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Shaarei Tfiloh Congregation
Shomrei Emenah Congregation
Suburban Orthodox Congregation
Temple Beth Shalom
Temple Isaiah
Zionist Organization of America
Baltimore District

Written Testimony

**Senate Bill 847 - Maryland Campus Accountability and Modernization to Protect
University Students Act
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee – March 5, 2025
Support**

Background: Senate Bill 847 would require both public and nonpublic institutions of higher education to adopt and enforce a policy regarding racial, religious, and ethnic harassment and intimidation at the institution while minding an individual's first amendment rights. This would include training for staff, establishing procedures for investigating complaints, and collaborating with local law enforcement. Annual reporting to the Maryland Higher Education Commission of all harassment and intimidation complaints will be required.

Additionally, each institution of higher education would be required to create a campus task force on combating antisemitism, Islamophobia, hatred, harassment, bullying, or violence toward others on the basis of their actual religious identity or what is assumed to be their religious identity at the institution.

Written Comments: It is impossible to turn a blind eye to the rising levels of hate across our country. Data from the recent release of the American Jewish Committee's 2024 Antisemitism Report details the following of [Young American Jews' experience with antisemitism](#):

- **Four in 10 (41%) young American Jews**, ages 18-29, said they have been the target of antisemitism at least once in the past 12 months.
- **35% of American Jewish college students** report experiencing antisemitism at least once during their time on campus.
- **Over one in four (32%) American Jewish college students** say they have felt uncomfortable or unsafe at a campus event because of their Jewish identity.

Additionally, nearly one-third of American Jewish College Students feel that [faculty members have promoted antisemitism or learning environments hostile to Jews](#). This data is unacceptable.

The incidents of antisemitism on our Maryland college campuses have been occurring going for years, well before the surge that began after the October 7th massacre in Israel. Jewish students living in dorms at Johns Hopkins University have found the mezuzahs ripped off the door frames of their dorm rooms. "Kill the Jews" signs have been posted around the campus at UMBC. Jewish students at Towson University have been followed and harassed on their way to class. Jewish students at the University of Maryland's downtown professional campuses have reported being harassed when walking back and forth to synagogue for Shabbat. Jewish fraternity students at Towson University were assaulted on a Saturday night at the conclusion of Shabbat observance, while their attackers shouted antisemitic slurs. Just this past fall, students walking back to their dorms from Friday night Shabbat services at the UMBC Chabad were harassed and threatened by unidentified individuals in an SUV. This last incident occurred not once, but twice — prompting UMBC's president to send a campus-wide message condemning and antisemitism.

BALTIMORE JEWISH COUNCIL

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Member of the Jewish Council for Public Affairs

Baltimore Jewish Council is an agency of The Associated

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It is important that Jewish students feel safe as they seek higher education. By establishing proper policies and procedures to address harassment on college campuses in collaboration with local law enforcement, there will be a sense of safety and security for those attending Maryland's institutions. Requiring reporting of all harassment incidents to MHEC will aid in tracking where these issues are most prominent, also aiding in the work of the task forces that will be required on campuses for combatting antisemitism, Islamophobia, hatred, harassment, bullying, or violence. This model is based on the CAMPUS Act passed in the State of Ohio, proving there is great value in this legislation.

For these reasons, the Baltimore Jewish Councils asks for a favorable report on SB847.

The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of The Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, its agencies and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.

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