

SB1058 - Educate to Stop the Hate Act.pdf

Uploaded by: Abigail Snyder

Position: FAV

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 Zionist Organization of America
 Baltimore District

WRITTEN TESTIMONY
Senate Bill 1058 – Educate to Stop the Hate Act
Education, Energy, & the Environment Committee - February 23, 2024
SUPPORT

Background: Senate Bill 1058 would require the State Department of Education (MSDE) to:

- [expand on the curriculum recently implemented for middle school students](#) around Holocaust education and antisemitism in social studies classrooms;
- develop curriculum standards and resources for instructional content around disadvantaged racial and ethnic groups by January 1, 2025; and
- require all public schools and certain nonpublic schools to include the revised and enhanced instruction in school curricula beginning in the 2025-2026 school year.

Written Comments: It's impossible to turn a blind eye to the increased hateful rhetoric that is plaguing our school systems across the State. Whether it's a swastika next to the words "kill the Jews" in the bathroom at Pikesville Middle School; threats to black students at Middletown Middle School; or the numerous antisemitic incidents occurring in Montgomery County Public Schools, this is an epidemic and we must do something to address it.

SB1058 takes a bold step to help educate our young people, by requiring comprehensive antihate curriculum in all our public schools and nonpublic schools that receive state funding. Teaching our students about contemporary racism, prejudice, and the Holocaust will help them to better understand why their words matter and can be extremely harmful. To ensure proper understanding, high schoolers will be required to learn about the contributions of many historically disadvantaged groups, including the African American, Native American, AAPI, Hispanic American, Jewish American, and Arab American communities. This will ensure better understanding of those who may not look like us or come from similar backgrounds.

Maryland is on the path of updating its curriculum about the Holocaust. In a [memo published by the Interim State Superintendent of Schools](#) on January 23rd, 2024, the new 6th and 7th grade social studies curriculums outline the inclusion of lessons on antisemitism and "analyzing the impact of physical geography, nationalism, World War I and II, and the actions of international organizations, the Holocaust, and the founding of Israel." However, with the increasing incidents of antisemitism in classrooms and across our younger populations, it's important that we expand on these efforts even further.

For these reasons the Baltimore Jewish Council asks for a favorable report on SB1058.

The Baltimore Jewish Council, a coalition of central Maryland Jewish organizations and congregations, advocates at all levels of government, on a variety of social welfare, economic and religious concerns, to protect and promote the interests of The Associated Jewish Community Federation of Baltimore, its agencies and the Greater Baltimore Jewish community.

CORRECTED SB 1058 Educate to Stop the Hate.pdf

Uploaded by: deborah miller

Position: FAV



**Testimony in SUPPORT of *Senate Bill 1058* –
Education - Curriculum Standards – Antihate and Holocaust Education
(Educate to Stop the Hate Act) –
Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee
February 23, 2024**

The Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington (JCRC) serves as the public affairs and community relations arm of the Jewish community. We represent over 100 Jewish organizations and synagogues throughout Maryland, Virginia, and the District of Columbia. The JCRC is strongly committed to cultivating a society based on freedom, justice, and pluralism. We work throughout the region to advocate for our agencies that serve the most vulnerable residents and to campaign for important policy interests on behalf of the Jewish community and all Marylanders.

Senate Bill 1058 requires that the State Board of Education develop curriculum standards and resources for antihate and Holocaust education by January 1, 2025. The Bill applies to elementary, middle, and high school classrooms in all public and nonpublic schools that receive state funding. Additionally, the curriculum would include utilizing historical contexts that have led to contemporary racism and prejudice and the Holocaust. It also will revise the high school history framework to include the contributions of historically disadvantaged racial and ethnic groups.

We are living in a time of heightened hate where every marginalized community seems to be under attack. The spike in racism, antisemitism, Islamophobia, and anti-Asian hate is unprecedented. Senate Bill 1058 is a critical piece of legislation to combat such hatred. Students of all ages need to understand history, including bigotry and prejudice, so that horrific events of the past - like the Holocaust - will never be repeated. In the last few months, the Jewish community has seen a 361% increase in antisemitic incidents compared to the same period a year ago. At the JCRC, it seems like a week doesn't go by without a call about vandalism at a synagogue, bullying on a playground, or a swastika found on a school desk. It's unacceptable and has to be addressed.

