



**For Immediate Release:**  
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## **THE JEWISH COMMUNITY RELATIONS COUNCIL OF GREATER WASHINGTON CONDEMNS VIOLENCE IN CHARLOTTESVILLE**

The Jewish Community Relations Council of Greater Washington (JCRC) condemns in the strongest terms Saturday's violence in Charlottesville, mourns the deaths of an innocent counter-protester and two state policemen and prays for the wellbeing of so many others hurt in the melee. There should be no doubt that these acts of domestic terrorism were the work of white supremacists, neo-Nazis and antisemites whose views and actions are anathema to American values. There were not many sides to the hatred and bigotry on display in Charlottesville, as some have claimed, only from those of the racist and the alt-right, who must clearly be called out for who they are.

We join with the many people of faith in Charlottesville this weekend praying for peace since Friday night, including so many rabbis and Jewish students, but numerous clergy of all faiths, as well. We have particular praise for Virginia Gov. Terry McAuliffe and Charlottesville Mayor Mike Signer, who have both led their fine state and city in the face of this violence but with the determination to call out those truly responsible while trying to maintain calm. Their immediate and unequivocal condemnations of the violence and the motivations of the white supremacists and neo-Nazis behind it should be a model for all public officials, Virginians and for all who seek to lead the commonwealth and nation. We appreciate similar statements from other Virginia elected officials and candidates alike, and hope this weekend will be an impetus for positive election campaign rhetoric.

Lastly, as hateful and despicable as we find all this violence and xenophobia, this extreme racism and intolerance, we are of course struck as a community by some of the particularly vile antisemitism employed this weekend -- on signs, in shouted slogans, on television interviews. We continue to defend the right of all Americans to free speech, regardless of how despicable, but not when it is an incitement to violence. In the words of Elie Wiesel: "*We must always take sides. Neutrality helps the oppressor, never the victim. Silence encourages the tormentor, never the tormented.*" We must work toward peace and tolerance, keeping hatred and bigotry out of Virginia and our nation.