

HCS HB 937 -- PROTECTIONS AGAINST DISCRIMINATION IN EDUCATIONAL SETTINGS

SPONSOR: Hruza

COMMITTEE ACTION: Voted "Do Pass with HCS" by the Standing Committee on Higher Education and Workforce Development by a vote of 10 to 2, with 1 voting present. Voted "Do Pass" by the Standing Committee on Rules-Administrative by a vote of 8 to 0.

The following is a summary of the House Committee Substitute for HB 937.

This bill defines "antisemitism" and requires that public schools, school districts, and public institutions of higher education integrate the definition of antisemitism into codes of conduct and prohibit antisemitic conduct.

Public schools, school districts, and public institutions of higher education are encouraged to integrate a Jewish American heritage curriculum for students.

The bill prohibits discrimination by public schools, school districts, and public institutions of higher education on the basis of race, ethnicity, national origin, sex, disability, religion, or marital status against students or employees. The bill provides that classes, guidance services, counseling services, and financial assistance services be available equally.

The bill requires the State Board of Education and the Coordinating Board for Higher Education to establish Title VI coordinators to monitor antisemitic discrimination and harassment at public schools and education institutions. The coordinators will investigate complaints and determine if an education institution allowed or failed to prohibit the discrimination and harassment and compile annual reports to be submitted to the General Assembly by July 1st of each year.

This bill is the same as HB 746 (2025).

The following is a summary of the public testimony from the committee hearing. The testimony was based on the introduced version of the bill.

PROPONENTS: Supporters say that this bill will help to combat antisemitism and that many school children and students at universities have experienced increased antisemitism in the last year. Many other states have similar protections and use the same definitions as found in this bill. Often what happens to members

of the Jewish faith in a society will happen to others in the society. All Missourians should love one another and lessening discrimination of all forms is an important step, especially in the General Assembly.

Testifying in person for the bill were Representative Hruza; Jonathan Geluda Lewin; Jewish Federation of St. Louis; Rachel Bray; Adam Beren, Combat Antisemitism Movement; Rabbi Zeev Smason, Coalition for Jewish Values Missouri; Samuel Zitin; Shauna Faye Kruger; Destiny Albritton ; Arnie C. Dienoff; and Nickolay Remizov.

OPPONENTS: Those who oppose the bill say that a more contemporary definition of antisemitism is appropriate as the definition used in this bill is more Zionistic in nature and prohibits free speech to condemn the violent actions of Israel. There has been a marked uptick of discrimination and hatred toward members of the Muslim faith in the last year too and yet there are no bills that are trying to take away 1st amendment rights from others.

Testifying in person against the bill were Michael E Berg; Noam Perry; Samuel Brian; Yara Salamed, UMKC and Mizzou Students For Justice In Palestine; UMKC and Mizzou Muslim Students; Progressive Jews Of Mizzou; Mark Haim; George P. Smith; Michael Berg, Saint Louis Jewish Voice for Peace; American Civil Liberties Union of Missouri; James Pepler; Abdulmajid Moad; Alma Jarbou, Mizzou Students for Justice in Palestine; Haidee Clauer; Isleen Atallah; Jeff Stack, Mid-Mo Fellowship of Reconciliation; Keith Rose; Luke Jenson; Leor Shomroni; Randall Quisenberry; and Reece Holcomb.

Written testimony has been submitted for this bill. The full written testimony and witnesses testifying online can be found under Testimony on the bill page on the House website.