

# HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 5

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By: **Delegates Martinez, Acevero, Alston, and Young**

Introduced and read first time: February 7, 2024

Assigned to: Rules and Executive Nominations

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## HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION

1 A House Joint Resolution concerning

2 **Commitment to Free Speech, Academic Freedom, and Open Public Discourse**

3 FOR the purpose of reaffirming the Maryland General Assembly's commitment to free  
4 speech, academic freedom, and open public discourse; upholding the right of  
5 individuals to express views on matters of foreign policy; and generally relating to  
6 free speech, academic freedom, and open public discourse.

7 WHEREAS, The First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution guarantees the  
8 fundamental right to free speech, which is essential to a democratic society and the pursuit  
9 of truth; and

10 WHEREAS, Open and robust public discourse is vital for a functioning democracy,  
11 allowing citizens to engage in the free exchange of ideas and opinions without fear of  
12 censorship or retribution; and

13 WHEREAS, Criticism of foreign governments is a protected form of political speech,  
14 contributing to informed public debate on matters of national and international  
15 importance; and

16 WHEREAS, It is essential to safeguard the right of individuals, organizations, and  
17 institutions to express dissenting views and opinions, even when such views pertain to the  
18 policies and actions of a foreign government; and

19 WHEREAS, Protecting free speech is not only a constitutional imperative but also  
20 an integral component of preserving academic freedom, promoting civic engagement, and  
21 maintaining a vibrant and pluralistic society; and

22 WHEREAS, Attempts to stifle or suppress criticism of any foreign government may  
23 have a chilling effect on free speech, academic inquiry, and public discourse; and



**HOUSE JOINT RESOLUTION 5**

1           WHEREAS, The State recognizes the importance of fostering an environment that  
2 respects diverse perspectives and encourages dialogue on issues related to foreign policy,  
3 human rights, and international affairs; now, therefore, be it

4           RESOLVED BY THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF MARYLAND, That the General  
5 Assembly of Maryland hereby reaffirms its commitment to the principles of free speech,  
6 academic freedom, and open public discourse; and be it further

7           RESOLVED, That the General Assembly of Maryland opposes any efforts to infringe  
8 on the constitutionally protected right to criticize foreign governments, including the State  
9 of Israel; and be it further

10          RESOLVED, That the General Assembly of Maryland encourages educational  
11 institutions, governmental bodies, and other entities within the State to uphold and protect  
12 the right of individuals to express dissenting views on matters of foreign policy without fear  
13 of censorship or retribution; and be it further

14          RESOLVED, That a copy of this Resolution be forwarded by the Department of  
15 Legislative Services to the Honorable Wes Moore, Governor of Maryland; the Honorable  
16 William C. Ferguson, IV, President of the Senate of Maryland; and the Honorable Adrienne  
17 A. Jones, Speaker of the House of Delegates.