



HoCo JAG

Howard County Jewish Advocacy Group

HB1382 – UNFAVORABLE

Written Testimony in Opposition to House Bill 1382

Hearing Date: March 11, 2026

Submitted by the Howard County Jewish Advocacy Group

Before the Maryland General Assembly Government, Labor, and Elections Committee

Dear Chair Wells, Vice-Chair Kerr, and Members of the Committee,

The Howard County Jewish Advocacy Group respectfully submits this written testimony in opposition to House Bill 1382.

HB1382 would eliminate a procurement safeguard that prevents Maryland taxpayer funds from being awarded to companies participating in boycotts targeting Israel. Maryland adopted this policy in [Executive Order 01.01.2017.25](#), which directs executive branch agencies not to enter into procurement contracts with companies that boycott Israel. The policy reflects a straightforward principle: **state taxpayer funds should not be used to support discriminatory commercial conduct.**

1. Undermines Maryland’s Existing Anti-Discrimination Procurement Policy

Maryland procurement already requires contractors to certify compliance with numerous legal and ethical standards, including nondiscrimination, labor law compliance, and conflict-of-interest rules. The anti-boycott certification operates within this same framework and ensures that companies seeking state contracts are not simultaneously participating in boycotts targeting Israeli companies or companies operating in Israel.

Boycotts associated with the BDS movement frequently pressure businesses to cut ties with Israeli firms, academic institutions, and individuals because of their connection to Israel. Maryland’s certification requirement helps ensure that state procurement dollars are not used to support such boycotts. HB1382 would remove that safeguard.

2. Reverses Established Maryland Policy

Maryland adopted its anti-boycott procurement policy in 2017 in response to increasing efforts to pressure companies and institutions to participate in boycotts targeting Israel.

The existing certification requirement reflects the State's decision that public contracting should not subsidize discriminatory boycotts of a close U.S. ally.

HB1382 would reverse this established policy without any demonstrated procurement benefit to the State.

3. Places Maryland Outside the Mainstream of State Procurement Policy

Maryland's current policy is consistent with a broad national trend.

More than thirty states have adopted policies preventing state contracting with companies that participate in discriminatory boycotts targeting Israel. These measures have been adopted by states across the political spectrum.

By eliminating Maryland's certification requirement, HB1382 would place the State outside this widely adopted procurement standard and weaken the safeguards currently in place.

4. Creates Inconsistent Procurement Standards

Maryland procurement law routinely requires vendors to certify compliance with numerous policies as a condition of receiving state contracts.

These certifications address issues such as:

- nondiscrimination in employment
- ethical conduct in contracting
- environmental compliance
- labor law obligations

The anti-boycott certification simply ensures that vendors receiving state funds are not simultaneously engaging in discriminatory boycotts.

HB1382 would remove this certification requirement while leaving other procurement certifications intact, creating an inconsistent and unnecessary gap in Maryland's procurement safeguards.

5. Risks Exacerbating Antisemitism in Maryland

Antisemitic incidents have risen significantly in recent years. Although Jews constitute a small percentage of both the U.S. and Maryland populations, [FBI hate-crime statistics](#) show that Jews experience hate-crime victimization at the highest per-capita rate of any identifiable group tracked in federal hate-crime data, a pattern also reflected in Maryland statistics.

Jewish institutions across Maryland—including synagogues, schools, and community centers—have been forced to significantly increase security in response to threats and harassment.

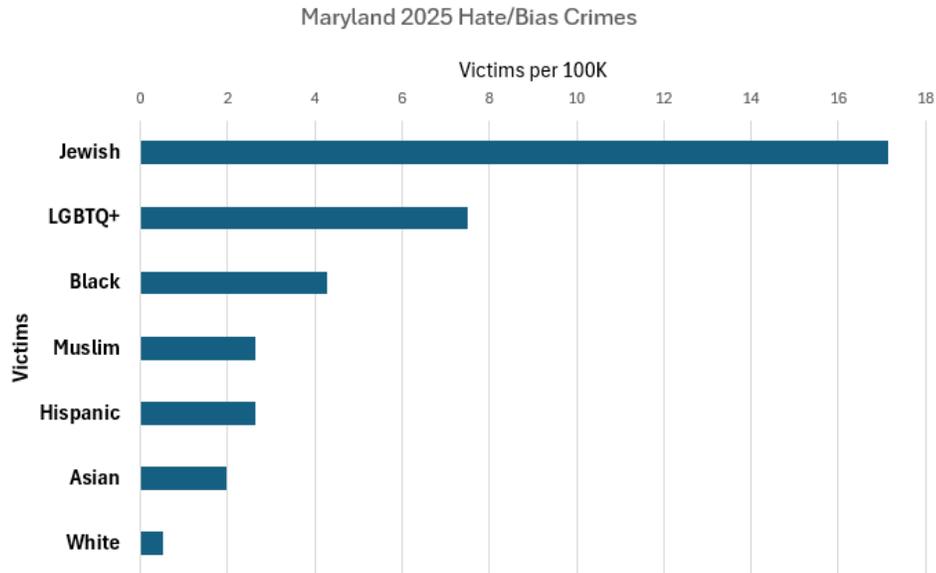


Figure 1. Source: [FBI Crime Data Explorer](#) (January 2025 - January 2026).

At a time when antisemitism is rising, dismantling policies designed to counter discriminatory boycotts targeting the world’s only Jewish state risks sending the wrong signal.

Conclusion

HB1382 would dismantle Maryland’s existing procurement safeguard that ensures state taxpayer funds are not awarded to companies participating in boycotts targeting Israel.

By removing this certification requirement, the bill would:

- weaken Maryland’s anti-discrimination procurement framework
- reverse established state policy adopted in 2017
- place Maryland outside the mainstream of state procurement policy nationwide
- permit companies engaged in discriminatory boycotts to receive state funds
- send a troubling signal at a time of rising antisemitism

For these reasons, the Howard County Jewish Advocacy Group respectfully urges the Committee to give **House Bill 1382 an unfavorable report.**

Respectfully submitted,

Howard County Jewish Advocacy Group

Attn: David Albert
 5000 Thayer Center, Suite C
 Oakland, MD 21550
david.albert@hocojag.org

301-970-9700

<https://www.hocojag.org>