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Written Testimony
House Bill 809 - Members of Boards, Committees, Commissions, Task Forces, or Workgroups – Removal or Suspension
Health and Government Operations Committee – February 20, 2024
Support

Background: In partnership with the Attorney General's Office, HB809 would give authority to the individual or entity that has appointed someone to serve on a statutorily created board, committee, commission, task force, or workgroup to suspend or remove the member for misconduct, incompetence, neglect of duties, or any other cause deemed reasonable.

Written Comments: This legislative effort comes as a direct result of Attorney General Brown's temporary suspension of CAIR Maryland's appointee on AG's Hate Crimes Commission - he reinstated this member a week later out of concern that he did not have proper authority to suspend or remove a commissioner. The Baltimore Jewish Council is grateful for Attorney General Brown's collaboration on crafting this bill.

It's important for there to be a mechanism for suspending or removing a member of a statutorily created board, committee, commission, task force, or workgroup if they no longer represent the best interest of the group. For example, if someone who is appointed to the Maryland Sexual Assault Evidence Kit Policy and Funding Commission is accused of committing sexual assault, they need to be able to be removed, or at least suspended until the accusation is resolved. Another example could be the need to suspend a physician from the State Board of Physicians due to pending litigation and until the case has ended.

By creating an equal mechanism across the board for these appointed positions, the State of Maryland can ensure that the most qualified individuals are represented without controversy.

For these reasons, the Baltimore Jewish Council asks for a favorable report on HB809.

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.