

OFFICERS

YEHUDA NEUBERGER
President
RABBI ANDREW BUSCH
1st Vice President
ELIZABETH GREEN
2nd Vice President
ABBA DAVID POLLAKOFF
Past President
BENJAMIN ROSENBERG
THE HON. CHAYA FRIEDMAN
ROBIN WEIMAN
RABBI STEVEN SCHWARTZ
HOWARD LIBIT
Executive Director

MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Adat Chaim Congregation
American Jewish Committee
Americans for Peace Now
Baltimore Chapter
American Israel Public Affairs Committee
American Red Magen David for Israel
American Zionist Movement
Amit Women
Association of Reform Zionists of America
Baltimore Board of Rabbis
Baltimore Hebrew Congregation
Baltimore Jewish Green and Just Alliance
Baltimore Men's ORT
Baltimore Zionist District
Beth Am Congregation
Beth El Congregation
Beth Israel Congregation
Beth Shalom Congregation of
Howard County
Beth Tfiloh Congregation
B'nai B'rith, Chesapeake Bay Region
B'nai Israel Congregation
B'nai Jacob Shaarei Zion Congregation
Bolton Street Synagogue
Chevra Ahavas Chesed, Inc.
Chevrei Tzedek Congregation
Chizuk Amuno Congregation
Congregation Beit Tikvah
Congregation Beth Shalom of
Carroll County
Congregation Tiferes Yisroel
Federation of Jewish Women's
Organizations of Maryland
Hadassah
Har Sinai Congregation
J Street
Jewish Federation of Howard County
Jewish Labor Committee
Jewish War Veterans
Jewish War Veterans, Ladies Auxiliary
Jewish Women International
Jews For Judaism
Moses Montefiore Anshe Emunah
Hebrew Congregation
National Council of Jewish Women
Ner Tamid Congregation
Rabbinical Council of America
Religious Zionists of America
Shaarei Tfiloh Congregation
Shomrei Eemunah Congregation
Simon E. Sobeloff Jewish Law Society
Suburban Orthodox Congregation
Temple Beth Shalom
Temple Isaiah
Temple Oheb Shalom
Winands Road Synagogue Center
Zionist Organization of America
Baltimore District



WRITTEN TESTIMONY

House Bill 485 (HB485) – Criminal Law – Hate Crimes – Penalty (Educate Against Hate Act)

Judiciary Committee
February 11, 2020

SUPPORT

Background: HB485, with sponsor amendment, would allow the court to require an individual who is convicted of a hate crime to undergo at least eight hours of education on the group or community of whom the hate crime was perpetrated against.

Written Comments: The Baltimore Jewish Council (BJC) and Maryland's Jewish community are concerned about the recent rise in hate/bias incidents in Maryland and the damaging effect that is having on our communities. These incidents are impacting not just Jewish communities, but those of other religions and racial minorities. According to the 2018 State of Maryland Hate/Bias Report authored by the Maryland State Police, there has been a sharp increase in hate/bias incidents over the past decade. 2018 saw the second-largest number of incidents in the last 10 years. Incidents were reported in all 24 jurisdictions with Anne Arundel, Baltimore, Howard, Montgomery, and Prince George's counties reporting the most incidents. These reported incidents targeted both individuals and some of our most vital arenas for community engagement, including schools, community centers, and places of worship. No place, person, place or part of our state is immune to these kinds of hateful incidents.

Education and understanding will always be the most powerful tools that we have for combating hate. If we truly want to make sure those who have committed hate crimes are able to grow from their past misdeeds, it is important that we are not just punishing offenders but using every tool in our arsenal to reduce the likelihood of them committing more acts of hate.

With this in mind, the Baltimore Jewish Council urges a favorable report on HB485.

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.