched in Spring Valley, home to many people of Haitian descent and which Legislator Wieder represents.

Since the Haiti relief effort, Masbia has assisted tornado victims in Kentucky, Afghan refugees who fled their homeland and are currently staying at Fort Dix Army Base, and now the Bronx fire.

“When a tragedy like this happens, the only people who can help are the ones who were not involved in the tragedy itself,” Masbia CEO Rapaport said. “But what’s truly heart-warming is not that the call for help goes out, but that so many hear it and respond in whatever way they can.”

The high-rise apartment building blaze has impacted 118 households, with many of the residents Gambian immigrants. Relief efforts also include New York State and City relief funds to help displaced residents restore their living situations and funeral expenses paid by rap singer Cardi B, who hails from the Bronx. The local Gambian Youths Organization has raised \$1 million. Masbia continues to raise funds to aid additional families in meeting their immediate needs, including clothing, footwear, laundry supplies, pots and pans, plates and glasses, etc.

For the ongoing trips to Target, Masbia coordinates bus transport for the fire victims to the store and back to the hotel where many are currently residing, as well as delivery of the items they shopped for.

“It takes a lot of time, coordination and of course, money, to make all of this happen,” Legislator Wieder said. “I sincerely thank everyone who has joined in this effort to help people who, in some cases, not only lost their home, but family members, some of them children. As a father and grandfather, I cannot imagine their pain.”

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