The Educate to Stop the Hate Act is not a panacea, but it certainly is a necessary step to help stem the tide and fight back against the harmful impact of hatred which undermines the very fabric of our society. HB 1058 is an opportunity to attack all forms of hatred. It's an opportunity we can't afford to miss. For these reasons, we ask for a favorable report on SB 1058.

KGlassmanTestimonySB1058.docx.pdf

Uploaded by: Kimberly Glassman

Position: FAV

Senate Bill SB1058

My name is Kim Glassman, and I am writing today in support of Senate Bill 1058. As a granddaughter of Holocaust survivors, daughter of a Holocaust educator, and the parent of three students in Montgomery County Public Schools, it is imperative that students across the State of Maryland receive significantly stronger Holocaust and anti-hate education than they receive currently. As it stands now, Holocaust education, which is not required statewide in Maryland, is often lacking in both quality and quantity when it is taught. Students are exposed to Holocaust education too late, and the emphasis will be on the Holocaust itself, but not the time period leading up to its start. This results in students believing that the Holocaust happened to the Jewish people in a vacuum and was not the result of thousands of years of antisemitism including ancient tropes that are frequent in today's society. The Holocaust did not begin with gas chambers and it is imperative that students receive a robust education that allows them to understand the full scope of the causes, as well as the events of the Holocaust. Limited instruction during social studies and optional books that teachers only selectively assign in English are not enough. This requires state wide legislation and coordination for all school districts to follow.

In addition, students are also sometimes under the impression that the Holocaust is the only calamity to ever befall the Jewish people, and also do not believe that antisemitism is a problem today. In fact, according to a recent Harvard-Harris poll, two thirds of Americans ages 18-24 believe that Jews are oppressors.¹ In reality, we know that Jews are frequent victims of hate crimes, especially since October 7, 2023. Much more needs to be done to fight antisemitism in all areas of society. Given this fact, Holocaust education must also lead into a discussion in terms of how the same tropes that lead up to the Holocaust are popular when discussing Jews or Israel today. For example, the claim that Israel is committing "genocide" or "ethnic cleansing" is tied to the ancient blood libel of poisoning Christian children in Europe. Given the explosion of antisemitism and dearth of Holocaust knowledge in Maryland, especially in schools and amongst young people, this legislation cannot wait. Please pass SB1058.

¹ Gans, J. (2023, December 18). *Wide generational gap persists on views around Israel-hamas war: Poll*. The Hill.

<https://thehill.com/policy/national-security/4366498-wide-generation-gap-persists-on-views-around-israel-hamas-war-poll/>

Testimony in Support of Sen Bill 1058_ HB 1181.pdf

Uploaded by: Laura Strashny

Position: FAV

February 22, 2024

Dear Legislators,

I am writing to express strong support for Senate Bill 1058 and its counterpart, House Bill 1181. The bills' aim to introduce comprehensive anti-hate education and training, specifically mandating Holocaust education, in schools receiving public funds is a necessary step in stemming the rising tide of antisemitism in Maryland.

The urgency of including Holocaust education in all schools is emphasized by FBI Director Christopher Wray's statement in an October 2023 Senate hearing identifying "historic" levels of antisemitic hate crimes. While Jewish identity, religion, culture, and history are multifaceted and should not solely focus on the Holocaust, mandating its coverage in Maryland schools is a concrete step the General Assembly can take to combat antisemitism and promote tolerance, empathy, and understanding among residents, including Jews and Israeli-Americans.

A recent nationwide survey¹ revealed significant gaps in Americans' historical knowledge of the Holocaust. Shockingly, 63 percent of respondents were unaware that six million Jews were murdered during the Holocaust, with Maryland scoring among the states with the lowest level of knowledge.

One of the survey's most disturbing findings is that 11 percent of U.S. Millennial and Gen Z respondents believe Jews caused the Holocaust. Additionally, a troubling percentage of Millennials and Gen Z have encountered Holocaust denial or distortion on social media, with approximately half having seen such posts online.

