



**Maryland General Assembly  
House Government, Labor, and Elections Committee  
March 17, 2026**

Testimony of Tali Cohen  
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ADL (the Anti-Defamation League) is pleased to submit this testimony in **support of House Bill 661, “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.” ADL is a global leader in combating antisemitism, countering extremism and battling bigotry wherever and whenever it happens. We work to ensure a just and inclusive society for all.

At a time of rising antisemitism, hate and extremism across the country, including here in Maryland, this bill sends a clear message that our community is committed to celebrating the enriching vibrancy of 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. At the same time, Jewish American Heritage Month should also be 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 Government, Labor, and Elections Committee to give  
House Bill 661 a favorable report.**