



Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
Testimony: SB0293 – County Boards of Education – Antibias Training for Members – Requirement (County Board Member Antibias Training Act)
Organization: Jewish Community Relations Council of Howard County, MD
Submitting: Laura Salganik, Chair
Position: FAVORABLE
Hearing Date: January 29, 2025

Dear Chair Feldman and Committee Members:

The Jewish Community Relations Council is submitting this testimony in favor of SB0293 which requires each member of a county board of education to receive antibias training at least once during the member's term. Last year, the legislature required antibias training for school employees, and we believe it is critically important for Board of Education members to also receive this training.

Boards of Education have overall responsibility, among other things, for setting policies, budgeting, approving and revising curricula, and setting the school calendar. Surely, they should be knowledgeable and sensitive regarding biases, prejudices, intolerance, and discrimination faced by the many groups of students in our schools.

Our community is concerned not only that antisemitism and Islamophobia have become more salient, but also about longstanding biases against other groups. We are glad to see that the legislation casts a wide net around the need for cultural responsiveness and antibias training and requires that the training incorporates lessons learned from actual incidents of bullying, harassment, and intimidation.

We urge the committee to give a favorable report to this important legislation.