Moreover, there is a striking correlation between Holocaust denial and denial of the October 7 attack on Jews by Hamas in Israel. A recent wave of misinformation about the Holocaust, the Jewish homeland, and the terror attack on October 7 are being used to rationalize attacks against Jews and undermine the legitimacy of the Jewish homeland. These alarming parallels underscore the need for comprehensive anti-hate education initiatives, including mandatory Holocaust education and training for students and teachers on antisemitism.

I urge you to champion these bills and oppose antisemitism, Holocaust denial, and terror denial. This is an opportunity to combat ignorance and hate against Jews and Israeli-Americans.

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

¹ U.S. Millennial Holocaust Knowledge and Awareness Survey was conducted in 2020 by the Conference on Jewish Material Claims Against Germany (Claims Conference).

Sincerely,
Laura Strashny
Montgomery County, Maryland resident
District 19
Member of newly-formed Maryland Jewish Alliance (MJA)

SB1058_MSEA_Lamb_FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Lauren Lamb

Position: FAV

FAVORABLE
Senate Bill 1058
Education - Curriculum Standards - Antihate and Holocaust Education
(Educate to Stop the Hate Act)

Senate Committee on Education, Energy, and the Environment
February 23, 2024

Lauren Lamb
Government Relations

The Maryland State Education Association supports Senate Bill 1058, which would require the State Board of Education to develop, revise, and enhance curriculum standards on the history and contributions of historically disadvantaged racial and ethnic groups, on the Holocaust, and on anti-hate education. It also directs county boards to provide paid training to educators to develop their content knowledge on the updated standards.

MSEA represents 75,000 educators and school employees who work in Maryland's public schools, teaching and preparing our almost 900,000 students so they can pursue their dreams. MSEA also represents 39 local affiliates in every county across the state of Maryland, and our parent affiliate is the 3-million-member National Education Association (NEA).

Students deserve an education that is inclusive, historically accurate, and values dignity for all. Comprehensive, multicultural curricula that grapple honestly with history is essential to developing students who are aware of, appreciate, and respect the history and contributions of all people.

This legislation brings necessary attention to the contributions and histories of groups that have for too long been obscured or omitted in American History curricula. It also requires comprehensive anti-hate education and the revision of social studies frameworks to enhance standards on the origins, context, and impacts of the Holocaust. These revisions will help ensure that students understand the dangers of prejudice, discriminatory policies, and abuses of power and that history curricula reflect the experiences of groups as diverse as Maryland's student body.

We appreciate the language in this bill ensuring that updated content is incorporated into the frameworks rather than expanding the quantity of instruction required. Educators have finite instructional time in the school year, and in improving the accuracy and completeness of our curricula, we do not want to reduce the overall time available for each standard. We also thank the sponsor for the inclusion of amendments clarifying that the State Board is to adopt *recommended* curriculum resources, thus retaining the role of local boards and educators in developing curriculum guides and selecting resources.

Finally, we support the provision of substantive, paid, and possibly credit-eligible professional development to enhance educators' content knowledge on teaching the revised standards. It is essential that students receive an accurate and complete account of history so that they can work toward a better future, and educators must be empowered with the support they need to teach that history effectively.

We urge the committee to issue a favorable report on Senate Bill 1058.

SB1058 Smelkinson testimony.pdf

Uploaded by: Margery Smelkinson

Position: FAV

I am Dr. Margery Smelkinson, leader of the Maryland Jewish Alliance, a grassroots group fighting antisemitism in our state. I recently wrote an [oped](#) for the Baltimore Sun in support of this bill and others describing why our schools need a Holocaust education requirement.

The article (pasted below) presents disconcerting statistics that highlight a concerning lack of knowledge among America's youth about the Holocaust, a distressing trend that has the potential to fuel antisemitism within communities.

Holocaust education bills in Maryland seek to address ignorance, antisemitism

With the rise of antisemitism in America, an ominous feeling that we're reliving the 1930s is permeating Jewish communities. In these foreboding years, leading up to the Holocaust, Jews were scapegoated, marginalized and "othered", their businesses vandalized and boycotted, and hateful, antisemitic, imagery was commonplace. Sadly, these historical references are lost on too many of America's youth: one in five young Americans consider the Holocaust a [myth](#), and [two-thirds](#) are unaware that six million Jews were murdered.

