



Baltimore Jewish Council

An agency of The Associated

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President

RICHARD GRATZ

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HOWARD LIBIT
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American Jewish Committee
Americans for Peace Now
Baltimore Chapter
American Israel Public Affairs Committee
American Red Magen David for Israel
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Baltimore Hebrew Congregation
Baltimore Jewish Green and Just Alliance
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Howard County
Beth Tfiloh Congregation
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Bnai Israel Congregation
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Religious Zionists of America
Shaarei Tfiloh Congregation
Shomrei Emunah Congregation
Suburban Orthodox Congregation
Temple Beth Shalom
Temple Isaiah
Zionist Organization of America
Baltimore District

Written Testimony House Bill 939- Certificates of Birth - Filing - Time Period Health Committee February 24, 2026 Support

Background: House Bill 939 would extend the filing period for birth certificates from five days to 12 for the birth of a child. Currently 25 states have filing period deadlines of more than five days.

Written Comments: The Baltimore Jewish Council represents the Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore and all its agencies, as well as the organized Jewish community of Greater Baltimore. It is the Jewish tradition to wait for a child's name to be announced. For boys, it is usually 8 days after the birth for their ritual circumcision, but often (20% of the time) it takes a few days longer for medical reasons like jaundice. For girls, the name is traditionally announced in a naming ceremony which usually takes place several days after birth. Under the current five-day requirement those who for religious reasons wait until after the five-day period to officially name their child on the birth certificate keep the name blank. As a result, they must go through a long process to get their child's name officially changed on their birth certificate. HB939 would take away this burden for parents who are already exhausted from taking care of a newborn.

For these reasons, we ask for a favorable report on HB939.

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.



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