

**HB1124 – FAV**

**Evelyn Frankl, 728 Easley Street, Silver Spring, MD 20910**

Good afternoon Mr. Chair, Madam Co-chair and members,

My name is Evie Frankl, resident of District 20 and testifying today in favor of HB1124 aka the 'Not on Our Dime Act'.

I attended a meeting recently here in Annapolis at which a member of this body began his remarks by saying this would be a bare bones legislative session, meaning that not many revenue-requiring bills would be passed because our state has no money to fund them.

Without entering that quagmire, it seems safe to say that tax breaks to organizations that support illegal activity should be off the table. That is, in essence, what HB1124 does: it prohibits tax-exempt organizations from supporting illegal activity.

Maryland gives tax exempt status to organizations which are providing a public good which without this status would be able to do less good. Our laws say: "Keep your share of money that would go to fund our schools, our healthcare, our affordable housing and renters' assistance, our infrastructure. You have permission to not pay your share toward remedying these dire needs because, in Maryland's opinion, the GOOD you are doing replaces that contribution."

According to PBS News: 'The Biden administration on Friday (Feb. 22<sup>nd</sup>) restored a U.S. legal finding dating back nearly 50 years that Israeli settlements in the occupied Palestinian territories are "illegitimate" under international law.' Therefore, once again, the US government agrees that settlements in Israeli territories – which HB1124 defines as the West Bank and East Jerusalem – are illegal.

I could write pages about the damage wrought by these settlements which I witnessed personally on a 2019 trip to the West Bank – the safety concerns, the brutality of the IDF, the impossible mess that travel has become, the destruction of homes and livelihoods, the appropriation of water and other resources for settlers over the Palestinian residents.

But the simple truth is that these settlements are illegal, and the amount of Maryland taxpayer dollars should not be reduced because there are those who ignore this illegality. Math plus ethics equals: Vote 'yes' on HB1124.

Thank you.