In response to this alarming ignorance, and recognizing the [positive impact](#) that Holocaust knowledge has on attitudes toward Jewish communities, Maryland legislators have recently introduced two bills. [House Bill 1181](#) (CF Senate Bill 1058) would require schools to incorporate lessons on the holocaust into social studies curricula, including the pivotal events leading up and the roots of antisemitism. [House Bill 71](#), would provide grants for holocaust teaching materials and training in all Maryland public schools. [House Bill 1386](#) would require districts to provide antisemitism training to school employees and conduct an assessment of Holocaust education in the state.

This is not Maryland legislators' first attempt at addressing these issues. In early 2023, Benjamin Kramer (D-Montgomery County) [proposed a spate of bills](#) to address ignorance of the holocaust and the burgeoning antisemitism in Maryland. These included creating a Holocaust Remembrance Day, funding school field trips to the Holocaust Museum, security grants for faith based institutions, and establishing a Holocaust education requirement in public schools. All passed with broad support, except, unfortunately, the last one.

Legislators now have another opportunity to act and the need is more pressing than ever.

In the aftermath of the October 7th terrorist attack in Israel, the [Anti-Defamation League](#) reported a staggering 337% increase in antisemitic incidents in America. Even before this, Maryland had the [10th](#) most antisemitic incidents of any state. In 2022, there were 109 reports of [anti-Jewish](#) hate crimes in the state, the most ever recorded and a [98% increase](#) over the year prior.

Unfortunately, our public schools are not immune to this alarming trend.

In Baltimore County, a Jewish middle schooler, subjected to Hitler salutes, bullying, and displays of swastikas, has opted to learn virtually over returning to the classroom. In Howard County, Jewish parents have expressed concerns about an increasingly hostile climate, where students feel emboldened to utter derogatory comments and share antisemitic content online. This unsettling atmosphere has been exacerbated by numerous school walkouts throughout the district that were approved by administrators.

Montgomery County, with a population that is 10% Jewish, also had [several walkouts](#), many riddled with antisemitic signs and slogans, such as “Kill the Jews” and references to the terrorist organization, Hamas, as the “Palestinian resistance”. The district also has four public school teachers currently on administrative leave for writing antisemitic content online and in work emails. Even before 10/7, there were several high profile cases of antisemitic [bullying](#) and [graffiti](#) in the district with [61% of all hate bias incidents](#) being anti Jewish. The issue has escalated to the point where Jewish educators within MCPS have united, [calling](#) for comprehensive antisemitism training for all staff members.

They are right that change is needed. A majority of states have already [established holocaust education mandates](#) and Maryland should join their ranks. Until the curriculum is changed, Maryland’s youth will continue to [languish](#) among the ten states with the least Holocaust knowledge. Approving these bills is the bare minimum the state can do to confront the twin plagues of historical ignorance and modern antisemitism.

Whereas once a glimpse of a tattooed number on an arm in the grocery store or a harrowing story of survival delivered to a school or religious institution provided inescapable reminders of the holocaust, the last of the survivors are passing on, necessitating a greater need for formal holocaust education. These bills, if passed into law, would be a pivotal step towards ensuring that the Holocaust remains a timeless lesson on the consequences of hatred and the importance of tolerance.

SB1058 Education against hate act.pdf

Uploaded by: Meredith Weisel

Position: FAV



Maryland General Assembly
Senate Education, Energy and the Environment Committee

February 23, 2024

Testimony of Meredith R. Weisel

ADL Washington D.C. Regional Director

ADL (the Anti-Defamation League) is pleased to submit this testimony in support of *Senate Bill 1058, Education – Curriculum Standards – Antihate and Holocaust Education (Educate to Stop the Hate Act)*. At a time of rising antisemitism across the country, including in Maryland, and at a time when Holocaust and genocide awareness, particularly among young people, is fading from memory, this bill sends a clear message that Maryland is committed to ensuring that schools have the tools they need to push back against these trends.

