

## OFFICERS

RABBI ANDREW BUSCH  
President

ELIZABETH GREEN  
1<sup>st</sup> Vice President

THE HON. CHAYA FRIEDMAN

BENJAMIN ROSENBERG

RABBI STEVEN SCHWARTZ

MELANIE SHAPIRO

ROBIN WEIMAN

YEHUDA NEUBERGER  
Past President

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 - Oheb Shalom 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 Emunah Congregation  
Simon E. Sobeloff Jewish Law Society  
Suburban Orthodox Congregation  
Temple Beth Shalom  
Temple Isaiah  
Zionist Organization of America  
    Baltimore District



## WRITTEN TESTIMONY

### House Bill 415 Operating Budget - Funding - Scholarships for Nonpublic School Students

### Appropriations Committee - March 1, 2022 Support

**Background:** The Broadening Options and Opportunities for Students Today (BOOST) program would give low income students who are eligible for the Free and Reduced Price Meals (FARMS) program the opportunity to apply for tuition scholarships enabling them to attend the school best suited to their needs. The bill requires the Governor to allocate in the annual operating budget funding for the program, which incrementally would increase from \$10 million in FY24 to \$16 million in FY27 and each fiscal year after.

**Written Comments:** The Baltimore Jewish Council, an agency of the Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, supports excellence in education. While the vibrancy of public schools in Maryland is a top priority, we understand that public school is not the right choice for all Maryland families. Baltimore area Jewish day schools educate more than 8,000 students. For much of the Jewish community, a Jewish day school education is not a choice, it is a necessity.

Many of the Jewish schools in our community serve a population that is 20%-40% FARMS eligible. Our schools strive to keep tuition as low as possible, but must still cover their operating costs. The BOOST program has helped over 2000 low-income Jewish children attend the school that is best for them. Codifying funding for non public school scholarships for low income children will make the program run more efficiently and lower the uncertainty that parents and schools face about the future of funding for these scholarships.

With this in mind, the Baltimore Jewish Council urges a favorable report of HB415.

*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.*