



**Maryland General Assembly
Appropriations Committee
February 4th, 2025**

Testimony of Luda Isakharov
ADL Washington D.C. Assistant Regional Director

Chair Barnes and Members of the Committee,

My name is Luda Isakharov, and I serve as Assistant Regional Director of ADL's Washington, D.C. Regional Office. I am also a recent graduate of the University of Oregon, where I served as student body president. **I submit this testimony in strong support of House Bill 86.**

As a Jewish student, I experienced firsthand the devastating effects of antisemitism on campus. From vile slurs to personal threats and doxxing attempts, I, along with other Jewish students, faced a hostile environment and constant harassment. After the events of October 7th, even as student body president, I found myself at a loss for where to turn to report incidents of antisemitism and receive a meaningful response. The reporting process was unclear, and I was bounced between multiple offices—the DEI office, student conduct, the Office of Civil Rights, and others—all of which struggled to coordinate with each other. This lack of clarity and coordination is something I have heard echoed by hundreds of students across the country, including many in the University System of Maryland.

My experience navigating this broken system is what led me to work at ADL, where I have spent the past six months researching this legislation and advocating for its passage. **House Bill 86, which would establish Title VI coordinators in Maryland's educational institutions, presents a common-sense solution modeled after the effectiveness of Title IX coordinators.** It is long overdue.

ADL has long advocated for Title VI coordinators to ensure compliance with the federal Civil Rights Act of 1964 and to promote equity and accountability. Coordinators should be trained to assess and adjudicate reports of discrimination, provide clear and accessible reporting mechanisms, and ensure timely investigations and transparency. These roles would help consolidate reporting processes and alleviate the confusion students like me have faced in moments of need, while better equipping educational institutions to respond to and protect their students.

Additionally, Title VI coordinators would enhance the ability of schools to track and address trends in harassment and discrimination. This includes conducting annual campus climate surveys and maintaining data dashboards with anonymized incident trends to promote transparency and accountability. These measures are not just about compliance; they are about fostering trust and safety for all students.

As Delegate Vogel has continuously emphasized, this legislation is not limited to protecting one group—it is about addressing the growing tide of bias and discrimination that impacts **all students**.

This issue is deeply personal to me. No student should have to wonder if their school will take action when they face hate and intimidation.

As a graduate of a Big 10 school, I would love to see Maryland take the lead in creating a model for other states to follow. The University System of Maryland, with its history of excellence, has an opportunity to set a standard that others can emulate in ensuring equity, safety, and accountability for all students.

For these reasons, I respectfully urge the committee to support and advance House Bill 86.
Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

Luda Isakharov

Assistant Regional Director
ADL Washington D.C.