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WRITTEN TESTIMONY

House Bill 2 – Annotated Code - Terminology - Clergy and Churches, Faith Institutions, and Places of Worship

March 3, 2025

Support

**Background:** House Bill 2 would simply alter the terminology throughout the Annotated Code as it relates to a clergyman and churches to be more inclusive. Specifically it would change church to faith institution or place of worship and clergyman to member of the clergy.

**Written Comments:** The Baltimore Jewish Council (BJC) represents the Associated Jewish Federation of Baltimore and all its agencies, and programs, as well as the organized Jewish Community of Baltimore. We appreciate the bill sponsor bringing this important bill to our attention. Ensuring that inclusive language that is representative of all faiths is used in Maryland's code is important in showing Maryland's commitment to freedom and equality for all religions.

For these reasons we ask for a favorable report on HB2.

*The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of the Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, its agencies and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.*