



## **TESTIMONY ON HOUSE BILL 1202 - FAVORABLE**

### **Public Schools – Content Standards, Curriculum, and Bullying Policies – Culture and History of Palestine**

**House Ways and Means Committee, March 6, 2026**

Joanna Silver  
Silver Spring, MD

Dear Chair Wilkins, Vice Chair Feldmark, and esteemed members of the Ways and Means Committee,

My name is Joanna Silver. I am a resident of Maryland District 18 and I am writing on behalf of the Montgomery County Jewish Collective (MCJC), an organization of Jewish-identifying residents of Montgomery County committed to collective liberation as the cornerstone of a vibrant, safe, and supportive Jewish community and a safe and equitable County and state for all. MCJC urges this Committee's support for HB 1202, both its incorporation of Palestinian cultural literacy into Maryland public schools curricula and its inclusion of anti-Palestinian hate into existing statewide anti-bullying policies.

MCJC's support for this legislation is rooted in our core value of collective liberation, which on its face must include an understanding of and respect for all cultures and communities, without exception. Our support is also informed by our own community's shameful history of failing to teach us the history and culture of the Palestinian people, while insisting that those very people are a threat to our own survival.

Most importantly, our support is rooted in the time we have spent working with our non-Jewish partners, including Palestinian community members, learning about and fighting against the historical and ongoing marginalization and silencing of Palestinian

culture and voices within the Montgomery County Public School system. We are active members of the Montgomery County Palestinian Solidarity Network and through that network we have met with many parents and teachers who have been subject to unacceptable treatment because of the failure of other parents, teachers, and in some cases students to understand very basic aspects of who they are and what their individual and collective historical experiences have been.

This treatment not only creates a hostile work and learning environment for many members of our school community, but it perpetuates harmful beliefs that ripple out into the larger community and is in many ways responsible for the policy choices that continue to threaten the safety of Palestinians and Jews, not only in the Middle East, but around the world.

We respectfully ask you to issue a positive report on HB1202.

*@mcjewishcollective on Facebook, Instagram, and Bluesky*

*Our Mission, Vision, and Values Statement [here](#).*