

**April 1, 2025**

Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and Members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee,

I am writing today as a commissioner on the Middle Eastern American Affairs Commission within the Governor's Office of Community Initiatives, and as a proud Maryland resident, to express my strong support for HB 899. I respectfully request a favorable report on this bill, which seeks to establish Muslim American Heritage Month and Jewish American Heritage Month in our state.

As a third culture kid and someone in an interfaith marriage, I chose to make Maryland my home because of its deep history of embracing diverse communities. Maryland has fostered a sense of belonging that transcends religious and cultural differences. Though I am the only Muslim in my Jewish neighborhood, I have always felt welcomed and part of the community. This bill is a meaningful step in recognizing the contributions of Muslim and Jewish Americans and reinforcing Maryland's commitment to inclusion.

By passing HB 899, we celebrate the values of unity, shared heritage, and mutual understanding that make Maryland a stronger, more connected state. I urge you to support this important initiative.

Sincerely,  
Mona Abdel-Halim Kishore  
7314 University Avenue  
Glen Echo, MD 20812