



# HoCo JAG

Howard County Jewish Advocacy Group

March 5<sup>th</sup>, 2026

**Written Testimony in Opposition (UNF) to House Joint Resolution 9 (HJ0009)**

2026 Regular Session

**By the Howard County Jewish Advocacy Group**

Howard County, Maryland

**Before the Maryland General Assembly Rules and Executive Nominations Committee**

Chair: Anne Healey

Vice-Chair: Marvin E. Holmes Jr.

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Dear Chair Healey, Vice-Chair Holmes, and Members of the Committee:

The Howard County Jewish Advocacy Group respectfully submits this written testimony in opposition to House Joint Resolution 9 (HJ0009).

While we recognize the humanitarian concerns expressed in the resolution, we believe that HJ0009 is selective in scope, reflects a troubling legislative pattern of targeting the Jewish state, and risks exacerbating antisemitism in Maryland at a time when Jewish communities are already facing rising threats.

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**Selective and Arbitrary Targeting of International Conflicts**

HJ0009 calls attention to violence occurring in Gaza, Sudan, and the Democratic Republic of the Congo. However, it excludes numerous other regions experiencing comparable or greater levels of conflict, civilian harm, and humanitarian crisis.

For example, the resolution does not address major ongoing violence and humanitarian emergencies in:

- Ukraine
- China
- Iran
- Yemen
- Syria

Given the many conflicts and humanitarian crises occurring worldwide, the decision to single out only a small subset of conflicts raises legitimate questions about the criteria used to determine which international situations merit attention from the Maryland General Assembly.

State legislatures are not foreign policy bodies. When they do choose to comment on international events, consistency and neutrality are essential. The selective nature of HJ0009 undermines those principles.

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### **A Pattern of Legislative Measures Targeting the Jewish State**

HJ0009 must also be considered within the broader legislative record of sponsoring Delegates Acevero and Martinez.

Both delegates have introduced multiple bills and resolutions focused on condemning Israel, the world's only Jewish state. This repeated focus raises serious concerns that such measures are not motivated solely by humanitarian considerations, but rather reflect a sustained effort to use the Maryland legislature as a platform for political advocacy directed against Israel.

The Maryland General Assembly exists to address the needs of Maryland residents. Legislative efforts that repeatedly single out one nation—particularly the only Jewish state—risk transforming the legislature into a vehicle for ideological campaigns rather than a body focused on the governance of this state.

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### **The Impact on Antisemitism in Maryland**

Maryland is currently experiencing significant levels of antisemitism, with Jewish residents facing hate crimes and bias incidents at rates far higher than all other groups.

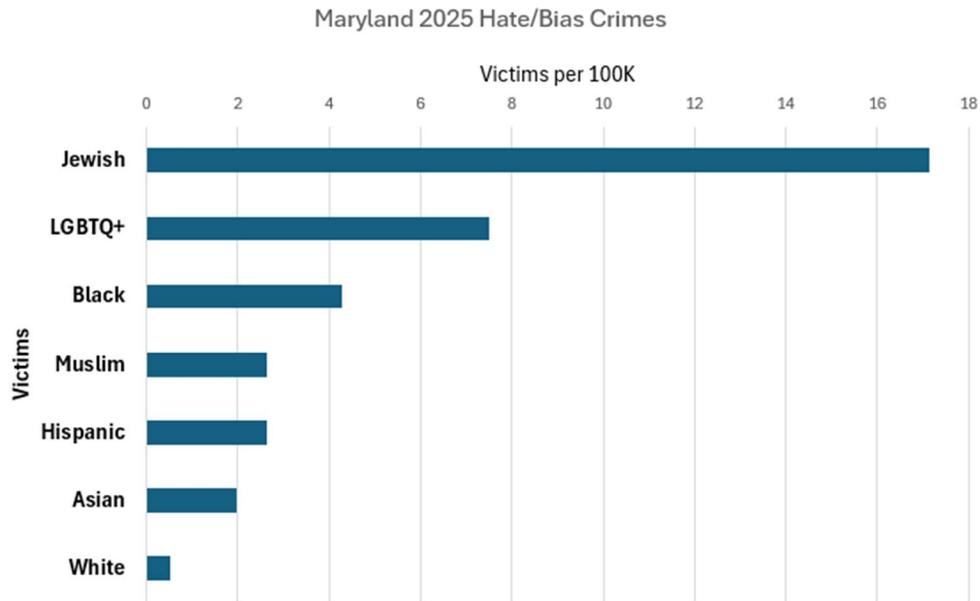


Figure 1 source: [FBI Crime Data Explorer Jan 25- Jan 26](#)

Jewish institutions across the state—including synagogues, schools, and community centers—have been forced to significantly increase security due to threats and harassment.

In this environment, legislative actions that appear to single out Israel risk contributing to an already hostile climate toward Jewish communities. Regardless of intent, resolutions that disproportionately focus criticism on Israel can reinforce narratives that fuel hostility toward Jews who identify with or feel connected to the Jewish state.

At a time when antisemitic incidents are already rising, the Maryland General Assembly should take care to avoid measures that could inadvertently intensify prejudice or hostility toward Jewish residents of our state.

### **Legislative Priorities Should Focus on Maryland Residents**

The Maryland General Assembly faces significant responsibilities that directly affect the lives of Maryland residents, including:

- Public safety
- Education
- Economic development
- Infrastructure
- Combating hate crimes and discrimination

HJ0009 does not meaningfully advance any of these priorities. Instead, it risks diverting legislative attention toward symbolic international political debates that fall outside the core responsibilities of state government.

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## **Conclusion**

For the reasons described above, the Howard County Jewish Advocacy Group respectfully urges the Rules and Executive Nominations Committee to decline to advance House Joint Resolution 9.

We appreciate the Committee's consideration of these concerns and its continued commitment to ensuring that the Maryland General Assembly remains focused on the well-being and safety of all Maryland residents.

Respectfully submitted,

Howard County Jewish Advocacy Group

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