



Maryland General Assembly
House Health and Government Operations Committee
March 13, 2025

Testimony of Meredith R. Weisel
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ADL (the Anti-Defamation League) is pleased to submit this testimony in **support of House Bill 899, “General Provisions – Commemorative Months – Muslim American Heritage and Jewish American Heritage Months,”** which would require the Governor annually to proclaim January as Muslim American Heritage Month and May as Jewish American Heritage Month.

As you may know, ADL is a leading anti-hate organization founded in 1913 with a mission to “stop the defamation of the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment to all.” Today, ADL continues to fight all forms of antisemitism and bias, using innovation and partnerships to drive impact. A global leader in combating antisemitism, countering extremism and battling bigotry wherever and whenever it happens, ADL works to ensure a just and inclusive society for all.

At a time of rising antisemitism, hate and extremism across the country, including here at home in Maryland, this bill sends a clear message that our community is committed to ensuring that we are also celebrating the enriching vibrancy of the both the Jewish and Muslim communities. ADL encourages both educators and legislators to commemorate Jewish American Heritage month in May each year. We offer important resources to help educators engage students in thinking broadly and critically about the Jewish experience in all of its diversity and complexity. In highlighting the significant events, people, culture and stories which have made a substantial contribution to the Jewish American experience, instruction should incorporate history, literature, politics, first-person experience, the arts, and the struggle for fair treatment and equity.

Jewish American Heritage Month is a time to reflect on and celebrate the multifaceted nature of Jewish communities around the world. Similar to other themed months focused on communities of people, it is important to acknowledge and teach about Jewish people, identity and culture throughout the year and not just isolate that learning to May. At the same time, Jewish American Heritage Month is a time to uplift and provide learning experiences for students to explore the Jewish experience. This can be done not just in our schools but throughout the entire community and can be an exploration of holidays, traditions, culture, history, notable people, antisemitism faced by the Jewish community and more.

We strongly support uplifting both Jewish American Heritage Month and Muslim American Heritage month.

**We urge the Health and Government Operations Committee to give
House Bill 899 a favorable report.**