



**Testimony in SUPPORT of *House Bill 748* –  
*Commission on Hate Crime Response and Prevention* –  
*Code of Conduct*  
**Judiciary Committee**  
**February 20, 2024****

The Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington (JCRC) serves as the public affairs and community relations arm of the Jewish community. We represent over 100 Jewish organizations and synagogues throughout Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. The JCRC is strongly committed to cultivating a society based on freedom, justice, and pluralism. We work throughout the region to advocate for our agencies that serve the most vulnerable residents and to campaign for important policy interests on behalf of the Jewish community and all Marylanders.

House Bill 748- Commission on Hate Crime Response and Prevention – Code of Conduct requires that the Attorney General make public a code of conduct for members of the Commission on Hate Crime Response and Prevention as well as a policy for investigating violations of the code of conduct. This Bill also gives the Attorney General the power to remove a member who has violated the code of conduct and to establish a process for the public to report conduct that is antithetical to the Commission.

The Commission is charged with eradicating hate crimes and bias incidents and supporting individuals and communities victimized by hate. It cannot achieve those ends if its members do not abide by a code of conduct. It also cannot function if the Attorney General has no power to remove a member who violates that code of conduct.

In short, if a member of the Hate Crime Prevention Commission espouses hateful language, that member should not be allowed to continue serving and the Attorney General must have the authority to remove them. Words matter and words have consequences. The JCRC supports House Bill 748 as a mechanism to hold Commission members to the highest level of decency and responsibility.