



**Testimony in SUPPORT of *House Bill 1227* –
Public Safety – Task Force on Preventing and Countering Domestic Terrorism
Judiciary Committee
March 9, 2021**

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.

House Bill 1227 establishes the Task Force on Preventing and Countering Domestic Terrorism to consider optimal policies and practices for preventing and countering domestic terrorism and prohibits a member of the Task Force from receiving certain compensation. The Bill also requires the Task Force to make recommendations based on the role of the State, the level of resources needed, public transparency, and online extremism. Furthermore, it requires the Task Force to report its findings and recommendations to the Governor and the General Assembly by December 31, 2021.

The JCRC supports HB 1227 given our commitment to combatting antisemitism, hate and extremism. In 2019, the ADL recorded a 12% rise in antisemitic incidents over the previous year. This added up to the largest number recorded in the ADL's 40 years of tracking antisemitic incidents in the U.S. More recently, it must be noted that the insurrection we witnessed at the Capitol in Washington, D.C. on January 6, 2021, was not an isolated incident, but an escalating pattern that the country has faced for years. The JCRC has learned that extremists must be taken at their word and confronted. We must acknowledge this dangerous form of domestic terrorism and take steps to combat it. Setting up the Task Force, per HB 1227, is one such measure to fight against extremism and reiterate that all forms of hatred and terror have no place in this country, nor in the State of Maryland. For these reasons, we ask this committee to give a favorable report on HB 1227.