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**WRITTEN TESTIMONY**

**Senate Bill 528 - Income Tax - Credit for Nonpublic School Student Bus  
 Transportation Expenses**

**Budget and Taxation Committee**

**January 31, 2024**

**SUPPORT**

**Background:** Senate Bill 528, (SB528) would establish a refundable income tax credit for parents for the cost of daily bus transportation for their child to or from a nonpublic school that participates in the Nonpublic Schools Textbook and Technology Grants Program. The maximum value of the tax credit would be \$1,500 per a student. SB528 comes from the *Task Force to Study Nonpublic Student Bus Transportation* which recommended that the state provide an income tax credit to help cover the cost of student transportation.

**Written Comments:** The Baltimore Jewish Council supports excellence in education. Area Jewish Day schools educate more than 8,000 students. Many of these students walk to school every day on busy roads, including Park Heights Avenue, because they do not have access to other transportation. This is a serious safety issue, not only because young children are walking on unsafe streets, but because many of these children are visibly Jewish. There have unfortunately been incidents of hate crimes and hate bias incidents in our community on roads like Park Heights Avenue where Jewish people have been both verbally and physically assaulted. The BJC is concerned about the sudden and extreme increase in antisemitism and the potential safety implications it has for visibly Jewish students walking to school. SB528 would help provide a safe transportation option for students in our community.

Further, The Baltimore Jewish Council and The Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore are committed to repairing our world. We represent The Pearlstone Center in Reisterstown, MD, a conference center and farm that employs and teaches sustainable practices. If enacted, SB528 would mean fewer cars on the road, and less stalling in front of school and wasted gas, all of which would have a positive impact on the environment.

For these reasons, the Baltimore Jewish Council asks for a favorable report on SB528.

*The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of the Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, its agencies and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.*

BALTIMORE JEWISH COUNCIL

5750 Park Heights Avenue, Suite 329 • Baltimore, Maryland 21215  
 410-542-4850 • fax 410-542-4834 • baltjc.org

Member of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs

Baltimore Jewish Council is an agency of The Associated

 **The Associated**  
 Jewish Federation of Baltimore

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