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**Testimony FOR HB1055
Health - Newborn Screening Program - Gaucher Disease
House Health Committee
March 4, 2026**

FAVORABLE

TO: Delegate Heather Bagnall, Chair, Del. Bonnie Cullison, Vice Chair,
and members of the House Health Committee

FROM: Nancy Braverman & Barbara Deitch, Co-Presidents
Hadassah Greater Baltimore

Hadassah, the Women's Zionist Organization of America, Inc. believes in bringing healing - in every sense of the word - where it's needed most, in the U.S., Israel and around the globe.

As the Greater Baltimore Region of Hadassah, representing over 4,200 Marylanders, we are writing to urge you to support HB1055, requiring Maryland's Department of Health to include screening for Gaucher disease as part of the existing newborn screening system in Maryland.

Gaucher disease is a rare, genetic condition that leads to the buildup of a fatty substance (glucocerebroside) in tissues which causes damage and dysfunction of tissues and organs (spleen, liver and bones).

The predominant variant of the disease - Type 1 Gaucher disease — is more common among Ashkenazi Jews from Eastern and Central Europe and accounts for 90% of Gaucher cases. Hadassah Hospital in Jerusalem is a leader in screening, treatment and research into Gaucher disease.

While there is no cure for Gaucher disease, it is often manageable, so early newborn screening would identify the disease and allow possible treatments to begin earlier.

We strongly urge you to return a FAVORABLE report for HR1055.

Thank you,
Nancy Braverman and Barbara Deitch
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