

Sara Kahn-Troster  
Temple Beth El  
LD 2107

Testimony in support of LD 2107, "An Act to Establish the Maine Nonprofit Security Grant Program"

Senator Carney, Representative Moonen, and distinguished members of the Judiciary Committee:

My name is Sara Kahn-Troster and I am the President of Temple Beth El (TBE) in Portland. I am pleased to submit this testimony in support of LD 2107, which will establish a \$2 million grant program administered by the Attorney General's Office to help religious institutions and nonprofits improve their security.

No one should have to worry about their safety while they are praying or attending events and celebrations at a house of worship. Like synagogues and churches around the country, TBE is deeply concerned about threats to our security. In the face of rising antisemitism and white nationalism we consider ourselves both particularly vulnerable and also fortunate not to have experienced any direct threats recently, but we know it is only a matter of time before one of these becomes more than just frightening.

Over the past few years, TBE has been fortunate to receive numerous federal Nonprofit Security Program grants that have allowed us to make significant upgrades to our physical plant and retain security staff, as well as to improve security at our cemetery. However, the future of that funding is uncertain and increasingly comes with ideological strings attached that may conflict directly with our mission. A fund in Maine to support security at religious institutions, similar to others in place around the country, would help us continue to maintain a safe, secure space for our congregants, students, staff and visitors without compromising our values.

On behalf of our Board of Directors and membership I urge you to vote to support this vital legislation.