



**Committee:** Education, Energy, and Environment  
**Testimony:** House Bill 661 – Commemorative Months – Muslim American Heritage and Jewish American Heritage Months  
**Organization:** Jewish Community Relations Council of Howard County, MD  
**Submitting:** Laura Salganik, Chair  
**Position:** FAVORABLE  
**Hearing Date:** March 12, 2026

Dear Chairperson Wells, Vice Chair Kerr and Committee Members:

The Jewish Community Relations Council of Howard County is submitting this testimony in favor of HB 661. It is appropriate that this bill would have the State of Maryland jointly commemorate months recognizing Muslim-American and Jewish-American heritage months. We should always remember that Isaac and Ishmael jointly came together to bury their father, Abraham (Genesis 25).

Both communities have been suffering from increased levels of antisemitism and Islamophobia. It is important that we demonstrate support for all our citizens, which establishing these commemorative months would encourage.

Howard County already commemorates both heritage months. It has been positively received by our citizens. Jewish students reported pride in seeing posters celebrating heritage month in their school. May corresponded with the school's culture night, so they included a poster board with Jewish cultural items that positively engaged students, both Jewish and non-Jewish. Hopefully statewide commemoration will have similar positive benefits.

There is so much positive to celebrate in both Muslim-American and Jewish-American heritage.

**We respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report on HB 661.**