



**Testimony in SUPPORT of HB1164**  
***Criminal Law – Domestic Terrorism***  
**House Judiciary Committee**  
**March 3, 2020**

The Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington (JCRC) serves as the public affairs and community relations arm of the Jewish community. We represent over 100 Jewish organizations and synagogues throughout Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. The JCRC is strongly committed to cultivating a society based on freedom, justice, and pluralism. We work tirelessly throughout the entire Greater Washington area to advocate for our agencies that serve the most vulnerable residents, support our Jewish day schools and community centers, and to campaign for important policy interests on behalf of the entire Jewish community.

Federal Bureau of Investigations (FBI) Director Chris Wray testified before the Senate Homeland Security and Government Affairs Committee on November 5, 2019 that “Homegrown Violent Extremists (HVEs) are the greatest, most immediate terrorism threat to the homeland” and “domestic violent extremists collectively pose a steady threat of violence to the United States.” Director Wray noted that underlying and constant drivers for domestic violent extremism include racism, anti-Semitism, and Islamophobia. The FBI is “most concerned” by lone actor shootings because they have primarily served as the dominant lethal type of domestic violent extremist attacks.

According to the Southern Poverty Law Center, in 2018, there were 21 known hate groups active in Maryland, spanning the ideological spectrum. Groups operating statewide include: White Nationalists, Ku Klux Klan, Racist Skinheads and Neo-Nazis.

We agree with the need to codify a bill to provide penalties for the misdemeanor and felony of domestic terrorism in the State of Maryland.

We thank Delegate Rosenberg for introducing this bill. We ask this Committee to give a favorable report on HB1164.