



Testimony in SUPPORT of House Bill 1462 – *Higher Education – Antihate and Antidiscrimination Policies and Workgroup (Maryland Campus Accountability and Modernization to Protect University Students Act)*
Appropriations Committee
March 5, 2025

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 social service agencies, synagogues and schools throughout Maryland, Virginia and the District of Columbia. The JCRC is strongly committed to cultivating a society based on mutual respect, justice, equity and safety. We work throughout the region to advocate for our nonprofits that serve the most vulnerable on a non-sectarian basis and to campaign for important policy interests on behalf of the Jewish community and all Marylanders.

The JCRC supports House Bill 1462, the Maryland Campus Act, which requires institutions of higher education to adopt and enforce policies regarding racial, religious and ethnic violence, harassment and intimidation. These policies include mandatory staff training on responding to hate-bias incidents and a clear and accessible complaint tracking system and adjudication procedure. The Bill also includes establishing a Campus Community Grant program of \$500,000 to provide support for interfaith outreach and cultural collaboration between student groups.

This Bill is of paramount importance to the JCRC whose top priority is combating antisemitism and protecting the safety and security of the Jewish people, including Jewish students on college campuses. At Montgomery County Community College (MCCC) last spring, our agency took the lead in addressing several high-profile antisemitic incidents. We worked closely with the college's president and administrators to call out professors who were spewing hateful, antisemitic rhetoric, and to condemn a planned screening of the virulently antisemitic film, *The Occupation of the American Mind*. After our efforts, the school decided not to show the film. Since then, we have continued to collaborate with the administration to ensure policies regarding antisemitism are updated. We have led trainings about understanding antisemitism and have worked to build up both Jewish life and interfaith programming on the campus.

The Maryland Campus Act would have been a huge asset had it been in place. It would have provided a roadmap for the school and established both mechanisms and accountability needed to address the vitriol and hate. We made tremendous progress at MCCC, and with this legislation, our success can be replicated at other schools. College campuses must be places of learning, not hotbeds of hate. For these reasons, we support House Bill 1462 and ask for a favorable report.

