

Senator Carney, Representative Kuhn, and Esteemed Members of the Committee:

My name is Zach Schwartz. I live in Westbrook, Maine, and I am testifying in strong support of **LD 2107, An Act to Establish the Maine Nonprofit Security Grant Program**. Thank you for your time and consideration.

Over the last few years, Jewish organizations across Maine and the US have faced the highest levels of antisemitism seen since the Holocaust. [In 2025](#), multiple Jewish institutions in Maine received specific death threats, letters saying things like “I will kill all at this place.” Flyers urging people to enact a “D-Day” against the Jewish community were posted in Portland. Another flyer in Bethel stated that Jews were no longer welcome in Maine. [In a recent survey of Maine Jewish adults](#), **52%** said they avoided activities in the past year out of fear of antisemitism, and **35%** reported experiencing antisemitic remarks, vandalism, or threats.

This bill grew directly out of what I heard while visiting synagogues across the state: “*We’re facing the highest threat levels we’ve ever seen, and we’re running out of security funds.*” These synagogues should not have to choose between keeping their doors open and keeping people safe.

However, this is not just a Jewish community issue. As I have spoken with other partners—churches, mosques, Buddhist temples, and nonprofits serving a variety of causes—I heard the same concerns about rising threats, safety, and preparedness. In 2025, there were multiple violent attacks on [Catholic organizations](#), Mormon organizations, Jewish organizations, and many others in the United States.

I’m here today representing **over 20 organizations** that have signed an open letter supporting this legislation—this letter includes the majority of Maine’s Jewish institutions, a historic black church in the Green Memorial AME Zion Church, the state’s largest Buddhist Temple Watt Samaki, a Southern Maine mosque, and nonprofits and houses of worship across Maine.

LD 2107 is a **unity bill**. Similar nonprofit security grant programs have passed in [at least 18 other states](#), oftentimes with strong bipartisan support. This bill’s support is not along geographic lines—while many nonprofits and houses of worship reside in the state’s cities, there are many rural churches in towns which don’t have professional police departments, or for whom it would take 15, 20, 30 minutes for law enforcement to arrive. And this bill’s support should not be along political lines—while there is strong Democrat support for this bill, the horrific murder of Charlie Kirk last year shows us that organizations and people with conservative values are also being targeted. This is a bill for all of us.

Some may ask: “Isn’t there federal nonprofit security funding?” There is, and it helps—but it is **highly competitive** and often **reimburses after costs are incurred**, which many small organizations cannot front. Additionally, the federal program does [not cover public security personnel](#), which many synagogues and houses of worship have urged me is the single most effective and important measure they can take to feel safe.

LD 2107 is a modest, commonsense, unifying bill that can prevent tragedy. As much as it pains me to say, it is not “if” a next attack against a house of worship or nonprofit happens, it is “when.” And I hope that if and when—G-d forbid—that moment should come, we can say that we did all we could to ensure houses of worships and nonprofits were ready and safe.

I respectfully urge you to support LD 2107 and report it out **Ought to Pass**. Thank you.

List of Organizations Signing Open Letter in Support of LD 2107

Androscoggin Bank (Lewiston)
Asian-American Community Center (Westbrook)
Beth Israel Congregation (Bath)
Chabad of Maine (Portland)
Congregation Beth El (Bangor)
Congregation Beth Israel (Bangor)
Congregation Etz Chaim-Biddeford (Biddeford)
First Parish Unitarian Universalist Church (Portland)
Green Memorial AME Zion Church (Portland)
Holocaust and Human Rights Center of Maine (Augusta)
Hope Acts (Portland)
Jewish Community Alliance of Southern Maine (Portland)
Khmer Maine (Portland)
Maine Jewish Film Festival (Portland)
Maine Jewish Museum (Portland)
Omar Mosque (Southern Maine)
Rwandese Community Association of Maine (Portland)
Temple Beth El (Portland)
Temple Shalom Synagogue (Auburn)
Watt Samaki Buddhist Temple (Buxton)