

Testimony in Support of HB0324, County Boards of Education - Anti Bias Training - Requirements.

January 27, 2025

To the Chair and Honorable Members of the Maryland House Ways and Means Committee.

My name is Lesley Frost and I am the Co Chair of National Council of Jewish Women, Maryland State Policy Advocacy Committee (NCJW MDSPA) and I am writing to express strong support for HB0324. This support is based on NCJW resolutions III.1 “The elimination of antisemitism” and resolution IV.1, “The enactment, enforcement, and preservation of laws and regulations that protect civil rights and individual liberties for all.”

The training requirements for County School Board members goes beyond raising awareness of biases, prejudices, intolerances, and discrimination of historically marginalized racial and ethnic minorities, to specifically address prejudices faced by historically marginalized religious minorities, including antisemitism and Islamophobia.

As we have witnessed a historic increase in antisemitic attacks in our schools, the advocates of NCJW, who live across the state, support every avenue that has remedies for these antisemitic attacks that make our students feel marginalized and less safe in their schools. We believe that all adults responsible for overseeing education must be informed and sensitive to all forms of bias so that this legislation succeeds in its aim “to achieve schools that are more inclusive and tolerant of students, faculty, and staff regardless of an individual’s race, national origin, marital status, sexual orientation, gender identity, religion, ancestry, physical attributes, socioeconomic status, familial status, or disability.”

On behalf of the more than 700 advocates of the National Council of Jewish Women in Maryland, I urge the committee to support HB0324.

Thank you for considering this testimony.

Lesley Frost
7707 Wisconsin Avenue
Bethesda MD 20814
lesleyfrost0@gmail.com

Co Chair NCJW MDSPA
ncjw.mdacts@gmail.com