



**Testimony in SUPPORT of *House Bill 1075 – Maryland Department of  
Emergency Management – Office of Domestic Terrorism Response*  
Appropriations Committee  
March 9, 2023**

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, synagogues, and social services agencies 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 throughout the region to advocate for our agencies that serve the most vulnerable residents and to campaign for important policy interests on behalf of the Jewish community and all Marylanders. The JCRC is focused on promoting social justice and intergroup relations and combating antisemitism and all forms of hatred.

In our ongoing effort to address the relentless dual threats of domestic terrorism and hate crimes, the JCRC supports House Bill 1075 to establish the Office of Domestic Terrorism Response within the Maryland Department of Emergency Management. This Office will be structured to implement measures to prepare for, prevent, and recover from domestic terrorism and hate crimes. The Bill also requires the Maryland Task Force on Preventing and Countering Domestic Terrorism to serve in an advisory role for the Office. Antisemitism is one of the oldest forms of hatred and Maryland is not immune to such attacks at his schools and houses of worship. According to the ADL, hate crimes and bias incidents against the Jewish community continue to rise at an alarming rate. In 2021, incidents were up 34% across the nation and 17% in Maryland from the previous year. Additionally, the FBI's latest Hate Crime Statistics indicate that the majority of all religious-based hate crimes in our country are against the Jewish community. Although Jews only represent 2% of the population, they constitute 60% of all anti-religious hate or bias crimes.

The threat of domestic terrorism tears at the fabric of our society and social media has allowed this hatred and intolerance to flourish in all of our communities. Establishing a formal Office of Domestic Terrorism Response is a proactive step in our efforts to combat online extremism and protect potential victims from hate crimes. For these reasons, we ask this committee to give a favorable report on House Bill 1075.