



IDENTITY AND POLITICAL PARTICIPATION IN THE US

An essay writing contest for public middle and high school students in Maryland.

The Jewish Museum of Maryland and Thomas Kennedy Center invite you to reflect on Maryland's "Jew Bill" and consider what it tells us about political participation and identity in the US. Passed in 1826, the Maryland Jew Bill enabled the full political participation of white Jewish men across the state of Maryland. Though the bill increased opportunities for political participation for some, others were still subject to exclusion.

INSTRUCTIONS:

Students are invited to respond to the following prompt:

- **What does Maryland's 1826 "Jew Bill" tell us about how *otherness*, race, religion, and political participation intersect in the US historically and today? How have these themes impacted life in your community or in a historical community you've studied?**

All submissions must be in Times New Roman, 12 pt. font, and double-spaced. All works must have a title. Each page must be numbered and include the writer's last name. Entries must be no longer than two pages.

ELIGIBILITY:

Middle and high school students attending public school in Maryland are invited to participate. Winners of last year's contest are respectfully asked not to enter.

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSIONS:

All entries should be submitted to essaycontest@jewishmuseummd.org no later than **Tuesday, March 31**

REVIEW PROCESS AND PRIZES:

A winner from both middle and high school entrants will be selected by a panel of judges. Winning entrants will receive an iPad. Second and third-place entrants will receive \$250 and \$100 checks respectively.

ANNOUNCEMENT OF WINNERS:

Winning essays will be featured and awards will be distributed at the JMM Annual Meeting on Sunday, May 17. Winners will be notified in advance of this date.