



**Maryland General Assembly
House Judiciary Committee**

March 6, 2024

Testimony of Meredith R. Weisel

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ADL (the Anti-Defamation League) is pleased to submit this testimony in **opposition** to **House Bill 1124, Civil Actions – Nonprofit Organizations – Unauthorized Support of Israeli Settlement Activity (Not on Our Dime Act)**.

Since 1913, the mission of ADL (the Anti-Defamation League) has been to “stop the defamation of the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment to all.” As a leading anti-hate organization, for decades one of the most important ways in which ADL has fought against bigotry and antisemitism has been by investigating extremist threats across the ideological spectrum, producing research to inform the public, and working with law enforcement, educators, the tech industry, and elected leaders to promote best practices to effectively address and counter these threats.

HB1124 is a dangerous and discriminatory proposal that would put many Jewish communal nonprofits in Maryland at risk at a time of rising antisemitism and hate. While purporting to seek to curb “support” for “Israeli settlement activity,” the bill’s overly broad language arguably sweeps much further, and could subject many nonprofit organizations here in Maryland doing critical humanitarian work *far removed* from the conduct described in the bill to severe and disproportionate penalties.

Not only that, but the bill’s language seeks to inject Maryland enforcement authorities as arbiters in an international conflict between Israelis and Palestinians, ignoring current realities on the ground and presupposing borders in which tax enforcement authorities should operate, which are yet to be negotiated between the parties in a final status agreement.

Finally, and regardless of intent, this bill would necessarily have a chilling effect on the work of Jewish and pro-Israel charitable organizations, and the willingness of individuals to lead or work for them, particularly where the bill contemplates a 10-year statute of limitations and penalties of not less than \$1 million – including for directors, officers, or “any other agent” of the non-profit. We are deeply familiar with the complex issues surrounding the Israeli-Palestinian conflict, and we are fierce advocates for dialogue that advances lasting peace. This bill does not achieve that goal. Instead, it sows greater division among Marylanders and distracts from the important work that our legislators do for our state each and every day.

**We urge the House Judiciary Committee to give
HB1124 an unfavorable report.**