

February 20, 2024
Honorable Chair Luke Clippinger
House Judiciary Committee
House Office Building, Room 121
Annapolis, MD 21401

Re: Testimony to **OPPOSE HB 0763** Commission on Hate Crime Response and Prevention
Membership - Alterations

Dear Chair Clippinger and House Judiciary Committee Members:

I thank you for this opportunity to provide written testimony **in strong opposition to House Bill 763**, which aims to remove the Council on American Islamic Relations (CAIR) and its representative from the Maryland Attorney General Hate Crimes Commission and instate two other Muslim appointees.

My name is Emily Kamin and I am a Jewish constituent of Delegate Clippinger. I oppose this effort to remove CAIR and its Maryland Director, Zainab Chaudry, from the Hate Crimes Commission.

Dr. Chaudry, who is the Executive Director of CAIR's Maryland office, faces removal from the Maryland Hate Crimes Commission because she has condemned Israel's relentless bombardment, starvation, and displacement of the 2.3 million Palestinians living in Gaza. Over the past 120 days, Israel has indiscriminately slaughtered more than 300,000 Gazan civilians, including 11,500 children, and trapped countless more under rubble. The Israeli military's bombing has demolished 70% of homes in Gaza, alongside schools, hospitals, and places of worship; entire neighborhoods have been razed.

Due to her denunciation of Israel's actions, Dr. Chaudry has now become the target of a defamatory campaign, including a push to remove her from the Maryland Hate Crimes Commission. The targeting of Dr. Chaudry is a naked attempt to intimidate those who exercise their right to speak out against the Israeli government's actions. More importantly, it distracts from the real issue at hand: the ongoing atrocities being perpetrated by Israel against Palestinians in Gaza.

As the only American Muslim on the Maryland Hate Crime Commission, Dr. Chaudry is a critical voice in representing the interests of Muslims in our Maryland community. As Maryland and the nation have seen a rising tide of Islamophobia and anti-Palestinian hate, having Dr. Chaudry remain on the Maryland Hate Crime Commission is more important than ever.

Chaudry is a widely respected activist and an important leader in the Maryland community, who has spent many years dedicated to public service, while participating in interfaith initiatives, including Jewish-Muslim interfaith dialogue groups. She was nominated for the El-Hibri Foundation Peace Awards and is a recipient of the Governor's Service Award for her work in interfaith communities across Maryland, among many other contributions and accolades.

We cannot allow the hateful campaign against Zainab Chaudry to succeed. As a Jew, I join many others of my faith in standing by CAIR and Zainab Chaudry. We demand that she remain on the Maryland Hate Crimes Commission. **I respectfully urge this committee to return an unfavorable report on HB 0763.**

Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,
Emily Kamin
649 S Curley Street
Baltimore, MD 21224