

HJ0005

(FAV) (Support)

As a Maryland resident, practicing physician, former Eagle Scout (and father of an Eagle Scout) who advocates for human rights, I strongly urge support for **HJ0005 “Commitment to Free Speech, Academic Freedom, and Open Public Discourse”** that reaffirms the Maryland General Assembly's commitment to free speech, academic freedom, and open public discourse and upholds the right of individuals to express views on matters of foreign policy.

I am a Presbyterian and I collaborate with Jewish, Christian, and Muslim allies in the name of peace and social justice. I have been to the West Bank and Israel multiple times as a medical volunteer, and I am strongly against the ongoing illegal settlement activity and violence against Palestinians perpetrated by the government and citizens of Israel. To express my views on these and other foreign policy matters, it is imperative that Maryland residents have strong protection for free speech.

Maryland is the Free State, and as Marylanders we should stand in strong support for FREE SPEECH and ACADEMIC FREEDOM.

I respectfully urge you to strongly reaffirm the Maryland General Assembly's commitment to free speech, academic freedom, and open public discourse and uphold the right of individuals to express views on matters of foreign policy. **I therefore urge support of House Resolution HJ0005.**

Thank you for your consideration,
Sincerely,

William F. Simonds, MD
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