



Committee: Education, Energy, and the Environment

Testimony: HB14: County Boards of Education - Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation - Information Collection and Reporting Requirements

Organization: Jewish Community Relations Council of Howard County, MD

Submitting: Laura Salganik, Chair

Position: FAVORABLE with Amendments

Hearing Date: April 1, 2026

Dear Chairman Feldman, Vice Chairwoman Kagan, and Committee Members:

The Jewish Community Relations Council is again submitting this testimony in favor of: HB14: County Boards of Education - Bullying, Harassment, or Intimidation including the Amendment offered by Sen. Brooks. Consistent with Sen Brooks' amendment, we strongly recommend the removal of the two conditions which substantially limit the impact and effectiveness of the original Bill. These statements are found in Lines 24-28 of the proposed legislation and include the following language:

(I) THERE HAS BEEN A SUBSTANTIAL INCREASE IN INCIDENTS
25 OF BULLYING, HARASSMENT, OR INTIMIDATION FOR STUDENTS IN THAT GROUP
26 OVER THE PREVIOUS SCHOOL YEAR; OR
27 (II) THERE IS A DISPROPORTIONATE INCIDENT RATE OF
28 BULLYING, HARASSMENT, OR INTIMIDATION FOR STUDENTS IN THAT GROUP.

These statements dilute its impact and effectiveness considerably. Because there are no legal definitions of "substantial increase" or "disproportionate incident," these lines leave the bill subject to the interpretation of the County Boards, allowing them to choose not to participate and thus render the Bill ineffective at best.

We, therefore, respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB14 as amended by Sen. Brooks.