Since 1913, the mission of ADL (the Anti-Defamation League) has been to “stop the defamation of the Jewish people and to secure justice and fair treatment to all.” Dedicated to combating antisemitism, prejudice, and bigotry of all kinds, as well as defending democratic ideals and promoting civil rights, ADL has long been recognized as a leading resource on effective responses to violent bigotry, conducting an annual Audit of Antisemitic Incidents and drafting model hate crime statutes for state legislatures. We strongly feel that the need for robust Holocaust and genocide education in Maryland’s schools could not be more urgent. When students do not understand the history of the Holocaust and other genocides, or the elements leading to these tragedies, they cannot fully grasp the significance of bias and bigotry today, or the lasting impact that hateful words and conduct can have on the community at large.

Since October 7, U.S. antisemitic incidents have skyrocketed, reaching the highest point of any three-month period since ADL began tracking in 1979, according to preliminary data. Between October 7, 2023, and January 7, 2024, ADL recorded **a total of 3,283 antisemitic incidents** across the United States, representing a **361-percent increase** compared to the same period one year prior, which saw 712 incidents. The preliminary three-month tally is higher than the total number of antisemitic incidents tracked in any year in the last decade, except for calendar year 2022, when the total number of incidents reached a historic high of 3,697.

Since Oct. 7, there’s been an average of nearly **34 antisemitic incidents per day**, putting 2023 on track to be the highest year for antisemitic acts against Jews since ADL started tracking this data in the late 1970s. The American Jewish community is facing a threat level that’s now unprecedented in modern history. It’s shocking that we’ve recorded more antisemitic acts in three months than we usually would in an entire year. In this difficult moment, antisemitism is spreading and mutating in alarming ways. This onslaught of hate includes a dramatic increase in fake bomb threats that disrupt services at synagogues and put communities on edge across the country.

This data also confirms what Jewish communities have seen firsthand across the country – and it corresponds with a notable rise in antisemitic attitudes. We’re seeing a mainstreaming and a normalization of antisemitism, the likes of which have not been seen in this country for

generations. In Maryland, 109 antisemitic incidents were reported in 2022, a 98 percent increase from the 55 incidents in 2021, and a 132 percent increase from the 47 incidents reported in 2020. Maryland registered with the 10th highest number of antisemitic incidents reported in the country for 2022. The raw data we are analyzing shows Maryland poised to report even higher for our 2023 audit of antisemitic incidents.

In 2022, there were 494 antisemitic incidents tabulated in non-Jewish schools (mostly public schools). This is a 49-percent increase from the 331 incidents in 2021. Of the 494 K-12 school incidents, 257 were incidents of harassment, 232 were incidents of vandalism and five were assaults. School-based harassment incidents in 2022 included one-off incidents such as when one student told another, “Ew Jew. Why don’t you kill yourself,” or when a student shouted in the middle of a math class, “If anyone celebrates Yom Kippur today, you can die!” Harassment incidents included recurrent antisemitic bullying, such as classmates taunting Jewish students with Holocaust jokes and references.

The 232 incidents of antisemitic vandalism in K-12 schools in 2022 represent a 53% increase from the 152 incidents tabulated in 2021. Of the 232 vandalism cases recorded, swastikas were present in 88% of K-12 school vandalism cases (205 incidents). Vandalism incidents included messages such as “Kill all Jews,” “6M Oven,” “Hitler was right” and “Jews not welcome.” Given the insidious nature of bullying, compounded by the fact that many children may not feel empowered to report their experiences, it is likely that the actual number of school-based antisemitic incidents was significantly higher than the data reported in the Audit.

These incidents did not take place in a vacuum. They come at a time of rising bigotry, the emboldening of hate groups, and a resurgence of Holocaust denialism—a challenge that has existed on the fringes for many years, but in recent years has encroached on the mainstream of our politics and discourse. They also come at a time when Holocaust and genocide awareness, particularly among young people, is fading from memory. According to one recent survey, for example, 22% of American millennials have either never heard of the Holocaust or are unsure whether they have heard of it.

Here in Maryland, we have an important obligation and unique opportunity to empower a new generation to learn from our past to build a safer, stronger, and more equitable society in the future. Throughout the state of Maryland, ADL provides anti-bias training to students and educators and develops innovative materials, programs, and services that build bridges of communication and understanding. **SB 1058** would require the State Board of Education to develop comprehensive curriculum resources for instructional content on antihate education, including the Holocaust at age-appropriate levels. This bill is absolutely necessary as the stories of the Holocaust have and will continue to serve as crucial reminders of the dangers of allowing hate and extremism to go unchecked.

