



## Brown Introduces Legislation to Support Volunteer Firefighters

"If enacted, this fund would provide meaningful financial stipends to volunteer firefighter"

By Senator Rosemary Brown

HARRISBURG - In communities across Pennsylvania, volunteer firefighters play a critical role in ensuring our safety and security. These dedicated men and women respond to emergencies at all hours, often risking their lives to protect others.

The number of volunteer firefighters has plummeted from approximately 360,000 in the 1970s to just 30,000–38,000 today. This sharp decline is not just a statistic—it's a growing threat to public safety and the long-term viability of our fire services. That's why I've introduced legislation to create the Pennsylvania Volunteer Firefighter Incentive Fund.

If enacted, this fund would provide meaningful financial stipends to volunteer firefighters who have at least three years of active service, respond to at least 60% of emergency calls annually, and are Pennsylvania residents actively serving in a volunteer fire company.

Eligibility would be verified annually by each company's fire chief. As a legislator, my priority is to safeguard our communities and provide resources to address challenges like this. I firmly believe that we must act now to reverse the downward trend in volunteer firefighting numbers.

This initiative is about more than just incentives; it's about recognizing the incredible commitment of these volunteers. Transitioning to a statewide paid fire service would be a costly alternative, and I'm determined to ensure we support the volunteers who serve out of passion and pride for their communities.

Our firefighters deserve our support, and I'm confident that this legislation will make a difference in recruitment, retention, and the future of public safety in Pennsylvania.

Click here to view my proposal <https://pasen.us21.list-manage.com/track/click?u=ad42733add2d5dc5f4866819b&id=0f08f96db2&e=e033a225ee>.



## Welcome Home! Three Hostages Released

By Jewish Federation of the Lehigh Valley

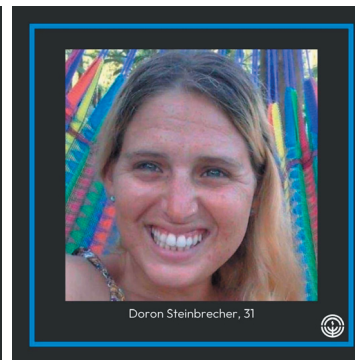
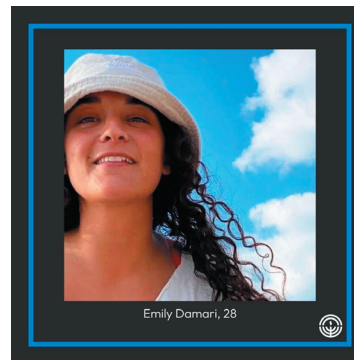
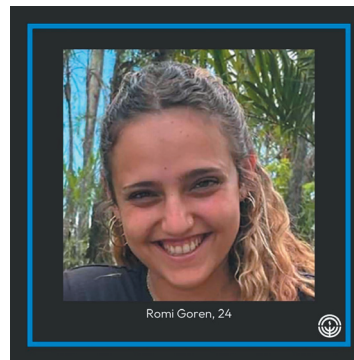
LEHIGH VALLEY - The Jewish community today is overwhelmed with emotion as we welcome Romi Gonen, Emily Damari, and Doron Steinbrecher, back home after 471 days in captivity.

Romi Gonen was shot and kidnapped from the Nova music festival. Emily Damari, the last remaining British hostage in Gaza, was also shot when she was abducted. Doron Steinbrecher was taken from her home at Kibbutz Kfar Aza.

Every day for over 15 months, we have been thinking about them, praying for them, and advocating for their release. They have lived through an unimaginable nightmare, and our community will do whatever we can to help them on the long journey of healing and reintegration that lies ahead of them.

We are hopeful that over the coming weeks, we will see continued hostage releases until every last one of the remaining 95 hostages are returned home.

Israel says the three women appear to be in good health, but they will undergo medical examinations at a military base immediately upon their arrival. The women were in Hamas custody for 471 days.



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