

Jews United for Justice

Anita Lampel

Bethesda, Maryland

www.jufj.org

**JEWS UNITED
FOR JUSTICE**

THINK JEWISHLY. ACT LOCALLY.

Testimony in Support of
U Visa Law Enforcement Certification Policy
Expedited Bill 26-24

My name is Anita Lampel, and I am a resident of Bethesda in District I. I am on the Montgomery County Leadership Council for Jews United for Justice (JUFJ), which represents over 2,000 Jews and allies across the county who act on our shared Jewish values to advance social, economic, and racial justice. **On behalf of JUFJ, I am submitting this testimony in support of the U Visa Law Enforcement Certification Policy.**

Our Jewish values state: "When a stranger sojourns with you in your land, you shall do him no wrong. The stranger who sojourns with you shall be to you as the native among you, and you shall love him as yourself for you were strangers in the land of Egypt" (Leviticus 19:33). The U Visa program protects the immigrant victims of serious crime against deportation when that person has come forward to testify or otherwise assist law enforcement. Unfortunately, Montgomery County currently places a time limit on when a victim can benefit from this program.

JUFJ works closely with CASA to address the concerns of our immigrant population. Undocumented individuals labor tirelessly to support families and they enrich our communities both culturally and economically. When an undocumented person is the victim of a crime and has taken the risk of cooperating with law enforcement, we should not require them to come forward by a certain time to either report the crime or request a U Visa certification. This bill allows immigrant crime victims to come forward when they feel they are able without fear that they failed a "timeliness" test that is not imposed by the federal government, but by Montgomery County

Therefore, we urge you to vote in favor of U Visa Law Enforcement Certification Policy, Expedited Bill 26-24.

Thank you.