Almost eight decades after the end of World War II, we do not have the privilege to remain complacent about hate in any form, especially as we are seeing antisemitism rear its ugly head yet again. Educating our younger generations about the lessons of the Holocaust is one of the greatest tools we have to fight back against this continuous onslaught of hate and extremism. According to a recent study from Echoes and Reflections, an ADL educational program,

Holocaust education encourages empathy and tolerance. Students with Holocaust education have more pluralistic attitudes and are more open to differing viewpoints and report a greater willingness to challenge intolerant behavior in others. Students who learned about the Holocaust through survivor testimony showed higher critical thinking skills and greater sense of social responsibility and civic efficacy.

When students do not understand the history of the Holocaust and other genocides, or the elements leading to these tragedies, they cannot fully grasp the significance of bias and bigotry today or the lasting impact that hateful words and conduct can have on their school community or the community at large. Education is key to combating hate. By learning about the Holocaust, students will have the opportunity to explore how stereotypes, prejudice, and religious and ethnic hatred can escalate to atrocity.

ADL's researchers, educators, and advocates are prioritizing improving and expanding Holocaust education across the country, as it is a crucial tool in the fight against antisemitism and hate in all forms. Maryland must join the list of states that already require Holocaust education in their schools.

We urge the Senate Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee to give SB1058 a favorable report.

2024-SB1058-HB1181-FAV.pdf

Uploaded by: Nelda Fink

Position: FAV

SB1058 / HB1181 – FAVORABLE

Nelda Fink

MD District 32

Here! Here! When I was in school they called this history! It's a shame that this needs to be called anti-hate but if that's what it takes to undo the CRT being pushed in the schools, please do it! It will be necessary to include the history as well, so we will get two for the price of one!

All the cultures listed in this curriculum are represented in our US Citizen population today and this curriculum will help to teach kids to live united together, rather than divided as we are today.

I ask for a favorable report on this bill.

Thank you.

Nelda Fink

Testimony in support of SB1058.pdf

Uploaded by: Richard KAP Kaplowitz

Position: FAV

SB1058_RichardKaplowitz_FAV

2/23/2024

Richard Keith Kaplowitz
Frederick, MD 21703

TESTIMONY ON SB#/1058 – FAVORABLE

Education - Curriculum Standards - Antihate and Holocaust Education (Educate to Stop the Hate Act)

TO: Chair Feldman, Vice Chair Kagan, and members of the Education, Energy, and the Environment Committee

FROM: Richard Keith Kaplowitz

My name is Richard K. Kaplowitz. I am a resident of District 3. I am submitting this testimony in support of SB#1058, Education - Curriculum Standards - Antihate and Holocaust Education (Educate to Stop the Hate Act)

My Jewish faith tell me (Leviticus 19:17-18) “¹⁷“Do not hate your brother in your heart, but rebuke your neighbors frankly, so that you won’t carry sin because of him. ¹⁸Don’t take vengeance on or bear a grudge against any of your people; rather, love your neighbors as yourself; I am your G-d”

This bill attempts to ensure curriculum in Maryland schools and the resources in support of that will enable a fact based and historical presentation of the Holocaust and the roots and expression of antisemitism in the past and currently. It will battle the misinformation and disinformation present on both social media and in textbooks that might be incorrect or misleading in our schools. It will force a revision that will fix these deficiencies in our presentations of these topics.

Rogers and Hammerstein, in their classic musical *South Pacific*, sum up what has to happen in the song “You’ve Got To Be Carefully Taught”.

“You’ve got to be taught to hate and fear,/You’ve got to be taught from year to year,
It’s got to be drummed in your dear little ear—/You’ve got to be carefully taught!

You’ve got to be taught to be afraid / Of people whose eyes are oddly made,
And people whose skin is a different shade— / You’ve got to be carefully taught.

You’ve got to be taught before it’s too late, / Before you are six or seven or eight,
To hate all the people your relatives hate— / You’ve got to be carefully taught!”

This bill will help our educators battle this mindset and help to stop the vastly increased hatreds that are now permeating our society.

