

**Testimony in Support of HB0071
Holocaust Education Assistance Grant Program**

April 2, 2025

FAVORABLE

TO: Sen. Brian Feldman, Chair, Sen. Cheryl Kagan, Vice Chair and members of the Senate Education, Energy and Environment Committee.

My name is Lesley Frost and I am the Co Chair of National Council of Jewish Women, Maryland State Policy Advocacy Committee (NCJW MD SPA) and I am writing to express our strong support for HB 0071, Holocaust Education Assistance Grant Program.

Our support is based on NCJW resolution IV “Ensure and advance individual and civil rights”, and specifically on resolution IV.10, “The historically accurate study of the Holocaust and other acts of genocide as part of the regular curriculum in all schools.”

As we have witnessed a historic increase in antisemitic attacks in our schools, the advocates of NCJW, who live across the state, support legislation that provides assistance to our local school systems to increase and enhance Holocaust education. Maryland requires high schoolers to take history courses, which include lessons on the Holocaust. However, a 2020 report conducted by the Claims Conference that “studied young people’s familiarity.....ranked Maryland in the bottom 10 states for Holocaust knowledge.” In addition, the absence of appropriate instruction in the lower grades results in students whose knowledge and behavior are inadequate to mitigate the roots of the current spike in antisemitic incidents.

Maryland should have a public school program that addresses the need for Holocaust education with measures of success that confirm the merit of such programs. The grant-based approach to Holocaust education in HB0071 would allow for such targeted approaches to succeed. On behalf of the more than 700 advocates of the National Council of Jewish Women in Maryland, I urge the committee to support HB0071, Holocaust Education Assistance Grant Program.

Thank you for considering this testimony.

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