



2025 MARYLAND LEGISLATIVE PRIORITIES

Federal Issues:

- **Advocate for Israel** including all efforts to secure the release of the remaining hostages held in Gaza. JCRC also supports the continued implementation of the Memorandum of Understanding, through which the U.S. provides approximately \$3.8 billion in annual aid to Israel. This funding, which includes aid for missile defense systems such as Iron Dome, helps Israel defend herself from indiscriminate rocket attacks and maintain Israel's Qualitative Military Edge to counter enemies of both Israel and the U.S.
- **Secure the Jewish community** from potential threats through FEMA's Nonprofit Security Grant Program (NSGP). This program is a critical tool to protect Jewish and other faith-based nonprofits from physical threats through target hardening and other physical security enhancements. We also advocate for \$500 million in annual funding for NSGP to meet the rising demand from Jewish institutions due to increased threats against our community since October 7th.
- **Combat Unprecedented Antisemitism** on college campuses. Jewish students are increasingly worried about their safety and security at school, and many are hiding their Jewish identity. The JCRC endorses the Antisemitism Awareness Act, which requires the Department of Education to use the International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance (IHRA) working definition of antisemitism when enforcing federal anti-discrimination laws. We also support efforts to counter the steep rise of antisemitism that has permeated medical schools, healthcare institutions, workplaces and professional associations since October 7th.
- **Enhance the Safety Net** for our nation's most vulnerable citizens, including Holocaust survivors, individuals with disabilities, older adults and those in dire need of support. The JCRC advocates for \$10 million in annual funding for the Holocaust Survivor Assistance Program (HSAP) to support aging Holocaust survivors and their caregivers. We also support the Supplemental Security Income (SSI) Penalty Eliminations Savings Act which helps millions of low-income seniors and people with disabilities pay for their basic needs. Unfortunately, current rules penalize them for saving even modest amounts.

Maryland State Issues:

OPERATING FUNDING-

- **The Protecting Against Hate Crimes (PAHC)** program for houses of worship and faith-based nonprofits targeted for hate crimes.
- **The Maryland Center for School Safety (MSCC)** Hate Crimes Grant for schools and childcare centers at-risk for hate crimes.
- **The Jewish Social Services Agency's (JSSA)** Holocaust survivors and Coming of Age programs for vulnerable, older adults including Holocaust Survivors.
- **The Charles E. Smith Life Communities'** ElderSafe Center to support victims of elder abuse and neglect.
- **The Maryland Israel Development Center (MIDC)** to promote trade between Israel and Maryland.

LEGISLATION TO:

- **Counter Antisemitism** through education, law enforcement and policy initiatives. This remains our highest priority in the aftermath of Hamas' 2023 massacre and kidnapping of Israelis and the spike in hatred against Jews worldwide. Antisemitic incidents threaten our community's sense of safety, security and belonging. We are committed to combating all forms of hatred and bigotry and to correcting misinformation and disinformation about Jews and Israel,
- **Strengthen Reproductive Health & Freedom** for women to have access to the full spectrum of healthcare services including contraception and abortion.
- **Ensure the Criminal Legal System** is applied equally and fairly to all regardless of race, religion, ethnicity, national origin, gender, gender identity, sexual orientation or disability. It is critical to protect the most vulnerable and build a just and caring society.
- **Protect Democracy and Voter Access** so that all Marylanders can thrive and participate in our democratic process.
- **Address Climate Change** and protect our environment including incentivizing energy efficiency and utilization of renewable energy sources.
- **Advocate for Individuals with Disabilities** to ensure they have the necessary resources to live with dignity and fully participate in society and Jewish life.
- **Support Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence and Abuse** so they have access to direct support services that are affordable, confidential and culturally sensitive.
- **Address Behavioral Healthcare Needs** given increased demand for these services for individuals and families in crisis.

Montgomery County Issues:

- **Increase Security Funding** for the Nonprofit Security Grant Program for faith-based institutions at risk of hate crimes and bias incidents.
- **Fight Against Poverty** with programs that help the most vulnerable by providing access to affordable housing, hunger relief and quality education.
- **Secure Funding for Nonprofit Agencies** (JSSA, Makom, JCA, CESLC, Bender JCC, JCADA, Sunflower Bakery) which provide vital non-sectarian social services throughout the county. These Jewish agencies help aging adults, individuals with disabilities, victims of domestic violence, Holocaust survivors, and individuals with mental health challenges, regardless of faith, race, ethnicity, or ability to pay.
- **Expand Quality Childcare** that is affordable and accessible for all.