I respectfully urge this committee to return a favorable report and pass SB1058.

SB 1058 - Anti hate and Holocaust Education.pdf

Uploaded by: NaShona Kess

Position: FWA



NAACP

Maryland
STATE CONFERENCE

February 23, 2024

Education, Energy, and the Environment
Maryland General Assembly
Annapolis, Maryland

Re: SB 1058 – Educate to Stop the Hate Act

Members of the Committee:

I am writing on behalf of the Maryland State Conference of the NAACP. We are in favor of Senate Bill 1058, Education - Curriculum Standards - Antihate and Holocaust Education (Educate to Stop the Hate Act). We ask that all members of the committee vote in favor of this legislation that seeks to require the State Board of Education to develop certain curriculum standards and curriculum resources for certain instructional content by January 1, 2025; requiring the State Department of Education to revise and enhance certain history and social studies frameworks to include certain instruction; requiring all public schools and certain nonpublic schools to include the revised and enhanced instruction in school curricula beginning in the 2025-2026 school year; etc.

We believe that a comprehensive and inclusive education is essential for fostering understanding, empathy, and equity among our students.

However, as we endorse the goals of SB 1058, we also propose crucial amendments to ensure that the curriculum adequately addresses the historical experiences of marginalized communities, particularly regarding white supremacy and transatlantic slavery.

Firstly, we propose amending the bill to include references to "white supremacy" wherever the term "antisemitism" appears. This amendment is vital because white supremacy has been a pervasive force throughout American history, shaping institutions, policies, and societal norms. By explicitly addressing white supremacy in the curriculum, we can provide students with a deeper understanding of systemic racism and its enduring impacts on our society.

Secondly, we recommend include references to the "holocaust" with "transatlantic slavery." While the holocaust is undoubtedly a significant historical event that deserves attention, it is equally important to recognize the horrors of transatlantic slavery and its lasting effects on African American communities. By incorporating the study of transatlantic slavery into the curriculum, we can ensure that students gain a more comprehensive understanding of the complex history of oppression and resistance in our country.

These proposed amendments are rooted in our commitment to promoting racial justice and equity in education. As an organization dedicated to advancing civil rights and combating discrimination, the Maryland NAACP believes that an inclusive curriculum is essential for building a more just and equitable society.

Furthermore, it is essential to note that these amendments align with the broader goals of SB 1058 to enhance diversity, equity, and inclusion in our schools. By incorporating the experiences of marginalized communities into the curriculum, we can empower students to challenge injustice and work towards a more equitable future.

In conclusion, the Maryland NAACP support of SB 1058 with the proposed amendments to include references to white supremacy and transatlantic slavery in the curriculum. Together, we can ensure that all students receive a comprehensive education that reflects the diverse experiences and contributions of our society.

Thank you.

In Service,

NaShona Kess, Esq., MLS
Executive Director, NAACP Maryland State Conference
NaShonakess.mdnaacp@gmail.com

SB 1058.Holocaust and AntiHate Curriclum mandate.p

Uploaded by: John Woolums

Position: UNF

BILL: Senate Bill 1058
TITLE: Education - Curriculum Standards - Antihate and Holocaust Education
(Educate to Stop the Hate Act)
DATE: February 23, 2024
POSITION: OPPOSE
COMMITTEE: Education, Energy, and the Environment
CONTACT: John R. Woolums, Esq.

The Maryland Association of Boards of Education (MABE) opposes Senate Bill 1058. MABE certainly appreciate the intent of Senate Bill 1058 and the critical importance of our students studying the Holocaust, the period of history from 1933-1945 during which approximately six million Jewish persons became victims of Nazi Germany and its collaborators throughout Europe. It was a time in history that must never be forgotten. Therefore, the horrific acts that took place during the German occupation in Europe, and in Russia and other nations, are covered in the social studies curriculum currently being taught in middle and high schools throughout our state. MABE also recognizes that this bill would broaden the mandated reforms to the state curricular frameworks to include instruction on prejudice and racism.

As this committee knows, MABE opposes efforts by the General Assembly to legislate curriculum, firmly believing that this role belongs to local boards of education in conjunction with the State Board. Therefore, MABE's opposition to this bill does not rest on an evaluation of the merits of teaching any specified subject matter, but rather the opposition to statutorily mandating the teaching of any one concept or content item.

