



Baltimore Jewish Council

An agency of The Associated

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President

RICHARD GRATZ

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AMALIA HONICK

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Past President

HOWARD LIBIT
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MEMBER ORGANIZATIONS

Adat Chaim Congregation
American Jewish Committee
Americans for Peace Now
Baltimore Chapter
American Israel Public Affairs Committee
American Red Magen David for Israel
American Zionist Movement
Amit Women
Association of Reform Zionists of America
Baltimore Board of Rabbis
Baltimore Hebrew Congregation
Baltimore Jewish Green and Just Alliance
Baltimore Men's ORT
Baltimore Zionist District
Beth Am Congregation
Beth El Congregation
Beth Israel Congregation
Beth Shalom Congregation of
Howard County
Beth Tfiloh Congregation
Bnai Brith, Chesapeake Bay Region
Bnai Israel Congregation
Bnai Jacob Shaarei Zion Congregation
Bolton Street Synagogue
Chevra Ahavas Chesed, Inc.
Chevrei Tzedek Congregation
Chizuk Amuno Congregation
Congregation Beit Tikvah
Congregation Tiferes Yisroel
Federation of Jewish Women's
Organizations of Maryland
Hadassah
Har Sinai - Oheb Shalom Congregation
J Street
Jewish Federation of Howard County
Jewish Labor Committee
Jewish War Veterans
Jewish War Veterans, Ladies Auxiliary
Jewish Women International
Jews For Judaism
Moses Montefiore Anshe Emenah
Hebrew Congregation
National Council of Jewish Women
Ner Tamid Congregation
Rabbinical Council of America
Religious Zionists of America
Shaarei Tfiloh Congregation
Shomrei Emenah Congregation
Suburban Orthodox Congregation
Temple Beth Shalom
Temple Isaiah
Zionist Organization of America
Baltimore District

WRITTEN TESTIMONY

House Bill 1460 Civil Actions - State Procurement - Prohibited Certifications - Boycotts of Foreign Countries

Health and Government Operations Committee

March 11, 2025

OPPOSE

Background: House Bill 1460 (HB1460) seeks to revoke a 2017 Executive Order prohibiting executive branch agencies from entering into contracts or conducting official state business with an entity unless the entity certifies that it will not engage in a boycott of Israel. Boycott of Israel is defined in the Executive Order as the termination of or refusal to transact business activities, or other actions intended to limit commercial relations, with a person or entity because of its Israeli national origin, or residence or incorporation in Israel and its territories. This would include boycotting a Maryland business because the Maryland business is owned by someone who happens to be of Israeli origin. It is the policy of the State of Maryland that such boycotts are inconsistent with Maryland's values and this bill aims to attack this policy.

The proponents of this bill support the Boycott Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement against Israel. BDS is an international campaign to delegitimize and pressure Israel, through the diplomatic, financial, professional, academic and cultural isolation of Israel, Israeli individuals, Israeli institutions, and, increasingly, Jews who support Israel's right to exist¹.

Importantly, the BDS campaign does not support real measures to build a path forward in Israeli-Palestinian peace negotiations. BDS is a biased approach to the conflict, putting the fault of territorial claims of only one party, the only Jewish state, Israel, while ignoring the actions of Palestinians and others in the conflict. Simply put, "BDS advocates for self-determination for Palestinians while denying to Jews that same right."²

Written Comments: The Baltimore Jewish Council (BJC) represents The Associated: Jewish Federation of Baltimore, all of its agencies, as well as the organized Jewish Community of Greater Baltimore. For more than three decades, Maryland and the Jewish community have jointly invested in developing a flourishing business relationship between our state and Israel,

¹ <https://www.adl.org/resources/backgrounder/boycott-divestment-and-sanctions-campaign-bds>

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creating jobs and economic activity both here and there. As part of that relationship in 2017 Governor Hogan signed an Executive Order to align with the state's values. This has been strongly reaffirmed by Governor Moore, who has stated "I am affirmatively against the Boycott, Divestment and Sanctions (BDS) movement. I will support the continuation of this executive order and I firmly believe that our laws should reflect our values."

HB1460 seeks to reverse these values by targeting the only Jewish state and Jewish people in Maryland.

For these reasons we ask for an unfavorable report on HB1460.

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.