

SB0847_RichardKaplowitz_FAV
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TESTIMONY ON SB#/0847 – FAVORABLE

Higher Education - Antihate and Antidiscrimination Policies and Workgroup (Maryland Campus Accountability and Modernization to Protect University Students Act)

TO: Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan and members of the Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard K. Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3, Frederick County. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB#0847, Higher Education - Antihate and Antidiscrimination Policies and Workgroup (Maryland Campus Accountability and Modernization to Protect University Students Act)

The FBI has tracked hate crimes and noted a significant increase in reports on these crimes. ¹

On September 23, 2024, the [FBI released](#) the hate crimes data from the Uniform Crime Reporting (UCR) Program as reported by law enforcement agencies across the country. Those agencies reported 11,862 hate crime incidents involving 13,829 offenses. More detail is available below and on the [FBI Crime Data Explorer](#).

Civilrights.org Leadership Conference Education Fund has noted this alarming increase every year and documented that increase. ²

The Leadership Conference Education Fund report — “[Cause for Concern 2024: The State of Hate \(Updated May 2024\)](#)” — outlines the serious threat of an alarming rise in hate crimes since 2014. Each of the last four presidential election periods have shown an unmistakable pattern: Hate crimes increase during elections. The report, the most recent publication in The Leadership Conference Education Fund’s “Cause for Concern” series first published in 1997, covers this trend. And while not all hate crimes and hate incidents are committed by white supremacists, white supremacists have been particularly active during the last four national elections. From the mainstreaming of hate and the failure of social media platforms to adequately address disinformation, the current climate is rife with opportunities for the trend of increased hate to continue into the 2024 election — unless action is taken.

¹ <https://www.justice.gov/hatecrimes/hate-crime-statistics>

² <https://civilrights.org/edfund/resource/2024-the-state-of-hate-updated/>

The policies now being pushed and implemented at the Federal level are accelerating this problem; it is up to Maryland now to counter that hate and discrimination.

We can accomplish this by passing this bill requiring institutions of higher education to adopt and enforce policies regarding antihate and antidiscrimination and time, place, and manner requirements for expressive conduct. We can provide enforcement for antihate and antidiscrimination through requiring institutions of higher education to conduct certain meetings with certain approved student organizations. We can assist them by establishing the Campus Community Grant Program. We can obtain data and learn about best practices to combat this scourge when this bill establishes the Workgroup on Combating Antisemitism, Islamophobia, and Other Forms of Racial, Ethnic, and Religious Violence, Harassment, and Intimidation.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on SB#0847.