In creating the State Board and local boards of education, the General Assembly has delegated to them the responsibility for developing curriculum and administering assessments. The State Board establishes State standards and statewide graduation requirements; the local boards implement locally-developed curriculum to ensure that standards are met and students are prepared to meet graduation requirements. State and local assessment programs ensure that all students, schools, and school systems are held accountable for their work.

Therefore, in the context of the recognizing the essential role of the state legislature in enacting laws which establish the framework for key elements of the State's approach to public education, MABE continues to support local decision-making authority in developing curriculum.

For these reasons, MABE requests an unfavorable report on Senate Bill 1058.

SB 1058 - State Board - OPPOSE.pdf

Uploaded by: Zachary Hands

Position: UNF

TO: Senate Education, Energy, and Environment Committee

BILL: Senate Bill (SB) 1058 - Education - Education – Curriculum Standards – Antihate and Holocaust Education (Educate to Stop the Hate Act)

DATE: February 23, 2024

POSITION: Oppose

The Maryland State Department of Education (MSDE) and the Maryland State Board of Education (State Board) respectfully oppose Senate Bill (SB) 1058 – Education – Curriculum Standards – Antihate and Holocaust Education (Educate to Stop the Hate Act). This legislation requires the State Board to adopt an antihate and Holocaust curriculum standards and curriculum resources by January 1, 2025, and requires all public schools and non-public schools that participate in state-funded education programs to include revised frameworks reflective of historically disadvantaged racial and ethnic groups by the 2025-2026 school year.

MSDE supports the charge to examine standards and curriculum through a diverse and equitable lens, with a specific focus on the contributions of historically marginalized peoples. The State Board and MSDE are supportive of many of the fundamental principles outlined in the requirements of this bill, and both entities are strident in ensuring that the development of curricular standards and frameworks reflects these shared priorities. We do not oppose the bill based on the merits of the proposed subject matter but on the grounds that the legislative requirement would run counter to the process that is entrusted to the State Board and MSDE.

Further, we share in the belief that social studies coursework can and should be leveraged to challenge contemporary racism and build tolerance and understanding amongst our students. COMAR 13A.04.08.01 mandates that LEAS offer social studies from prekindergarten to twelfth grade which “shall provide for the diversity of student needs, abilities, and interests at the early, middle, and high school learning years”. The regulation also states that the standards must align to the College, Career, and Civic Life (C3) Framework for Social Studies Standards. The resulting Maryland Social Studies Standards currently in place are guided by national best practices, and as such, are designed as inquiry statements and do not contain any specific content by design.

However, to improve student outcomes and respond with immediacy and efficiency to emergent curricular and resource needs as they arise, MSDE proposes to convene a “Standards and Frameworks Review Committee” (SFRC) to address the concerns of SB 1058. The SFRC shall be comprised of no more than ten educators (such as teachers, administrators, and/or content supervisors), two parents of Maryland Public School students, two community members (such as University scholars and/or associated content experts) as well as a chairperson selected by MSDE. All members of the SFRC shall undergo a rigorous application and selection process along with training in MSDE protocol. The objective and scope of the SFRC shall be to improve student outcomes by ensuring the alignment of standards and frameworks to emergent needs as identified by MSDE.

Within twelve months, MSDE will convene the SFRC, and intends to bring curricular recommendations aligned to the concerns of SB 1058 to the State Board’s Education Policy Committee for approval. This revised timeline would provide local education agencies with an appropriate amount of time to complete the required curriculum development, training, and procurement of new materials.

In partnership with teachers, supervisors, parents, institutes of higher education, and other stakeholders, MSDE and the State Board will continue to undertake a significant review of state standards and frameworks through the SFRC. In this process, MSDE will be certain to include our critical partners in the General Assembly.

The Department and the State Board respectfully request that the committee considers this information on SB 1058. Please contact Dr. Akilah Alleyne, Executive Director of Government Affairs, Education Policy, and Government Relations, at Akilah.alleyne@maryland.gov or at 410-767-0504 or Zach Hands, Executive Director of the State Board, at Zachary.hands1@maryland.gov or at 443-915-6094, if you would like any additional information.