

**HB 1202:** Public Schools – Content Standards, Curriculum, and Bullying Policies – Culture and History of Palestine: Please vote to **OPPOSE** this bill.

Dear Ways & Means Committee:

I am writing to strongly urge you to **OPPOSE HB 1202**.

While anti-bullying protections for all students are essential and already exist under Maryland law (Safe Schools Act, COMAR regulations, and existing nondiscrimination policies), this bill is unnecessary, divisive, and risks politicizing K-12 education.

**Mandating statewide curriculum content specifically focused on the history and culture of Palestine introduces a highly contested geopolitical topic into classrooms in a way that could easily lead to biased, incomplete, or ideologically slanted instruction—especially given the ongoing Israeli-Palestinian conflict and differing narratives about history, events, and responsibility.**

**Public school curriculum should prioritize core academic subjects, civic education, critical thinking, and factual U.S./world history taught in a balanced, age-appropriate manner—not single out one region or conflict for mandatory inclusion. Local school boards, parents, and educators are best positioned to determine supplemental materials on global cultures and history without a state-mandated focus on Palestine that could be perceived as advancing a political viewpoint.**

**Additionally, existing bullying and harassment policies already cover discrimination based on national origin, ancestry, ethnicity, and religion—categories that fully protect students of Palestinian heritage without needing a special carve-out that singles out one group over others.**

**Maryland schools should remain focused on academic excellence and neutral education**, not on legislating specific geopolitical topics into required curriculum. This bill sets a precedent for future mandates on other controversial issues, further politicizing classrooms and distracting from core learning priorities.

For these reasons, I respectfully ask you to **vote against HB 1202**.

Thank you for your attention to this important education and curriculum neutrality issue.

Sincerely,

Trudy Tibbals